

# Comparison of International Primary Curriculum with Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education

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**SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU**  
**UČITELJSKI FAKULTET**  
**ODSJEK ZA UČITELJSKE STUDIJE**

**ADRIANA JURAŠIĆ**  
**DIPLOMSKI RAD**

**COMPARISON OF INTERNATIONAL  
PRIMARY CURRICULUM WITH  
CROATIAN NATIONAL CURRICULUM  
FOR GENERAL COMPULSORY  
EDUCATION**

**Zagreb, srpanj 2020.**

**SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU  
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Adriana Jurašić

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## Comparison of International Primary Curriculum with Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education

### **ABSTRACT:**

Education today has a role of one of the greatest accomplishments in man's life and is directly influencing the prosperity of each society. Thereby, a nation's economy and wellbeing primarily relies on the quality of its educational system. In view of the fact, since its formation in the late 1990s, Croatia has implemented three major educational reforms among which is the on-going experimental reform that offers a curriculum directed towards the future of its nation. Simultaneously, rapid economic growth and global change demanded urgent creation of specific global and international curricula. To meet that need, the International Primary Curriculum, among many others, was soon established. On that ground, the thesis analyses principal dissimilarities within International Primary Curriculum and Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education. The first part of the paper provides the reader with general information about the IPC and the Croatian National Curriculum regarding its origins, structure and approach towards assessment and evaluation. The second part of the paper examines the issue through Mathematics, Language, Science, Music, Visual Art and Physical Education within the scope of its common subject goals and learning outcomes. Main purpose of the thesis is identifying peculiarities that could possibly contribute to the development of both Croatian educational system and the International Primary Curriculum. Comparison of curricula led to the conclusion that research based and project based learning, as well as technology implementation are of high importance when it comes to improvement of Croatian Educational system. Likewise, acquisition and application of theoretical knowledge such as language knowledge, motor knowledge and abstract art could ensure effective enforcement of the IPC. However, each society and therefore curriculum is unique in its own way and although particular curricula can serve as examples, direct transfer is clearly unfeasible.

**Key words:** comparison, Croatia, curriculum, education, IPC

Usporedba Internacionalnog kurikulumu za primarno obrazovanje i Nacionalnog kurikulumu Republike Hrvatske za opće obvezno obrazovanje

**SAŽETAK:**

Obrazovanje danas predstavlja jedno od najvećih postignuća u čovjekovu životu te izravno utječe na boljitak društva. Samim time ekonomija države i dobrobit nacije prvenstveno ovise o kvaliteti vlastitog obrazovnog sustava. Slijedom toga, Hrvatska je od svog formiranja krajem 1990-ih provela tri glavne obrazovne reforme, među kojima je i aktualna eksperimentalna reforma koja predlaže kurikulum usmjeren prema budućnosti svoga naroda. Istodobno, brzi gospodarski rast i globalne promjene zahtijevale su žurno stvaranje jedinstvenog globalnog i internacionalnog kurikulumu te je i samim time uspostavljen "Internacionalni kurikulum za opće primarno obrazovanje". Na temelju navedenog, u radu se analiziraju glavne razlike u Internacionalnom kurikulumu za primarno obrazovanje i Nacionalnom kurikulumu Republike Hrvatske za opće obvezno obrazovanje. Prvi dio rada čitatelju pruža opće informacije o nastanku, strukturi i pristupu vrednovanju i ocjenjivanju u Internacionalnom kurikulumu i Hrvatskom Nacionalnom kurikulumu. Drugi dio rada proučava zajedničke ciljeve predmeta i ishode učenja prisutne u područjima matematike, materinjeg jezika, prirode, glazbe, likovne umjetnosti i tjelesnog odgoja. Glavna svrha rada je uočavanje značajki koje bi mogle pridonijeti razvoju hrvatskog obrazovnog sustava i Internacionalnog kurikulumu. Usporedba navedenih kurikulumu dovela je do zaključka da su istraživačka i projektna nastava, kao i primjena tehnologije od velike važnosti kada je riječ o unaprjeđenju hrvatskog obrazovnog sustava. Isto tako, stjecanje i primjena teorijskih znanja kao što su znanje jezika, motoričko znanje i apstraktna umjetnost mogu osigurati učinkovito provođenje IPC-a. Međutim, svako je društvo, pa samim tim i kurikulum na svoj način jedinstven, i iako određeni kurikulum može poslužiti kao primjer, izravna imitacija je uistinu neprovediva.

**Ključne riječi:** Hrvatska, Internacionalni kurikulum, obrazovanje, usporedba



## 1.INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, when technology and modern innovations have become an important component of everyday life, society is starting to recognize the importance of education as it directly affects its nation and its future. This has undoubtedly been acknowledged by the Croatian educational system directed by *Ministry of Science, Education and Sports* since the educational project *School for Life* has been initiated in 2016, while two former educational reforms have already been implemented during the 2000s. Nevertheless, the vast majority of Croatian schools still rely on the Teaching Syllabus from 2006 (HNOS) which does not specify certain approach that is entirely directed towards the future. On the other hand, the ever-increasing globalisation and multiculturalism led certain International curricula such as the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) to its rapid educational development in terms of its values and principles. Although, multinationalism and multiculturalism are not factors that directly determine Croatian society, the philosophy and structure of the IPC can serve as an example for the Croatian educational system with regards to shaping its pupils into the global citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, this thesis paper compares the main features both curricula which will expectantly ensure Croatian Educational system to recognize the issues that could be enhanced, but also help the IPC identify specificities which have been disregarded.

