Multicultural education in Hungarian daycares

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The subject of multicultural education remains largely unknown in Hungary despite the many, often volatile changes in everyday life that have arisen due to globalization and migration. This paper contends that children can be shown basic concepts related to multiculturalism, acceptance and tolerance within a daycare environment. The purpose of this study is twofold: while one aspect of this discussion explores to what degree Hungarian society is open to multiculturalism, the other examines what multicultural methods, topics or attitudes can be introduced to children attending daycare, a period that spans the ages of twenty weeks to three or four years old in Hungary. It is the authors' general experience that Hungarian people are fairly open to the idea of multiculturalism, even though educational laws do not mention the importance of teaching multicultural ideas. To support or disprove this impression, a survey was conducted both in English and Hungarian to assess what the general public thinks about the topic of multicultural awareness in daycares. After analysing responses from the survey's 105 participants, a practical session led by a daycare professional-in-training was then used to test the effectiveness of a playful, multicultural approach to introducing certain topics to three-year-old children.

Keywords: multiculturalism, inclusion, daycare, early childhood education

Defining culture, multiculturalism and integration

As a concept, culture cannot be easily defined since it reflects different elements for almost every individual. The following overview contains a collection of some of the research conducted on the topic in order to establish what culture represents for the purpose of this examination. The sociologist, Zoltán Farkas (2005), approached the concept of culture by explaining how the word's etymology changed throughout time. In the beginning, "culture" was a verb used to describe agricultural tasks and only later came to mean the "cultivation" or education of people. In the nineteenth century, culture therefore referred to educated, wealthy and socially advanced people. According to Farkas, three interpretations represent what culture means today: the first concerns an individual's process in intellectual, emotional and aesthetic values. The second refers to a group of people following the same lifestyle in a specific time period. Lastly, the third focuses on the spiritual and artistic aspect of human activities, a perspective which is the most common view. The wider definition of culture can also refer to substantial and symbolical culture (pp. 6–7).

Hungarian uses two words to refer to culture: the first, *kultúra*, is naturally a Hungarianized version of the Latin term, *cultura.* A second, Hungarian term stems from the active verb, *művelni*, i.e., to create, cultivate or even farm*.* The adjective, *művelt*, can be viewed as a synonym for *kulturált*, or "cultured." The verb, *művelődni*, describes the act of attaining cultural knowledge or education in a process that can be viewed as a passive one given that this verb form connotes a certain absence of action: the noun, *művelődés***,** can be seen as the acceptance of or almost unwitting exposure to culture. To look at how culture is defined in Hungarian, the *Hungarian Explanatory Dictionary* provides three interpretations of culture. The main, more philosophical interpretation views culture as the unity of substantial and intellectual values that humankind has developed throughout its history. The second interpretation refers to individual literacy or civilization; the third is the least important from the point of the present examination, yet is interesting to note as it suggests that the initial definition of culture referred to by Farkas is still in usage today, i.e. culture is a verb that involves agricultural work or the cultivation of foodstuffs (Arcanum Adatbázis Kft., n.d.).

In contrast to Hungarian definitions, the *Cambridge Dictionary* defines culture as a noun that can either refer to a way of life or the arts. As the first definition states, "the way of life of a particular people, especially as shown in their ordinary behaviour and habits, their attitudes toward each other, and their moral and religious beliefs." The other usage, however, defines culture as "the arts of describing, showing, or performing that represent the traditions or the way of life of a particular people or group; literature, art, music, dance, theatre, etc." (Cambridge University Press, n.d.) The researchers Godwyn, Hoffer and Gittell (2011) view culture as a type of pattern that belongs to a specific group and is based upon "shared basic assumptions, invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and, therefore, is to be taught to new members of the group as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems" (p. 313). As an illustration of this process, in many cultures parents warn their children from communicating with strangers. Children are therefore taught to connect safety to the idea of "keeping away from strangers," just as the surrounding adults have passed on worst-case scenarios that will remain imprinted within these children when they are adults. As parents, these children will then teach the same to their children because their environment supports this idea. If this type of thinking remains the only influence within a child's environment, the consequence is a mentality that makes no or little differentiation between any type of unknown person or, indeed, unfamiliar environment. Based upon the steps described above which summarize the establishment of cultural values, culture is formed by and for a given group of people who utilise their cultural beliefs in order to answer the challenges of everyday life.

Fredrick (2001) interpreted culture as what moves us, lives in us and is in our environment. Culture can be individual, familial, communal, institutional, societal and global. No matter its origin, in Frederick's view culture is seen as

humankind's most valuable and important tool, one that contains elements of civilization and tradition. As such, culture is a framework of information, a symbolic system, a source of motivation and emotion. Since culture is difficult to define, there is no certain way to gain a full and clear image of its elements either; in discussions of culture, language or religion, for example, can be categorized as both a source and element. Malota and Mitev (2013) found that the most common approach to establishing what factors are related to culture is to list religion, history, values, social organizations and institutions and language as its common elements. For the purpose of this examination, the educational process described by Godwyn, Hoffer and Gittell best represents the learning steps we – as both researchers and educators – are interested in tracing. Frederick's attention to the significant role culture plays in impacting an environment has informed our classroom approach while Malota and Mitev's summary of what components culture can contain provided the basis for many of our survey questions.

Research by Gollnick and Chinn (2013) defined multiculturalism as, "The condition in which different cultural groups can maintain their unique cultural identities while participating equally in the dominant culture" (p. 10). Since migration rates have increased in Hungary, multicultural ideas have become important for both immigrants and locals. According to Görbe and Zán (2013), by the middle of the 1990s, roughly 300,000 immigrants had come to Hungary. In his research of migration in the twenty-first century, Kincses showed yearly increases in the number of people coming to live legally in Hungary. In 2001, the number of people living in the country was 93,005, while 10 years later (in 2011) the number of immigrants rose to 143,197. According to one source, out of every one thousand individuals living in Hungary today, 8.5 are immigrants. Although these numbers may be small compared to other European countries, they still demonstrate a growing trend. This paper contends that the need for multicultural education has become important in each area of education, no matter the given age group of the child. Whether in daycares, elementary schools, or even training sessions for adults, educators must pay attention to teaching equality and acceptance. The importance of educating people about race, genders, ethnicity, age, religion, special learning needs, different competencies, cultural and society groups is a crucial part to achieving a society where everyone feels safe and respected, no matter his or her identity.

