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## Executive summary

This report presents the main essences of each of WP3's research endeavours carried out throughout the project "Curriculum Quality Analysis and Impact Review of European ECEC" (CARE), highlighting the most important research questions, data, findings and insights. We begin by presenting WP3's main objectives in CARE. These include drawing on and creating research on the link between (pre-service and in-service) professional development policies, initiatives and practices and their effects on child outcomes, with a particular focus on the vulnerable and social inclusion. Tantalizing was an analysis and comparison of innovative 'best practices' in professional development strategies. Under four sub-sections, WP3's research and discussions are considered, with an integrative reflection on the whole, followed by some concluding remarks and recommendations for policy, practice and research.

To begin, CARE's Danish, Italian and Polish partners undertook a comparison of professional development across 10 European countries (WP3.T1), assessing current professional development systems and strategies for ECEC. The focus was on continuities, discontinuities and contradictions in education and training, qualification levels, organisation of work, license requirements, legislation, ratio of qualified/non-qualified staff, etc. This culminated in a cross-country analysis reported in D3.1 "Comparative review of professional development approaches" (Jensen et al., 2015).

Secondly, CARE's Danish partners carried out a quantitative analysis of professional development, examining it as a moderator of the effects of ECEC (WP3.T2). Findings were presented in D3.2, "Professional development and its impact on children in early childhood education and care: A meta-analysis on European studies" (Jensen & Rasmussen, 2016).

Thirdly, CARE's Italian partners, together with the Danish and Polish partners led research on innovative approaches to professional development through case studies (WP3.T3). In D3.3, "Report on 'good practice' case studies of professional development in three countries" (Bove et al., 2016), our objective was to identify innovative and dynamic learning approaches to professional development based on a literature review, with an outlook on peer-education, supervision and team-professionalism, reflective practice, organisational learning and leadership, technology in professional development, and intercultural issues. The cases were used to highlight innovative approaches to professional development as they operate in practice and as they could inspire future initiative.

For WP3's final task, (WP3.T4) towards effective professional development in Europe, CARE's Danish and Italian partners synthesised the research, culminating into proposals for exemplary, methodologically innovative approaches to professional development in ECEC that improve child outcomes in general and tackle educational disadvantage in particular. This was achieved in D3.4, "Recommendations for common policy across the EU regarding professional development as an element of quality in ECEC and child wellbeing for all" (Jensen & Iannone, 2016).