The thesis, apart from the Introduction and Conclusion, comprises four additional chapters. Following the Introduction, the second chapter gives an overview of both International Primary Curriculum and Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education. While, the first part provides information about the establishment of the IPC, the second part introduces the Croatian educational system and elaborates its most significant educational reforms. The subsequent chapter titled *Curriculum Overview* delivers fundamental curriculum goals, pupil's targeted traits, subjects and subject areas, as well as additional curriculum documents that structure each of the curricula. The main features of assessment and evaluation within the International Primary Curriculum and Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education are presented in the fourth chapter. Most notably, the fifth chapter analyses the differences between specific subjects and subject areas within International Primary Curriculum and Croatian National Curriculum for General

Compulsory Education. Received recognition relating to the issue is further described and clarified in the Conclusion.

## **2. CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

### **2.1. The origins of the International Primary Curriculum**

In order to thoroughly understand the term IPC and its structure, one must commence from its foundations. The International Primary Curriculum, as it currently stands, developed from Shell, a group of companies that help in directing and advising international primary schools, primarily United Kingdom and Netherlands. According to Hayden and Thompson (2012) the acronym ‘IPC’ first appeared in Shell documents in the 1930s when it was initially called *The Shell International Primary Curriculum*. A significant breakthrough occurred in the early 1990s when Fieldwork Education, a learning improving organisation from the United Kingdom, recognised the potential of International curricula. Shortly after, as reported by Hayden and Thompson (2012), Fieldwork Education won the contract for Shell schools guidance on a conference organised by the Shell International in The Hague. It did not take long for the co-founder of Fieldwork Education, Martin Skelton to take the curriculum improvement forward. „Martin Skelton made presentations about the IPC at the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) and International Baccalaureate (IB) conferences“ (Hayden and Thompson, 2012, page 228). As Hayden and Thompson (2012) claim, in 1998 the agreement to take over ownership of the IPC was signed and the curriculum was first used in 2001, as the first set of materials became available to all schools. The vast majority of schools use English as the main medium, although, Hayden and Thompson (2008) claim that there are a few schools that offer the IPC in Dutch and that there are plans for translating the materials into Spanish, Mandarin and Arabic. Moreover, according to Rowley and Cooper (2009), the IPC has since then also been adopted by national schools, mostly from the United Kingdom but also from the Netherlands, Germany, Kenya, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Today, as described by Fieldwork Education (2019), the IPC is a comprehensive curriculum that is used in over 1,000 schools in over 90 countries worldwide, including Croatia. „It has a long lasting association with WaterAid, which it supports financially, and the charity provided input to the development of teaching units on water“ (Hayden et. al, 2015, page 96). IPC continuously inspects changes and therefore upgrades the

education system worldwide which makes it, at the moment, the most rapidly-expanding international education programme in the world.

## **2.2. Croatian educational system and its changes**

While most European countries implemented school reforms during the 1990s, as Baranović (2015) reports, Croatia was at the time a post-war country and consequently had a later start. Therefore, as Doolan (2017) briefs, three crucial educational reform initiatives occurred in Croatia from the 2000s to the present. “In 2006, the Teaching Syllabus was published, which is still in force, in 2011 the National Framework Curriculum (NQF), and in 2016 the Proposal of the National Curriculum Framework (NQF) with accompanying documents” (Doolan, 2017, p. 2). Doolan (2017) also emphasizes the fact Teaching Syllabus from 2006 is the only educational reform that has been entirely conducted. This is related to the fact it offers specific structure of both mandatory and optional subjects, as well as other additional classes and extracurricular activities with its fixed programme and timeframe. Although the term *curriculum*, as stated by Baranović (2015), is not mentioned within the Teaching Syllabus, it retained within the document of the Croatian National Education Standard to this day. While another school reform occurred in 2011 and according to MZOŠ (2011) was created in order to encourage pupils to make important decisions regarding their future, the educational programme and fixed schedule remained the same. Moreover, Doolan (2017) reports, both school reforms, that of 2006 and 2011, were barely recognized by the government, whereas the ongoing project which literally translates as *School for Life* has raised exceptional interest among the broader public and media and has caused great number of reactions. Possibly the most notable example is when the project brought the term ‘gender’, as well as its meaning into question. Doolan (2017) explains this suggestion has consequently divided Politicians and public in general into Conservatives which nurture nationalism and Progressives who strongly advocate gender equality.

“The development of both national and school curricula shows that their relationship is changeable, depending on the educational tradition, economic, political and cultural context of the country, and that it varies even within a country” (Baranović, 2015, page 6). However, Baranović (2015) quotes the main question concerning the Croatian school system and therefore curriculum: Who is the most important in terms of its

establishment and development - the central education authority, the local government or the school itself? Whatever the case may be, according to Baranović (2015), centralized education remains in the Croatian educational system since the reform that is focused on life in a modern society and future in general is still in progress. Nevertheless, Šetić (2017) claims steady steps and relying on its own terms, strengths and knowledge will lead to an improvement within Croatian educational system.

### **3. CURRICULUM GOALS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

#### **3.1. Philosophy and Design of the IPC**

When Martin Skelton first started creating the IPC in 2001, Hayden and Thompson (2012) report his initial goal was to make a curriculum that would:

- be international in the truest sense
- be based on the central importance of children's learning
- acknowledge recent realizations of learning
- involve parents into the process of learning
- be enjoyable and fun for both teachers and pupils
- develop personal traits, while promoting international attitude

Accordingly, Fieldwork Education (2019) has centred its learning goals around three main areas: *International Learning goals*, *Personal Learning goals* and *Subject Learning goals*.