In sociology, multiculturalism is usually referred to as a means for addressing cultural diversity while integration represents the process of minorities becoming incorporated into the system of the host's society. During this process, immigrants adapt to local daily life; education comprises one of the most efficient means to helping non-majority members learn about the host country's customs and cultural norms. It must, however, be emphasized that integration and assimilation are two different ideas. Assimilation is a process whereby the non-dominant group eventually conforms to the existing culture of the dominant group in a way that generally causes members of the non-dominant group to abandon their own culture and adapt as many aspects of the host's culture as possible. These two concepts are reflected in the main

theories concerning multiculturalism. Based on Longley, the "Melting Pot Theory" assumes that different types of immigrant groups eventually meld together to assimilate fully into the majority culture, i.e. the predominant group. This theory involves risks, since it entails a loss of cultural or even personal identity. A more humanistic approach is contained in the "Salad Bowl Theory," the term given to the conceptualization of a heterogeneous society in which individuals exist side by side in mutual respect of each other's culture while both integrating into majority society and preserving some part of their traditional culture (Longley, 2019). Compared to assimilation, integration is more of a "balancing act" by means of which a non-dominant group can maintain its original cultural identity while adapting to another culture. If multiculturalism is viewed as a means of preserving cultural diversity, integration provides the approach needed to enable members of minority groups to adopt aspects of the majority culture through intercultural discourse, rather than force. From the point of view of this examination, integration is viewed as the preferred, long-term goal for those coming to live in Hungary.

In this research, the main focus is multicultural integration in Hungarian daycares. In 2018, 2.4 million immigrants from non-27 EU countries entered EU-7 nations, including Hungary (Eurostat). At the beginning of 2018, 156,000 immigrants were residing lawfully and for a lengthier period of time in Hungary, a number equaling 1.6% of the total population. On January 1, 2019, this number was 172,600, resulting in 1.8% of the total population or a 0.2% increase in the presence of immigrants in Hungary (EACEA National Policies Platform). It can be expected that these individuals will start or continue raising a family in Hungary. Their children will therefore need multicultural integration and education while daycares in Hungary do not prioritize multicultural aspects. Daycare providers mostly speak Hungarian (or low fluency levels of spoken English) while supporting Hungarian cultural values in everyday life. Left unaware of the difference between integration versus assimilation, daycare providers can confuse the two and choose assimilation instead. While children primarily learn their parents' culture(s) at home, in Hungarian daycares children will generally experience mainstream cultural values.

The daycare system in Hungary

Before any analysis can be conducted, it is first necessary to provide some basic information regarding the daycare system in Hungary. Daycares in Hungary are one element of the child-welfare system; their main function is to provide families daily care for their children from the ages of twenty weeks old to three years. As such, daycares are also part of the "early warning system" in Hungary and therefore ensure basic rights and safety for both children and their families. State-run institutions offer professional care for children with trained daycare providers who have completed a university degree in Infant and Early Childhood Care Provision. As far as the types of daycares that are available in Hungary is concerned, early childhood institutions can be

put into the following three categories: state-run or public daycares, church-run or denominational institutions and privately-run daycares that are not funded by the state. Daycares that are funded by churches provide almost the same services as state-run ones do. The only difference is that children who attend a denominational institution also receive religious instruction and learn religious habits, such as praying before eating. Since this type of early childhood institution is supported by a slightly different system, this paper will instead focus on state-run or private daycares.

State-run daycares are financially supported and supervised by the government and include daily supervision for children from the ages of 20 weeks to three years; provision of these services is usually dependent upon the child and his or her family's residency. These daycares are open from 6 am to 6 pm and offer similar nursing and instruction compared to what a family would provide, such as feedings, hygiene, naps and basic education. Beyond these basic services, daycares additionally offer special counseling, periodic child care, children hotels and playhouses. Application is easy and understandable for parents. Non state-run or private daycares could be any type of institution from a workplace nursery funded by a privately-run company or family-operated nurseries. Workplace nurseries care for a group of maximum seven children based on the needs of parents who naturally work for the specific companies that run the nurseries. These daycares must be near the workplace's actual location and providers must participate in training sessions every three years. In family nurseries, there can only be from five to seven children who are being cared for by a provider and a helper. Providers need to do the same trainings that are required for workplace nurseries. Both forms of daycare demand higher fees for their services compared to state-run institutions.

University students pursuing a degree in daycare provision mostly become familiarised with state-run daycares as these have contracts with our university, ELTE's Faculty of Preschool and Primary Education, and allow students to conduct their practice training within this kind of an environment. This paper compares state-run to private daycares for the following reason: although ELTE's programme prepares students for state-run institutions, it is more common to find aspects related to multiculturalism in private facilities. State-run daycare institutions must maintain the rules listed in *Rules of Nursing and Caring in Daycares, Methodological Notes* written by Balogh, Barbainé Bérci, Nyitrai, Rózsa, Tolnayné Falusi and Vokony. Since no English translation of this document exists, a few essential parts have been translated and provided in order to illustrate how state-run daycares provide children and families with support and educational instruction during the early stages of childhood.

As far as fees and costs are concerned, since 2012 parents not only pay for meal costs but also provide a daily fee for caregiving. The latter cost varies based on the parents' incomes and mostly ranges between 0 HUF to 1500 HUF/day. Some reduced rates are available for people in need of them, such as families who receive regular child protection support, have three or more children or have children suffering from a chronic illness or disability. For private daycares, the price for caregiving cost is approximately 450-500 EUR/

school year. State-run daycares focus on accepting children whose parents are not able to give them daily care for different reasons. Children who have social or medical disadvantages or have been placed under child protection are prioritized due to their conditions. Daycares therefore maintain daily, weekly and monthly contact with parents, families, medical personnel, social services and educational institutions. Medical personnel also help children and their families, such as the network of public nurses or pediatricians. In the area of education, the main helpers are educational counseling services, kindergartens, special schools, special services for caring with families and children, special needs education services or pedagogical professional services. Daycares also maintain ties with child protection services, the child welfare system and family support services.

The following table provides a basic overview of the principles that are upheld in Hungary's daycare system mentioned in *Rules for Nursing and Childcare in Daycares: Methodological Notes* (2012).