Starting from *International Learning goals*, it is important to stress that IPC schools centralize inclusion which “includes visible differences such as age, gender, ethnicity and physical appearance, as well as underlying differences such as thought styles, religion, nationality, sexual orientation and education” (Hayden and Thompson, 2012, p 358). Due to the fact that diversity and differences are highly valued, Fieldwork Education (2019) defines specific International Learning Goals pupils will achieve through this kind of education, such as:

- know that pupils in their class come from different backgrounds
- know the names and some basic characteristics of the home countries of all the pupils from their class
- be familiar with the similarities and differences between the lives of pupils in their home countries compared to their country of schooling

- respect other pupils, their culture and values

Since the majority of IPC classes are of a small size, International pupils are frequently encouraged to cooperate with pupils from other classes and therefore the above noted goals can be applied at the school level. In addition, International pupils experience working with different age groups and become more adaptive and tolerant. Overall, International Learning goals are primarily created as a means to develop an international mind-set and promote international standpoint among pupils.

Secondly, apart from adapting into the multi-cultural community, IPC attempts to create an independent and authentic individual and therefore Fieldwork Education (2019) establishes *Personal Learning goals* in the following way: *Enquiry, Resilience, Morality, Communication, Thoughtfulness, Cooperation, Respect and Adaptability*. What sets the IPC apart from the most National Curricula are traits which International pupils acquire in terms of communication and morality. To be more accurate, as it is noted in the IPC Guide, International pupils will in terms of communication “be able to communicate in more than one spoken language and be able to communicate in a range of different contexts and with a range of different audiences”, while they will in terms of morality “know about and respect alternative moral standpoints”, as well as “be able to develop their own moral standpoints” (Fieldwork Education, 2019, page 12).

Thirdly, International Primary Curriculum offers specific subjects and subject areas each IPC school should implement within its national curriculum. According to Fieldwork Education (2019) these are: *Science, History, Geography, Music, Art, ICT and Computing, Technology, PE, Society and International and World Languages*. Noted subjects can further be divided into several areas depending on school and the level of pupils. These areas are Comprehension, Reading, Spelling, Handwriting, Library, Swimming and other extracurricular activities. One common characteristic of all International schools that rely on the International Primary Curriculum is the IPC as both self-related and interrelated subject. To be more specific, IPC units are teaching units organised around various themes that are brought to the pupils through their own scientific investigation using technology, library research, experiments, measurements and eventually comparison. IPC offers more than 70 suggested units of work and according to Hayden and Thompson (2012) it is not based on particular textbooks,

learning activities or methodologies. On the contrary, IPC creators brainstorm specific learning progress that occurs within each IPC unit. As stated by Fieldwork Education (2019), each IPC topic starts with a motivational introduction – *Entry point*, continues with *Knowledge Harvest*, *Explaining the Theme* and *The Big Picture* that are followed by *Research Activities* and *Recording Activities* and ultimately ends with an *Exit Point*. Fieldwork Education (2019) explains *Knowledge Harvest* an essential part of a lesson that helps teachers see what pupils already know and what they are interested in, while *The Big Picture* provides pupils with additional background information closely related to the subject. Moreover, as Fieldwork Education (2019) states, Recording Activities help pupils learn how to present the information received through their own research while the *Exit Point* will ultimately help them build connections and gain an overall understanding of a unit. Organising learning in this way also helps children to see how subjects are both independent and interdependent enabling children to see *The Big Picture* of their learning, make connections through and across different subjects, and talk about a theme from multiple perspectives (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p 11).

IPC units are created in accordance to the *Mileposts of learning*. To be more precise, Fieldwork Education (2019) states International pupils from the age of 5 to 7 are in their first *Milepost of learning*, International pupils aged 7 to 9 are in their second *Milepost of learning* and lastly, International pupils aged 9 to 11 are in their third *Milepost of learning*. This indicates that each IPC unit offers around 30 to 50 units and approximately lasts for 2 years.

Finally, Fieldwork Education (2019) provides new IPC schools with the *Curriculum Guide* and the *Implementation Guide* that will help them incorporate the IPC within their school system. While the *Curriculum Guide* offers information about the principles and structure of the IPC, the *Implementation Guide*, as stated by Fieldwork Education (2019) gives advice on how to put the IPC into practice.

### **3.2. Content and structure of Croatian National Curriculum**

The Croatian National Curriculum is a subject- based curriculum that is currently in force and serves as a basis for creating and developing school curriculum, differentiated curriculum and teaching syllabus. According to the Ministry of Science Education and Sports (MZOŠ,2011) the Croatian school system is divided into 4 cycles of learning, within which Croatian pupils that are of the age of 6 to the age of

10 belong to the first cycle of learning or more precisely first, second, third and fourth grade of compulsory primary education. Furthermore, basic components of the Croatian National Curriculum, as stated by MZOŠ (2011) are: *educational goals, educational values, educational principles, methods, means and forms of work, educational areas and assessment and evaluation.*

The main educational goals of the Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education, pursuant to MZOŠ (2011), are:

- to increase pupil's intellectual, physical, aesthetic, social, moral and spiritual development
- to develop pupils' awareness of their national identity and importance of preserving the historical and cultural heritage of the Republic of Croatia
- to educate students in compliance with the general civilizational values, human and children's rights
- to educate pupils to respect diversity and live in a multicultural world
- to enable pupils to live in an ever changing society and its context in terms of economy, technology and science

Moreover, the values to which the Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education, in accordance with the MZOŠ (2011) emphasizes are: *knowledge, solidarity, identity and responsibility.* In regard to solidarity, Croatian pupils are empowered to be respectful of others, however MZOŠ (2011) does not mention other cultures and nations, but strongly emphasizes the importance of care towards the underprivileged the weak and the marginalized. In accordance, identity is undoubtedly the trait that is elaborated to the highest extent and therefore it can be concluded it is the most important trait Croatian pupils should obtain through their education. "Today, in the age of globalization - in which there is a strong mixing of different cultures, worldviews and religions - one needs to become a citizen of the world, while preserving his national identity, his culture, social, moral and spiritual heritage". Apart from the noted, MZOŠ (2011) claims identity can be preserved through careful implementation and application of Croatian language and therefore it is of no surprise that the stated outcomes are present in every aspect of Croatian education.

Finally, the Croatian National Curriculum is closely interlinked with teaching syllabus which determines subject areas and mandatory subjects, as well as differentiating curriculum which defines optional subjects and school curriculum which is responsible for the selection of additional classes and extracurricular activities. Thereby, MZOŠ (2006) in its Teaching Syllabus states that the mandatory subjects in the first cycle of learning are: *Croatian Language, Mathematics, Physical Education, Music, Visual Art, Foreign Language* and *Social studies and Sciences*. While, optional classes depend upon differentiated curriculum, due to the Croatian population being mostly Catholic, Religion is optional subject that is chosen by the majority of pupils. Likewise, an additional Foreign Language can be chosen by the pupils in grade 4 while MZOŠ (2020) in its ongoing school reform announces Computer Science as an additional subject that is now offered to the pupils from the first cycle of learning. Moreover, MZOŠ (2006) provides pupils with additional *Homeroom classes, as well Additional classes* for the gifted pupils and *Remedial after school* activities for the pupils with special needs. Extracurricular activities, on the other hand, rely on the School curriculum and school resources in general and hence can vary from: drama, journalism, film workshops, art workshops, choral singing to football, basketball, volleyball, folklore, gymnastics, but also swimming and so forth.

A significant feature that differentiates the Croatian National Curriculum from the IPC is the fact that it provides a fixed weekly schedule for each individual subject. For this reason, Croatian pupils will, according to MZOŠ (2006), participate in 5 school hours of Croatian Language, 4 school hours of Mathematics, 3 school hours of Physical Education, 2 school hours of Foreign Language and Biology and 1 school hour of Visual Art and Music on a weekly basis.

Finally, “the National Curriculum serves as a basis for the development of subject curricula, but also other curriculum documents (guidelines for the application of curricula, manuals for teachers, manuals for parents, standards for textbooks and other teaching materials, standards and criteria for evaluating the quality of student achievement and school work, etc“ (MZOŠ, 2011, page 16). In other words, subject textbooks are written in accordance with specific guidelines and while, both teachers and parents are provided with various materials and ideas, excessive deviations from the initial form are not highly encouraged.



## **4. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

### **4.1. The IPC Approach to Assessment for Learning**

While the main vision of the IPC is to develop *Knowledge, Skills and Understanding*, according to Fieldwork Education (2019), skills are the only type of learning that is transferable and therefore are the most valued. In order to assess skills, IPC provides an Assessment for Learning Programme which, as stated by Fieldwork Education (2019), consist of three main parts *Teachers' rubrics, Children's rubrics* and *Learning advice*. *Teacher rubrics: Beginning, Ending and Mastering* are provided by Fieldwork Education (2019) as a part of each IPC unit in order to help International teachers observe the stage and progress of each child according to the Mileposts of learning. International pupils can, in the same manner, participate in self - assessment and peer-assessment through the Children's rubrics. Nevertheless, when it comes to *Mastering* level, both teachers and pupils should be aware that Fieldwork Education (2019) does not demand perfection, solely a confirmation of understanding that is necessary for the following stage of learning. Fieldwork Education (2016), for example suggests that pupils can within their *The Circus is Coming to Town* unit make list of things they now know, understand and are able to do. Later on when being in their second Milepost of learning stage, International pupils can be asked to write down things they already know, things they want to know and the things they want to ask about the ongoing topic. Fieldwork Education (2019) additionally provides both teachers and pupils, but also their parents and families with a *Learning Advice* that is expected to help them with their learning progress and moving from the one stage to another. This may be particularly beneficial for the pupils who are newly arrived to school and community and are just starting to acquire the language that is used as a main medium within teachers and other pupils.

To continue, while Fieldwork Education (2019) believes knowledge and skills can be assessed, it does not deliver specific examples on how to assess knowledge. Reason being that the IPC curriculum is intended to be applied to another national curriculum and consequently different IPC schools tend to choose different national curricula to cooperate with. Since the vast majority of IPC schools rely on English National Curriculum and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), teachers are offered their original tests and quizzes, but are also encouraged to plan and develop their own materials.

When it comes to evaluation in terms of IPC, Fieldwork Education (2019) believes understanding is the only type of learning that should be evaluated. The IPC reinforces a lifelong view of learning by viewing the development of understanding as infinite and multi-dimensional (Rowley & Cooper, 2012, page 338). Moreover, Fieldwork Education (2016) considers understanding cannot be directly implemented to each pupil and hence provides teachers with multiple activities that can help pupils experience the topic and potentially deepen their understanding. Some of such activities are suggested within the *Circus is Coming to Town* unit by Fieldwork Education (2016) and these are: journals, presentations, debates, reflections, discussions and posters. In addition, Fieldwork Education (2019) implies understanding can be further deepened through various Entry point and Exit point activities that can be conducted at home with the help of pupil's parents. What is more, "the 3rd edition IPC Self-Review Process values the contributions of parents, care givers and guardians so much that it includes a specific strand in the rubrics dedicated to 'Community'" (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p 75).

One major peculiarity to be found within the IPC curriculum regarding the evaluation process is the fact IPC creators believe learning process should be enjoyable and fun and thereby numerical grading is not included. Although, their subject performance is assessed in terms of a percentage, International pupils are evaluated based on their overall progress through an online Assessment Tracking Tool in form of a written report. The report is completed by International teachers at the end of each IPC theme and accordingly sent to the pupil's parents or guardians. In this way, both parents and pupils have an insight into their learning journey within one Milepost of learning that is, as above mentioned, teaching period of two years' time.