Table 1
Examples of the established principles for state-run daycares in Hungary

Principles	Examples in daycares
Respect for upbringing in family	Upbringing is the responsibility of the families and daycare providers must respect that with representing family values.
Respect of children's rights	Daycare providers are responsible for helping children individually to create a healthy lifestyle that takes their needs into consideration.
Unity of nursing and care	Nursing and caregiving belong together, their value lies in this unity.
Equal opportunities	Every child deserves the care and nursing suited to their needs and developmental progress.
Safety and stability	Daycare providers provide a consistent personal and material background to create a safe environment for the children.
Supporting activity and self-determination	Supporting and acknowledging self-determination in every form is encouraged.
Unity in educational ways	Education transmits and provides values to achieve development in children's lives.

Researching multiculturalism in Hungary's daycares

While the brief overview provided above illustrates the commitment state-run daycares have toward the children in their care, it does not address issues related to cultural integration and multicultural education in nurseries. In our research, the method of triangulation was used to explore how Hungarians view some of the questions (equal access to education, access to native language education, celebration of special, cultural events, the introduction of multicultural education, etc.) to which the growing influx of children originating

from non-Hungarian backgrounds may give rise. As was previously mentioned, in Hungary private daycares are more likely to emphasise any aspects related to multiculturalism due to the fact that the providers are generally fluent in a foreign language. The first part of this triangulation therefore comprises an Internet search of private nurseries or daycares that may offer services more suitable for children who do not speak Hungarian or have additional cultures at home. The second part of our triangulation examines the results of a survey that assesses the opinions 105 participants expressed regarding education in multiculturalism and their attitudes toward people coming from a non-Hungarian background. The third part of our research triangulation addresses the question of whether young children can comprehend cultural differences while including a practical "game" that could become an effective method in developing greater sensitivity toward other cultures.

The online presence of private daycares in Hungary

In order to locate information regarding these institutions, an online search was conducted. Tags such as "multicultural daycare," "international daycare" or "English daycare" were used to begin the online search; the word "daycare" was occasionally changed to "nursery" and the option was set for Hungary-based websites. The top results included six daycare facilities all located in Budapest. The information about the facilities were understandable, the websites were easily to navigate and the menus were logical. In addition to this online search, in-service daycare providers were asked if they knew of any institution where multicultural values are evident. While we had hoped more employees of state-run daycares would be aware of the challenges that the children of immigrants face, only two professionals could list daycares or daycare programs that are connected to multicultural efforts. (The latter event referred to tea parties that daycare providers could attend in order to learn about the presence of more cultures in a daycare environment.) The table below summarizes the services provided by these private institutions.

Table 2

Comparison of Hungarian daycares promoting a multicultural environment

	Daycare 1	**Daycare 2**	**Daycare 3**	**Daycare 4**	**Daycare 5**	**Daycare 6**
Location	Budapest, 12th district	Budapest, 8th district	Budapest, 2nd district	Budapest, 2nd district	Budapest, 2nd district	Budapest, 2nd district
Target Age	From 18 months to 3 years	From 4 months to 3 years	From 16 months to 3 years	From 8 month to 2 years	From 14 months to 3 years	From 18 months to 3 years old

Spoken/ Taught Languages	Hungarian, English	Hungarian, English	Hungarian, English	Hungarian, English	Hungarian, English	Hungarian, English, German
Curriculum	Structured play program, socialization, motor skills development, fine motor skills development	Follows the British National Curriculum: Early Years Foundation Stage	Developed by international research practices in Britain, USA and Hungary	No information on the website	No information on the website	Lists studies which are not available on the website
Cultural Events	Orientation Day, Parents-Teacher meetings, Hungarian Harvest Festival, Halloween, Thanksgiving, St. Nicholas Day, Valentine's Day, Carnival, Fashion Show, Easter, Mother's Day, Summer Camp	Back to School, Welcome Party, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Open Day, Santa Day, Christmas Shows, International Day, Charity Valentine Party, Carnival, Hungarian Day, Easter Egg Hunt, Mother's Day Show, End of Year Show, Summer School	Parents' Evening, Parent-teacher meeting, Orientation Session, Family Garden Party, Halloween Party, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Parties, Carnival, Valentine's Day, World Water Day, Earth Day, Birds and Trees Day, Parents' Day Celebrations, Children's Day Celebration, Class Year End Parties, Summer School	School Year Opening Party, Santa Claus, Christmas Party, Carnival, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Children's Day, Farewell Party, Summer Camp	Coffee-Morning, Parents' Board, Parents' Session, Halloween Party, Santa's Day, Christmas Party, Pyjama Party, Valentine's Day, Hungarian Carnival Party, Easter Fun, Graduation, Summer Camp	No specific events listed on the website

Extra Activities	Afternoon classes: Arts, Chess, Football, Judo, Karate, Piano, Ball Games, Ballet, Kindermusik, Dance, Robotics	No information on the website	Art, Chess, Extra gym, Yoga, Dance, Football	Karate, Hungarian Folk Dance, Handy Craft, Ballet, Skiing, Yoga	Briefly mentioning that the institute has some extra activities.	Music, Dance, Soccer, Folk Dance, Swimming, Ballet, Judo, Visual Arts, Skating, Piano
Extra Information provided for Parents	Menus (meals), Articles, Application Forms and Guides, Useful Documents, Galleries	Menus (meals), Galleries, Admission Information	Downloadable Contents, Galleries,	Timetable, Documents, Menus (meal), Galleries	Meet our staff, Galleries, Downloadable Calendar	Galleries, Study titles, Articles, Resources in Staff and Equipment Documents
Application Process	Application Form	Nothing available online, need to contact their email address	Application Form	Application Form	Application Form	Upon arranged meeting
Price	450 € / child / school year	Need to contact email address for information	No information on the website	No information on the website	No information on the website	No information on the website
Contacts	Website, Telephone number, email address, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube	Website, email address, Telephone number, Facebook	Website, Telephone number, email address, Facebook	Website, Telephone number, email address, Facebook	Website, Telephone number, email address, Facebook, Instagram	Website, Telephone number, email address, Facebook, Instagram

Extras	Smart Boards, door-to-door bus service	Minibus	Bus Service	Nothing listed on the website	Japanese Website	German Website, Children's Library

As can be seen in the above table, most private daycares are located on the Buda side of Budapest, meaning that they can be found among the wealthiest districts of Budapest. Only one, Daycare 2, is located in the eighth district, a much poorer (if not the poorest) district of the capital city. Given that this last district is populated the most by immigrants in Budapest today, the need for multicultural daycares is arguably higher here. This statement leads us to the crucial matter of the fees that parents need to pay for childcare. Due to the fact that these private nurseries mostly cost 400-500 €/child/school year, only the wealthy can afford private care. Most private daycares in Buda are housed in large villas found in a green area; the daycares where one of the authors of this paper conducted her practice training was one floor or located in a ten-story, block house surrounded by artificial grass.