#### 4.2. Assessment and evaluation in the Croatian National Curriculum

While the outcomes themselves are the crucial component of assessment and evaluation in the Croatian National Curriculum, specific guidelines are additionally listed within Regulation on Ways, Procedures and Elements of Student Evaluation in Primary and Secondary Education by MZOŠ in 2010. Accordingly, teachers are, as stated by MZOŠ (2006), responsible for their own regular self-assessment in terms of setting and achieving educational goals that can be best monitored through pupil's results. Regular assessment of pupil's behaviour and their work in general, according

to MZOŠ (2011), will lead to the development of their work habits, as opposed to the IPC where the main goal of assessment, based on Fieldwork Education (2019), is developing skills. Moreover, teachers are additionally required to maintain cooperation with other teachers and principal through an ongoing consulting and support (MZOŠ, 2006).

On the other hand, the terms self-assessment and peer-assessment in context of pupils are only present within the Foreign Language Syllabi which requires pupils to track their own progress through the use of portfolios, most commonly the European Language Portfolio, in order to develop their self-evaluation skills and self-esteem. Nevertheless, the Croatian National Curriculum in contrast to the IPC features specific guidelines in terms of assessing the pupils with special needs. As a result, MZOŠ (2011) states special needs pupils should only be assessed in regards to their overall progress and growth, while the teacher is not entitled to mark their work as insufficient.

In regards to marking, one must recognize Croatian National Curriculum highly differs from the IPC in terms of evaluation, since numerical grading is an essential component of Croatian School System. MZOŠ (2011) grades school achievement based on a grading scale from 1 to 5, where each number is additionally elaborated using one or two words (insufficient – 1, sufficient - 2, good - 3, very good - 4, excellent - 5). The mark excellent or exceptional (MZOŠ,2011) is assigned to those pupils who stand out with their quality of work. There are usually not many of them, so the word or grade should not be given too often for the results which do not depict such exceptional or excellent work. achieved, or it should not be shared with a large number of students because such exaggeration loses the meaning of the true value of the grade (MZOŠ, 2011, p. 281). Moreover, MZOŠ (2011) explains that in the case where the teacher or the person responsible for the evaluation process is rather satisfied with the pupil's results, his work is marked with the word good, while if results exceed expectation and pupil has done more than needed, his work is described as very good. Moreover, the word sufficient, based on MZOŠ (2011), is awarded to the pupils who have done minimum work required to achieve the predetermined outcomes. Finally, the grade insufficient (1) as cited in the Regulation on Ways, Procedures and Elements of Student Evaluation in Primary and Secondary Education (2010), unsatisfactory student achievements should be corrected, while the teacher is obliged to organize additional classes before the supplemental oral or written test occurs. Such numerical grading is

present from the first cycle of learning and according to MZOŠ (2011) pupils of that age, especially 7-year-old pupils, may have difficulties in terms of understanding its abstraction. Therefore, as stated in item 4 article 12 “In the first semester of the first grade of primary school, the teacher monitors the students’ achievements, but does not evaluate students numerically, but encourages and prepares students with educational procedures and measures for evaluation and grading in his further education” (MZOŠ, 2010, page 4). Croatian teachers are, regardless of the age of pupils, undoubtedly encouraged to write simple explanations and notes, but also to submit grading symbols such as ticks, thumbs up and smiley faces next to each numerical grade.

Although Rosandić (2013) notes that the Croatian educational system will enable pupils to acquire knowledge, competences and skills, however, the Croatian evaluation process mostly revolves around knowledge. Therefore, MZOŠ (2011) specifies that tests and quizzes are not and should not be the only indicator of pupil’s performance and thereby their additional work such as artworks, portfolios, presentations, compositions, essays and reports should be taken into consideration. For example, apart from the acquired outcomes and specific key terms of each lesson, within the subject Croatian Language be evaluated on the basis of expressive reading, acting out and their general expression and communication skills. Cross-curriculum topics which are: personal and social development, health, safety and environmental protection, learning how to learn, entrepreneurship, use of information and communication technology, civic education and competencies acquired by participating in various independent, classroom and school projects (MZOŠ, 2011, page 280) are also subject to assessment and evaluation. Further on, in terms of the subject Music MZOŠ (2011) specifies, that teachers mostly evaluate musical components within classical music pieces, while skills like singing and playing should generally not be assessed. Similarly, Croatian pupils will, in terms of Arts, be graded based on their knowledge achievement, more precisely the acquisition of specific key terms and art problems, whereas skills such as painting, drawing and crafting should not be evaluated.

Croatian teachers are in each specific case, as MZOŠ (2010) declares, obliged to explain specific value principles to the pupils, inform them about the date when a written test occurs and consequently present the evaluated work to each pupil. Oral assessment, on the other side, can be conducted without the obligation of announcement, thus, as stated by MZOŠ (2010), teachers are required to publicly mark

and elaborate each grade. Moreover, each communicated grade is marked by the teacher into a designated section and each parent has the right to view/access it. It should be emphasised that “the parent is obliged to regularly attend to parent-teacher meetings and individual informative meetings with the class teacher (MZOŠ, 2010, p. 5).

Finally, many Croatian pupils may perceive the numerical grading system as burdensome. According to the results of a research survey done by Lapat, Lukaček and Matijević (2017), the initial reaction of Croatian pupils to a weak (or low) grade is sadness, fear, but also aggression and anxiety that consequently results in stress. Nevertheless, parents and family in general are directly involved in child’s education and due to that, as Lapat et al. (2017) state, most Croatian pupils feel highly motivated to redo particular tests in order to achieve better grades. This however may indicate that Croatian pupils, when compared to pupils at IPC schools, primarily learn because of the external influences and the ultimate result. The noted assumption has been acknowledged by MZOŠ, as the ongoing textbook examples focus on the assessment and provide various self-assessment activities from an early age.

## **5. COMPARISON OF CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

This chapter analyses common subjects and subject areas within the International Primary Curriculum and Croatian National Curriculum in the following order: Mathematics, Language, Science, Music, Visual Art and Physical Education. Noted subjects will be examined and compared in terms of their subject fields, subject goals and most importantly learning outcomes which are the best indicator of the age difference between International and Croatian pupils in relation to its adoption and acquisition.

### **5.1. Mathematics**

Although it is presumable how each curriculum has a group of subjects that are different from one to another, mathematics was always necessary for each child’s cognitive development. It has been present in everyday life of our ancestors, it is of high essence for each school and teacher to indicate its historic importance. Not only can it be discerned in art, music, dance and so forth, it has been fundamental for many advances and discoveries in science, especially technology which is still continuing to

develop exponentially. „Since mathematics studies quantitative relationships, structure, shapes and space, regularities and legalities, analyses incidental occurrences, observes and describes changes in different contexts, and provides a precise symbolic language and system for describing, presenting, analysing, propagating, interpreting and intermediating ideas, mathematical education allows students to acquire the knowledge, skills, abilities, ways of thinking and attitudes necessary for successful and beneficial participation in such a society“ (MZOŠ, 2011, page 115-116). Because of that it might be foreseeable that the following curricula share a number of similarities regarding subject goals, structure and outcomes when it comes to mathematics. Both Fieldwork Education (2019) and MZOŠ (2011) state that through Mathematics pupils will be able to:

- acquire basic mathematical knowledge, skills and processes
- recognize and understand mathematical relationships and connections
- solve mathematical problems and apply mathematics in a variety of contexts, including their everyday lives
- develop responsibility for their mathematical activities, and ability to reflect on their work and results
- communicate mathematical knowledge and reason their ideas and results in their own words

Moreover, both Croatian National Curriculum and IPC categorize mathematics into following areas: *Numbers*, *Measurement*, *Shape and space* and *Data handling*. While MZOŠ (2011) refers to them as *Mathematical concepts*, Fieldwork Education (2019) identifies these as *Units of Work*. Nevertheless, *Using mathematics* is an additional separate area in the International Curriculum which expects of pupils to be “able to discuss mathematical problems, processes and solutions with teachers and other children and to use their mathematical Knowledge, Skills and Understanding in everyday situations” (Fieldwork Education,2019, page 39). Even though similar subject goals are cited in MZOŠ (2011), as it is the basis for curriculum reconstruction, specific examples are not available in the teaching syllabus from 2006. A similar situation occurs with the *Data handling* area where both Fieldwork Education (2019) and MZOŠ (2011) describe it in detailed manner explaining students will be able to collect, sort and organize data that comes from everyday life and display it through simple tables, pictograms and bar charts, while only IPC cites specific situations where

this occurs. Such statements help in explaining what makes those areas so challenging to compare and enlarge upon. When it comes to subject outcomes cited as a part of *Numbers, Measurement and Shape and Space* areas, these are highly corresponding and can easily be examined.

Table 1 represents some of the main subject outcomes shared by the two curricula which IPC pupils should acquire at the end of age of 7. IPC pupils are at this point at their, as the Fieldwork Education (2019) calls it, *second milestone of learning*, whereas Croatian pupils of the same age, according to MZOŠ (2011), are at their *first cycle of learning* Mathematics. It should be taken into the consideration that for international pupils this is the third year of being introduced to Mathematics, whereas for Croatian pupils it is only their first year. It is no surprise that, due to the mentioned, Croatian pupils will at the end of their first year of Mathematics be able to share approximately half of the mathematical knowledge and skills with the International students. For instance, as examples 1: *Be able to count to 100*, 3: *Be able to use mental calculation to solve number problems involving money* and 9: *Understand the place value of each digit in numbers to 100* from the Table 1 show, Croatian pupils will achieve the mentioned outcomes at the age of 8, more precisely at the end of their second year of encountering with Mathematics. MZOŠ (2006) states that at the age of 7, the pupils will be able to count to 20 instead of 100 and therefore understand the place value of each digit in numbers to 20. Even more perceivable differences manifest when *Measurement* and *Shape and Space* areas are being compared. This can be found within examples no. 10: *Know standard units used for the measurement of length and mass*, 11: *Know standard units used for the measurement of turn* and 13: *Know the mathematical names for common three-dimensional shapes* in the table below. According to MZOŠ (2006) Croatian pupils are not exposed to the units of length and mass until the age of 9, while they learn the three-dimensional shapes and units of turn at the age of 10, more precisely when being in the 4<sup>th</sup> or the last grade of primary education.

On the other hand, as previously mentioned, many IPC schools are founded on the English National Curriculum, resulting in the IPC itself not being highly specific. Whereas the Croatian National Curriculum has been vastly elaborated. For example, MZOŠ (2006) points out that 7-year-old pupils at the end of their first year of encountering with Mathematics should be able to: solve word problems, use numeric

names: addends and sum, determine relationships between numbers and write them down using following characters =, <, >., count using the number line and differentiate even and odd numbers. Moreover, even though Croatian pupils do not learn about three- dimensional shapes until the age of 10, MZOŠ (2006) requires them to acquire specific two- dimensional shapes such as circle, triangle, parallelogram and rectangle and specific three-dimensional shapes such as cube and sphere. Pupils are also expected to know surface area and volume formulas by heart. Taking into account the fact that the IPC learners first become involved with Mathematics at the age of 5 it can be assumed they are most likely familiar with most of the previously mentioned outcomes, especially the shapes, but this statement should not be more than an assumption.