Other than Hungarian, most private nurseries provide English and speak to children in English while Daycare 6 also offers German. In the experience of this paper's authors, state-run daycares do not emphasize teaching any language other than Hungarian, although daycare providers may possess some basic knowledge in English that they can use when engaging with foreigners. State-run nurseries do not have an option for foreign language websites; in contrast, Daycare 5 has a website in both Japanese and English. In state-run daycares, the application forms are mostly in Hungarian; as can be seen above, private institutions offer forms in different languages. When perusing the curriculum requirements published by private daycares, the main impression is that they mostly support unstructured play combined with the development of motor skills and speaking.

The celebrations held in private nurseries focus on both Hungarian and international holidays. All of them hold religious events such as Christmas and Easter or more international ones, like Valentine's Day. Some private daycares celebrate special days, for example Water Day or Earth Day. All of the private daycares included in this study provide summer camps and occasions or tea parties where parents and daycare providers can meet. These events and holidays let parents, providers and children enjoy their time in the daycares and makes planning easier for the adults. In state-run nurseries, a yearly plan for events is rare as it is mainly left to daycare providers to decide what celebrations will be held. Extracurricular activities are becoming increasingly popular in Hungary: for the smallest age groups, private daycares provide activities where children can improve their art, motor or cognitive skills. State-run nurseries mostly offer playhouses that are held on weekends and during summer breaks. Contacting and checking the daycares are an important part of deciding among the possibilities. Based on our research, most private daycares have caught up with this change and created Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

accounts, a step that makes their facilities far more attractive to parents who have grown up using technology.

A survey of attitudes toward multiculturalism

The following survey was conducted in order to evaluate what views residents of Hungary hold in connection to multiculturalism. The survey contained 44 questions including options for multiple choice, the provision of short or long answers, a linear scale and checkbox options. Since participants were asked to express their own opinions to some questions, a few of the survey queries resulted in a variety of answers from almost every participant. In total, 105 people filled out the survey which was uploaded to Google Docs. Both the English- and Hungarian-language version of this survey were shared on the social media profile of one of the authors, Hanna Zorka Czirmai, whose personal contacts then shared the survey on their private profiles in order to reach a wider audience. Some participants emailed the survey to their colleagues. In short, social media and Internet-based resources were used to disseminate this survey. The authors' aim was to assess the following points: how people living in Hungary feel about different cultures, how much is known about multicultural education and what views are held regarding multicultural daycares or whether there is any need for multicultural daycares. When preparing the survey, it was expected that participants would be interested in different cultures while different behaviour/habits would comprise the main challenge in a multicultural environment. We expected participants to be familiar with the concept of multiculturalism but predicted a bit of resistance to the idea of multicultural daycares given that public opinion generally views Hungarian culture as the preferred culture to which children should be exposed.

Out of the 105 respondents, 79 were female and 23 were male; 3 did not state a gender preference. Participants' ages ranged from under 18 to over 50, with an average age between 18-25 years. Respondents were generally from the capital or larger cities. Most did not have children but plan to start one eventually. The results summarized in Table 1 indicated the ethnic composition of respondents. Questions in the second part of the survey focused on culture and the qualities of tolerance and empathy. 24 people stated that they pay attention to multiculturalism; 39 have never considered it while 42 have, but not intentionally. 69% of respondents actively focus on multiculturalism and express an interest in cultures other than their own, while 14% of them claimed not to. Most of the participants who stated an interest in other cultures receive their information from travel, social media platforms and websites. According to this survey, globalization (61 people) and migration (18 people) were listed as the most likely contributors to multiculturalism. Questions in the second part of the survey also focused on culture and the qualities of tolerance and empathy. 24 people stated that they pay attention to multiculturalism; 39 have never considered it while 42 have, but not intentionally. 69% of respondents actively focus on multiculturalism and express an interest in cultures other

than their own, while 14% of them claimed not to. Most of the participants who stated an interest in other cultures receive their information from travel, social media platforms and websites. According to this survey, globalization (61 people) and migration (18 people) were listed as the most likely contributors to multiculturalism. Some respondents listed other options, such as political views, population or manipulation. There were some questions in which respondents needed to choose from a scale of 1 to 5 in which 1 meant "I do not" and 5 "I do."

Figure 1

Ethnic composition of survey participants
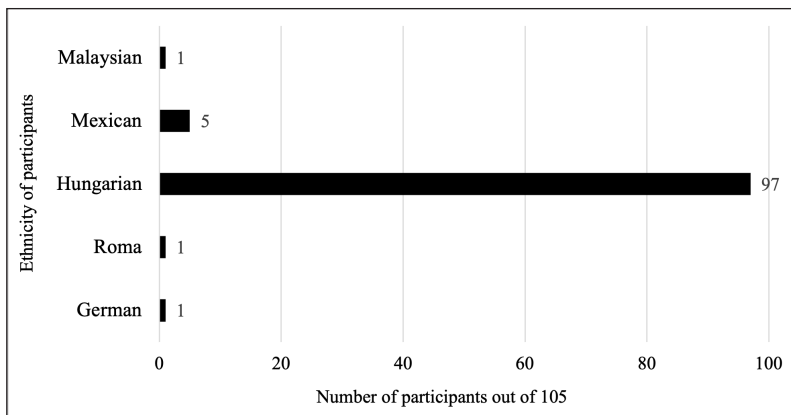
Figure 2