Table 1

*Age comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring mathematical outcomes*

Area	Outcome		Age of a pupil	
	No.		IPC	CNC
Numbers	1	Be able to count to 100	7	8
	2	Be able to recognize symbolic, concrete and pictorial representations of numbers	7	7
	3	Be able to use mental calculation to solve number problems involving money	7	8
	4	Be able to identify simple sequences of numbers	7	7
	5	Be able to add and subtract whole numbers	7	7
	6	Be able to solve problems using addition and subtraction	7	7
	7	Understand the inverse relationship between addition and subtraction	7	7
	8	Understand that numerals are symbols used to represent quantities	7	7
	9	Understand the place value of each digit in numbers to 100	7	8
Measurement	10	Know standard units used for the measurement of length and mass	7	9
	11	Know standard units used for the measurement of turn	7	10
Shape and space	12	Know the mathematical names for common two-dimensional shapes	7	7
	13	Know the mathematical names for common three-dimensional shapes	7	10

After studying IPC outcomes designed for 9-year-old learners by Fieldwork Education and comparing it to the outcomes written by MZOŠ, similar features within two curricula are to be found. Regardless of the fact that MZOŠ (2011) lists subject outcomes connected to the *Data handling* concept, specific units are still not reported.



On the other hand, *Data handling* outcomes wished to be acquired are specifically quoted in the IPC, such as: „ability to extract and interpret information presented in simple tables and lists, ability to gather information and present it in bar charts, pictograms and line graphs and ability to understand that some events are more likely to happen than others“ (Fieldwork Education, 2019, page 43). Furthermore, in the *Measurement* area, Fieldwork Education (2019) challenges 9-year-old IPC learners to think and estimate given lengths and masses using appropriate equipment, while MZOŠ (2006) stays focused on acquiring specific Mathematical knowledge and introduces the standard units of volume and its conversion which stays unmentioned in the IPC. This comes to no surprise if taking the fact that the IPC students are at this point at their 3<sup>rd</sup> milestone of learning, while Croatian pupils are still at their first. Both curricula, however, introduce the standard units used for the measurement of time and temperature. Many shared outcomes can also be noticed in the *Numbers* and *Shape and Space* areas.

Table 2 shows some of the common subject outcomes between IPC and Croatian National Curriculum comparing the age of pupils when acquiring them. Most similarities can be recognized in the *Numbers* area, where Croatian pupils acquire approximately half of the shared outcomes with the International students when reaching the age of 9. Both groups of pupils are by then introduced to multiplication and division, as it can be seen from the examples under number 5: *Be able to use written methods to multiply and divide two numbers* and 6: *Be able to record a remainder in a division sum*. After looking at example number 3: *Be able to use mental recall of multiplication tables, and their associated division facts, up to 10x10*, it can be observed how multiplication table is introduced to Croatian pupils at the age of 8, when only being at their second year of Mathematical education. This, however might not come as a surprise regarding the fact that the Croatian National Curriculum is mostly focused on factual knowledge. Nevertheless, examples No. 2: *Be able to use and recognize decimal notation* and 7: *Be able to use simple fractions* indicate significant distinction between the two curricula as MZOŠ (2011) chooses to elicit fractions and decimals out of the Croatian primary education and introduces these units when pupils reach the age of 11, more precisely when being in fifth grade. While examining the *Shape and Space* areas, more specifically example number 13: *Know the characteristics of particular angles* it is apparent that Croatian pupils are once

again slightly behind the International students, as they are introduced to lines as a part of Geometry at the age of 10. Nevertheless, MZOŠ (2006) specifically cites given line names (a line, a line segment, a ray) and types of lines (parallel, perpendicular and intersecting) pupils are supposed to acquire. Additionally, Roman numerals are to be found in the Croatian National Curriculum as a separate unit pupils ought to acquire.

Having taken all of the above into an account, all mentioned outcomes are most probably implied and possibly stated in English National Curriculum, but when it comes to IPC itself, the teacher certainly has far more flexibility, and therefore responsibility when planning mathematical activities and lessons.

Table 2

*Age comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring mathematical outcomes*

Area	Outcome		Age of a pupil	
			IPC	CNC
	No.			
Numbers	1	Understand place value in numbers up to 1000	9	9
	2	Be able to use and recognize decimal notation	9	11
	3	Be able to use mental recall of multiplication tables, and their associated division facts, up to 10x10	9	8
	4	Be able to use written methods to add and subtract three-digit numbers	9	9
	5	Be able to use written methods to multiply and divide two numbers	9	9
	6	Be able to record a remainder in a division sum	9	9
	7	Be able to use simple fractions	9	11
Shape and space	12	Know the characteristics of particular lines	9	9
	13	Know the characteristics of particular angles	9	10

## 5.2. Language

In the same manner as Mathematics, when curricula around the world are being compared, one may come to a realisation that not only is Language a mandatory subject in the majority of cases, but it is also an essential part of each school system in general. According to Gardner (1983, p. 83), language skills are fundamental human skills that can be traced back to child's babbling which occurs in each's person's early childhood. Indeed, even deaf youngsters begin to babble early in life; and during the first months, all infants will issue those sounds found in linguistic stocks remote from their home tongue. Moreover, Gardner (1983) points out how human reading skills

develop at the age of five or six, while some children are at the age of two or three already able to decode simple texts. Since it is almost impossible for an individual to coexist in the world without efficient linguistic competence, Gardner (1983) further defines linguistic intelligence as a separate type of intelligence which he describes as the ability to process linguistic messages rapidly.