The percentage of empathy and tolerance expressed by participants
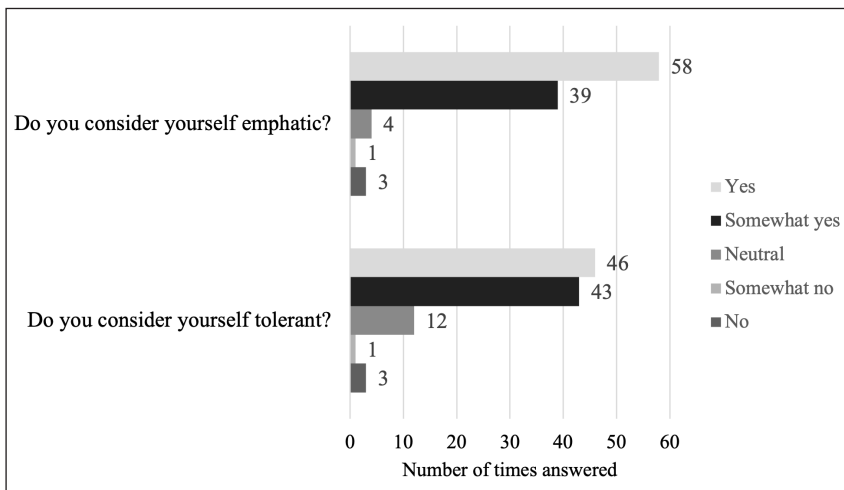
The third part of the survey focused on multicultural education. More than half of respondents had never heard of multicultural education. Those who

had were given the opportunity to explain how and what they knew. Here are some examples of the answers given regarding their knowledge of multicultural education:

Question: Have you ever heard about multicultural education? If so, please share your knowledge with us.

- *"Learning the best in every culture to improve in every way."*
- *"It's about educating children in other cultures and acceptance of diversity."*
- *"Knowing different cultures, ethnically heterogeneous classrooms, befriending different cultures through religion, habits, cuisine, folk arts."*
- *"Teaching unity for children with different ethnicities religions, social groups. The key is being open-minded and getting rid of racism, discrimination or prejudice."*
- *"Learning different languages and cultures during high school."*
- *"There are some institutions where they follow multicultural curriculums and students there are way more tolerant."*
- *"In Europe, there are already institutions where they teach children about multiculturalism at an early age."*
- *"Its goal is to teach children acceptance through children from different cultural backgrounds."*

Figure 3
Results of respondents regarding how education equality could be achieved
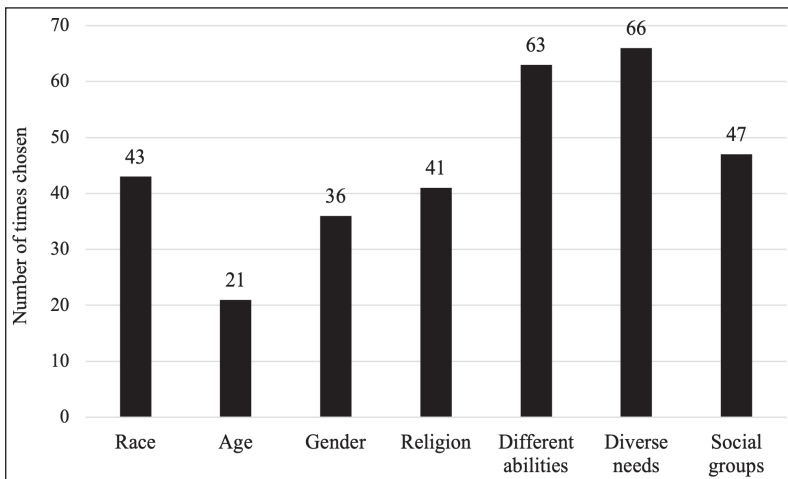
Most respondents thought that the ideal age to start learning about acceptance and equality is as soon as children attend any kind of educational institution, including daycare. The next question referred to whether people felt a need for there to be obligatory classes in schools in order to familiarize students with other cultures. 71 people felt the need for this type of class, while 7 were

uncertain. The remaining 27 people thought this kind of exposure should not be obligatory.

The fourth section concerned multiculturalism in daycares. The first question asked whether participants believe that the concept of multiculturalism has a place in daycares. 56% of respondents answered positively, 20% negatively and 24% were uncertain. The next question was potentially more controversial since respondents were asked about their opinions regarding children who come from a non-majority ethnic background and whether these children should be cared for in their own language. Nineteen participants thought these children had the right to this and 41 of them did not. The rest (45) remained uncertain. Participants had the opportunity to explain their choices. Some of their answers have been provided below:

Table 3
Some answers given to the question "Do you think a child who has a different ethnicity/ language from that found in the country where he/she lives deserves to be cared for in his/her own language in daycares?"

Yes	"Because it's a part of their personality, so it shouldn't be oppressed just because the individual is not in his or her usual living space." "It would give them safety." "It provides basic needs, helps to improve their identity." "It should be obligatory, because we need to be open to understand that the children might not speak our language." "It should be a fundamental right." "It would serve their development and self-esteem." "It's important for children to be able to keep their cultural values." "We live in a free country, so why not?" "Since we are talking about children at a specific age where they mostly understand their native language, sure, they have the right."
No	"It could be harmful when it comes to understanding their peers." "The Hungarian language is the most important. If they come here, they have to speak Hungarian." "If I were to go to a foreign country, would I get the chance to learn in my mother tongue too? I don't think so. So why would a child get it here if I can't either?" "It would cost too much money for the government." "Who would hire a professional who speaks the specific language? Or how would they find someone who has the educational background of a daycare provider and speaks fluently in a foreign language other than German or English?" "It can be harmful not to know the local language when they grow up to be students in schools." "If they live in another country which is not theirs, they should learn the local language as soon as possible." "It would damage the integration process."

Maybe	"In my opinion, it would only be needed above a percentage of the specific ethnicity." "They have the right, but I don't find it crucial." "It is possible, for example I would learn words from the children's language, but I would recommend the same from them." "Since Hungarian children have the chance to hear Hungarian in daycares, minority children would deserve the same even thought it would be hard to achieve given the Hungarian circumstances." "Observing the fact that Hungary is a dictatorial state and every single professional is escaping the country, it would be chaotic to ensure minority needs as far as language is concerned."

Even though the issue of language rights was a controversial part of the survey, when respondents were asked whether daycare providers need to learn the children's cultural background, more than 75% voted yes. Some options were listed in connection to how equal opportunities could be achieved in daycares and respondents were given the chance to list others or express their own opinions.

Figure 4
How do you think equal opportunities could be achieved in daycares?
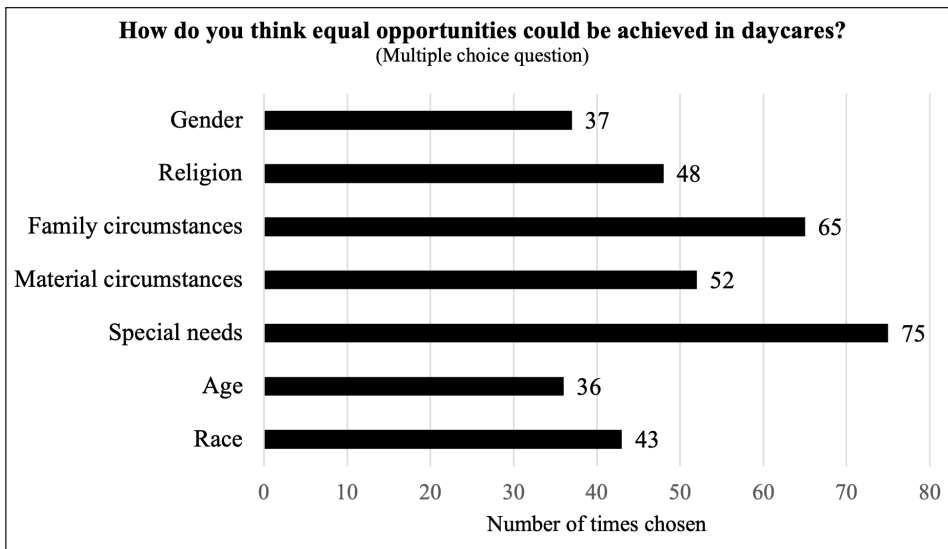
Out of all the participants, 83% had never heard of multicultural/international daycares, but the ones who did could list a few of the private daycares featured in the first part of this research triangulation as examples. Participants mostly agreed that private daycares that provide different spoken languages during early childhood should be more expensive than state-run facilities since daycare providers have dedicated more time to educating themselves by learning a foreign language, for example. Some found it unfair to pay for something that should be a fundamental right for minority children. A few participants mentioned how financial issues could hinder parents from

sending their children to a private facility, where children would also have more opportunities in their own language. According to the results, the majority felt that the most useful services a private daycare could provide include exposure to languages, afternoon classes and summer camp.

In connection to multicultural daycares, respondents were also asked about the holidays and habits children should be exposed to in daycares. Fifty-six would like the chance to organize holidays based on the ethnic composition of the children's group, 27 people would not want this option and 23 were undecided. The percentage of opinions given in connection with the holidays to be celebrated in daycares can be seen in Table 8. Some respondents added other ideas to the survey such as observing holidays non-Christian religious holidays, minority holidays (such as those held by Roma) or even the celebration of name days.

One of the most important questions in this section regarded whether participants would allow their children to attend a multicultural daycare. Fifty-five participants answered in the affirmative while 27 would not and 23 were willing to consider it. The last section of the survey focused on what knowledge regarding multicultural needs can be or should be expected of daycare providers. To be more specific, we were curious whether parents or future parents would prefer to have their children attend a daycare where the providers are aware of issues related to race, language, religion and cultural habits. With the same structure as before, respondents needed to choose where they stand on how important they find the specific knowledge on a scale of 1 to 5.

Figure 5

Opinions regarding topics deemed important for daycare providers to know
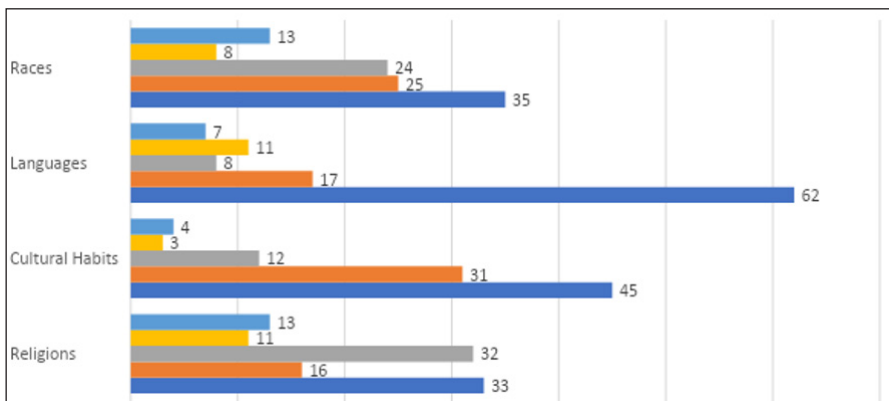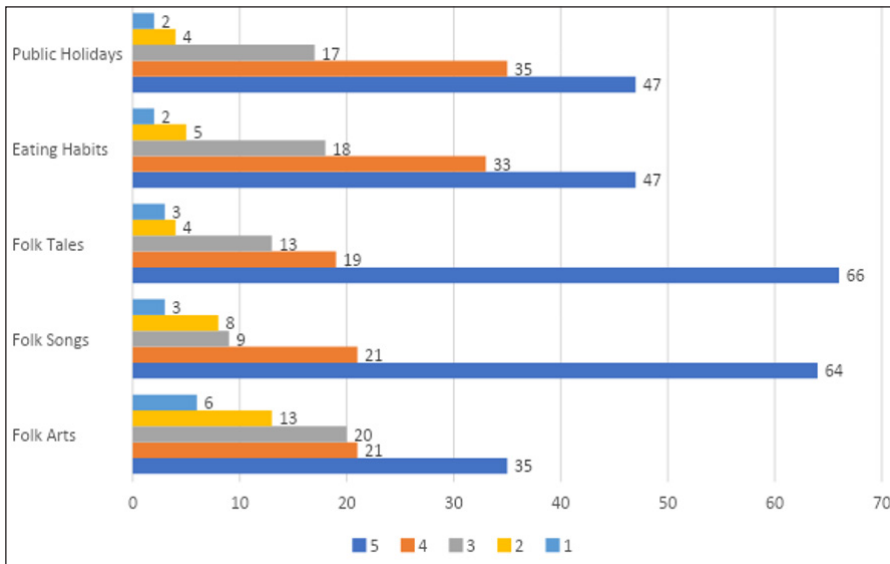
In the final section of this survey, respondents were asked for their opinions and given the opportunity for free expression. Most of the feedback was positive, while some participants offered advice. The following statements reflect some of the views that were shared.

– *"This idea is really important and actual."*
– *"Hoping for more multicultural daycares."*
– *"I'm wishing for Hungary's improvement in this area!"*
– *"I don't find the question of multicultural education unimportant, but it has no place in regular education. What I find important is learning basic human behavior."*
– *"I feel a bit cautious about this topic, so throughout the whole survey I had my doubts, but I'm hoping for a better future for daycares."*
– *"I believe in gradation, so I wouldn't start educating them that early. Maybe later on."*
– *"I can't see a need for multicultural education because we would lose all the values of our own culture. You have to be loyal and stick to your own, not to other cultures."*
– *"I think most cultures can unite, but it's harder when it comes to a Hungarian and an Arab. I find Muslim or Arabs harder to get on well with or to integrate them successfully."*
– *"In this current situation, Hungarian daycares are not capable of achieving a multicultural atmosphere. If the care is loving and caring at the daycare and they still have the energy to do extra with multicultural aspects, I applaud that. My daycare days were the best I can remember in the Hungarian nursing system. I never wanted to go home from daycare."*

It can be concluded that the 105 individuals who participated in this survey were mostly open to the idea of multicultural daycares. Respondents believed

themselves to be tolerant and emphatic. Some doubts regarding this opinion appeared when comparing this result to some of the opinions given in long-answer questions, which also contained some negative, hurtful or slightly racist replies. On the more positive side, the survey also revealed a number of people who are interested in other cultures and actively devote time to discovering new cultures. While it had originally been thought that religion or native language would prove the strongest factors to differentiate cultures, the survey respondents surprisingly chose behaviour and habits the most.

Multicultural education was a concept most respondents had either never heard of or only knew little of. Although those who were familiar with the topic gave good explanations of their knowledge, a third of survey participants did not find multicultural education necessary or opted to remain undecided in connection with holding obligatory classes on other cultures. Similarly, opinions regarding multiculturalism in daycares were divided, but the majority felt that the concept has a place in daycares. While it was expected that views regarding the rights of minority children would be controversial, the many positive answers that were given indicate that there are more reasons for hope. According to some survey respondents, the concept of multicultural education is not as popular as wished and is not sufficiently widespread or discussed in everyday life. Addressing the right to equality for special needs children featured at the top of all the needs that comprise steps toward attaining equal access to education. Three fourths of participants expressed the need for daycare providers to learn about the children's cultural background.

The majority of respondents had never heard of a multicultural or intercultural daycare. This could possibly be because daycares are not obligatory since children can stay home until the age of three. The question of the cost for private daycare proved divisive since participants had doubts about parents being able to pay for facilities that would be more fitting to their lifestyle. The emphasis placed on celebrating religious holidays was surprising given the general experience that fewer and fewer people in Hungary adhere to religious views or practice religion. Only slightly more than half of respondents thought that the composition of the daycare group should determine the holidays that would be celebrated, a result that questions an institution's ability to create diversity. In spite of this, 55 participants would allow their children to join a multicultural daycare group.

The survey was admittedly affected by some sociodemographic factors. Age comprised one impacting influence as this survey was mostly filled out by a specific age group ranging between 20-25 years. A possible, underlying reason for this circumstance could lie in the fact that this is the age group that tends to represent itself more on social media and online surveys. For future success, this group is the most important to rely on since sooner or later they are going to become the parents of the children who would eventually attend a multicultural daycare.

Learning playfully: the international food game and flag puzzles

To examine how children who are only three years in age react to information regarding other countries and habits, two games were designed as an activity for their free play time. Both games contained multicultural aspects and were meant to impart informal knowledge in a way that was more about having fun than educating the children. The group contained four boys and four girls in the group, all of whom were three years in age. Most of the children spoke fluently and understood all the words that were used. The children were interested in and motivated to play these new games.

The aim of this first game was to evaluate what effect globalization may have had on cultural aspects, such as eating habits. Photographs of international foods were printed out, laminated and shown to the children in the aforementioned group. These dishes included pizza, spaghetti, taco, sushi, a bowl of rice, a fortune cookie, curry with rice, a croissant, a hot dog, a hamburger and a kebab. With these meals, the intent was to represent Italian, Mexican, Japanese, Chinese, Indian, French, American and Turkish cuisines by showing dishes that are not related to any type of traditional, Hungarian dish. The purpose of the game was 1) to see if the children were familiar with popular dishes from around the world; 2) whether a three-year-old could connect cultural information to a country; 3) to gauge their interest in learning this type of information. As an additional benefit, this game would provide an opportunity to teach them about other culture's eating habits and traditions.

On Monday, the children were asked if they could name each food. After the foods had been identified, we discussed what cuisines the foods belonged to and what they were made of. We repeated the names and looked at the pictures several more times until the children were confident in their knowledge. The following day, Tuesday, the children were asked to line up while the pictures were hidden in places about the group room. The children then had the task of finding the picture for the name of the dish that had been announced. On Wednesday, instead of mentioning the names, they were only given the countries from which the foods originated. Thursday was the last day for playing this game: this time the toddlers were told about the special ingredients needed for each dish and were then asked to look for the picture based on this information.

All in all, the group obviously had a lot of fun, especially while the toddlers were running from location to location, searching for the pictures. The children enjoyed the new information, were eager to learn more about the food's taste, smell and ingredients. When it came to the countries, they could not differentiate among them, but still learned the names. Monday and Tuesday went the smoothest since the exercises for those days were the easiest. On Monday, most of the children instantly recognized pizza, spaghetti, the bowl of rice, the croissant, hot dog and hamburger. Their familiarity with these dishes was expected since these foods appear in almost every Hungarian household; given their previous knowledge, we began to discuss what they knew about them. We spoke about the meals that the children could not identify while mentioning their names, flavor and origin. On Wednesday and Thursday,

the group found it harder to play with the cards but were happier when they succeeded. By the end of the week, the children knew all of the foods, the countries and culture they had originated from and could name most of the ingredients found in the dishes.

A similar game was devised for the following week: in this case the flags for certain countries were printed out and laminated. The card was then cut either in halves or in a puzzle shape. Children in this age group are very attracted to looking for matching pieces or putting together simple puzzles, even if they are not always able to find the missing parts. To make a working area, two tables were pushed together and chairs were placed around them. The children were then asked if they would like to play a puzzle game. They sat down and were shown the whole picture of the flags and asked if they knew what these "rectangles" were. After this, an explanation of what flags are and how they belong to countries was given. All of the flags were closely inspected, including their colours and any designs that were a part of the flag. The flags were then paired with countries before the next part of the game (putting the flag pieces together) was completed.

Once more, the children enjoyed the game. Although it was expected that this game would be more about playing or practicing how to put the pieces together, the children were very proud to recognize the names of some countries that had been mentioned during the international food game from the previous week. Some children already knew what flags were and could even identify the Hungarian flag by naming its colours, a circumstance that indicates the early age at which children are capable of absorbing cultural information. All in all, the toddlers spent approximately forty minutes learning about this flag puzzle.

Perspectives for the future of multicultural daycares in Hungary

As the survey demonstrated, respondents generally viewed themselves as possessing empathy and tolerance, qualities that are essential to having an open mind toward multiculturalism. In contrast to this finding, research performed by ENAR (European Network Against Racism) indicates that 24% of Hungarian adults openly profess to opposing other races; this same proportion believes that the country should not accept immigrants into its society. Similarly, ethnic Hungarians are mainly prejudiced against Chinese, Russians and Roma. Comparing the results of our survey and ENAR's findings regarding public opinion indicates that the question of how Hungarians will incorporate people from other countries into their everyday lives remains relevant.

In order to start thinking about a future in which multicultural integration is a part of everyday life in daycares, it is also important to understand how Hungary has improved in multicultural education. In 2005, due to migration, Hungary's Ministry of Education issued a statement with seven points concerning intercultural education for foreign national children in kindergartens and schools. There is an increasing tendency for articles and

research in Hungarian to be published in connection with multiculturalism and methods for achieving a multicultural environment in education. As part of the European Union, Hungary follows regulations that are connected to educational improvement in multicultural views. Regulations, laws and orders, however, make no mention of multicultural or intercultural ideas in daycares. Instead, the discussion of how to help immigrants and minorities has been relegated to schools and kindergartens. According to the law entitled "2011. évi CLXXIX. törvény a nemzetiségek jogairól" (2011 Law for the rights of minorities), Hungary protects all minorities' rights to practice their culture, religion or access education in their native or hereditary language. However, having rights is not enough in these cases because providing opportunities to practice these rights demands great responsibility and effort.

The first step towards creating multicultural daycares is to consider the major contributing factors, such as the ratio of immigrants and ethnicities in Hungary's population and their basic needs as regards integration. The support of the government can be a crucial part, too, since only private daycares provide multicultural education. If state-run daycares had the support of the government to pay attention to multicultural education, this circumstance would help the case of many non-Hungarian or half-Hungarian families.

Educating daycare providers

To become a daycare provider or to be able to work with children in the early ages there are courses, trainings and university studies which provide the qualification. The highest level of education in daycare providing is achieving a Bachelor's Degree (BA) in a university. The training lets the student both learn about nursing, teaching and instructing children with practices and theoretical studies. The main subjects in university studies consist of courses in Pedagogy, Psychology, Health Science, Social Science, Information Technology, Foreign Languages, Literature, Music and Visual Education. Other than a university program, National Qualification Registry (OKJ) trainings to become a daycare provider which is far more practice oriented and contains less exposure to a theoretical background. These two qualifications are the only way to work in state- or church-run daycares. The university program in Infant and Early Childhood provided at ELTE's Faculty of Preschool and Primary Education includes courses in which issues related to multiculturalism are discussed, such as the topic of mental vulnerability in families. Students must study English or German for two semesters; some students participate in Erasmus programmes. Other than these opportunities, multiculturalism is rarely mentioned as an important or crucial concept for raising young children. The lack of multicultural education at the university level means that those professionals who will later plan the structure of the curriculum do not view multiculturalism as an important aspect of early childhood education or care. One of the first steps in educating providers would be to provide an obligatory course in which educators can familiarise themselves with cultures by focusing on habits, languages and important

holidays. Paying attention to other cultures and values which come with them would create interests in students. Speaking different languages or at least motivating students to learn one during their university years would also help the case of multicultural education. Participating in Erasmus programmes or joining summer camps in foreign countries can be a good opportunity to learn about multiculturalism.

To conclude this discussion, the competencies of a daycare providers should be formulated around positivity, acceptance and tolerance, all qualities that can be promoted when multicultural education contains basic knowledge regarding languages, cultural values and habits. Teaching educators to question stereotypes and be open and accepting should be the goal. Although love for children is a must in this specific area, this quality is still not enough to understand cultural diversity. As a further use for multicultural education, agreements and principles are needed to establish what practices should be followed in daycares. There must be essential points and plans on how to achieve those agreements. For example, if there is a goal to expose children to one, new culture every month, there must be a plan for how and when to learn that specific culture, just as methods have to be developed for how to target a given age group. There might be failures at the beginning and the agreements might need reforming during this initial period, but risks needed to be taken while acknowledging the ratio of success versus failure.

Despite the challenges that introducing aspects of a multicultural approach may entail, children and their healthy upbringing should always be the first factor to consider. Future generations must be prepared for a life outside daycares in an environment that demands a high ability to adapt. In the case of multicultural daycares, both parents and daycare providers need to understand that accepting a culture can be frightening, yet this process also opens an entire new world. The opportunity to achieve a strong educational background in Hungary that includes rather than excludes multicultural education in daycares is a possibility. Even though our survey suggests that more than half of the participants would send their children to a multicultural daycare, there is still a risk of lack of interest. Since multicultural or intercultural daycares are relatively unknown or a new way of education, these institutions are not an everyday topic in public discourse. With qualified and open-minded educators and providers, there is a chance of achieving a reputation for multicultural institutions. Advertisement is a key step toward reaching a wider audience. Affordability is essential, too, since there are families in need of cultural education to help their integration but could not afford a private daycare with high fees. The findings and methods discussed in this study will hopefully contribute to this aim.

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