When thinking of schooling, many may primarily associate linguistic intelligence with writing and reading skills, hence activities that revolve around speaking such as storytelling, discussions, commands, instructions etc. are most commonly main means of teaching. The noted statement may pose a challenge for many International pupils, since the language they are using in school, which is most commonly English, differs from their Native Language. Although in principle international schools may offer education through any language of instruction, in practice the largest growth has been – and seems likely to continue to be – in those schools offering English-medium education to children of English-speaking expatriates and others who believe that allowing their children to become fluent in English will provide them with an advantage in later life (Hayden and Thompson, 2008, p.27). Nevertheless, Rowley and Cooper (2009) claim that since International pupils use English as an Additional Language (EAL), they constantly have to explain and hypothesize their knowledge and therefore connections in their learning are made, while the amount of knowledge they have at their disposal broadens. Still, many obstacles appear when the two syllabi, the IPC and the Croatian National Curriculum, are being compared. To start with, MZOŠ (2006) titles the subject as *Croatian Language*, while the name *Language Arts* is listed by Fieldwork Education within the IPC guide. Moreover, three main goals International pupils will be taught of in terms of Language Arts are: “the skills which help them to use the language effectively, the meaning, use and form of language and enjoyment and appreciation of language” (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p. 34). The term enjoyment in the Croatian Syllabus is replaced by the alternative phrase “suppression of fear of language”, while the two additional outcomes are stated: “awareness of the differences between standard language and native idioms and gradual adoption of the Croatian language standard” (MZOŠ, 2006, p. 25). Although additional forward-thinking goals are suggested in the Croatian National Curriculum, such as: “understand different media languages and use them successfully in learning and communication, especially information and communication technology and know-

how to find different sources of information and use them”, specific lesson topics are still not proposed (MZOŠ, 2011, p. 56). Likewise, Fieldwork Education (2019) specifies six different areas within the Language Arts: *Language awareness, Speaking and listening, Reading, Writing and Drama*. Although, MZOŠ (2011) recognizes the importance of language skills and cites: *Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing* as the four main areas of the subject Croatian Language, particular materials, topics and resources that revolve around noted areas are still not offered. Specific topics and outcomes in general can be traced within Croatian Syllabus, meaning they are given out by MZOŠ (2006) that mentions the following areas: *Language, Literature, Media culture and Linguistic expression (oral and written)* as the main areas of Croatian Language. However, comparison will be conducted in the terms of skills, since they are a crucial part of each school system and person in general.

Table 3 serves as an indicator for the common subject outcomes between IPC and Croatian National Curriculum in terms of Language subject, while comparing the age of pupils when acquiring them. When comparing listening and speaking skills, it can be noticed how both Croatian pupils and the International pupils are able to use many of those specific skills when being only 7 years old. Some of the skills pupils develop at that age are supported by the following examples: 1: *Be able to formulate question and answer*, 2: *Be able to follow the rules of conversation*, 3: *Be able to listen to the interlocutor* and 4: *Be able to understand and to respond to oral directions*. This certainly does not come as a surprise if the common learning goals the two curricula advocate are taken into the consideration. The cited skills therefore, a crucial part of each following subject. However, as can be seen from the example 5: *Be able to participate in group discussion*, MZOŠ (2006) proposes that Croatian pupils should acquire the term “discussion” and be taught how to participate in one when being 9 years old, as opposed to the International pupils who engage in a range of discussions from the onset of their education. However, apart from the fact that the specific term is not addressed until a certain age, Croatian pupils do engage in various discussions in the context of a Home room class that is held once every weekly. Lastly, International pupils are, according to example 6: *Be able to give out simple oral presentations*, educated on how to present an information by using different sources and technology. Contrarily, Croatian pupils, as stated by MZOŠ (2006) are required to “narrate independently according to the stimulus of an image or series of images, one's

own experiences or ideas” from the age of 7. Needless to say, short presentations given out by Croatian pupils are initially prompted by teacher’s questions related to the topic. Similarly, even though using technology is proposed in the Croatian National Curriculum, specific topics and ideas have still not been presented by the MZOŠ (2011). Moreover, very few Croatian schools are able to provide their pupils with some sort of technological device and due to that fact, Croatian teachers, as opposed to International teachers, still do not require of its pupils to know how to utilize Power Point and such like programmes. Nevertheless, an additional area - Media Culture together with its topics can be traced within the Croatian Language Syllabus. According to the outcomes stated by MZOŠ (2006), 8-year-old pupils will be able to retell short animated films, while 9-year-old pupils will learn how to retell particular children’s movies.

Table 3 also presents how the Language outcomes diverge the most if pupils ‘reading skills are being compared. Firstly, example 9: *Be able to identify the main idea and characters in a text* represents that both groups of pupils are able to detect meaning and characters in a given text at the age of 7. Nonetheless, International pupils are at this point additionally able to distinguish characters and their main features as well as to recognize and discuss major events of a story. The topics “Sequence of Events in a Story” and “Main and Supporting Characters” are on the other hand, introduced to Croatian pupils by MZOŠ (2006) in their second grade of primary school, more specifically when they are 8 years old. More importantly, Croatian pupils are not expected to discuss appearance and behaviour of characters and know how to determine story setting before the age of 9. Secondly, Croatian pupils are at the age of 7 still perfecting their reading skills and, as stated by MZOŠ (2006), are only reading familiar sentences and texts with right intonation, while the outcome under example 7: *Be able to read given text aloud with expression* is achieved when being one year older than the International pupils. More remarkably, outcome number 10: *Be able to retell the text they read* is acquired at the age of 9, while outcome number 11: *Be able to summarise the text they read* is acquired at the age of 10 by the Croatian pupils, whereas International pupils are working on repeating and summarising texts from the age of 7 or less. Nevertheless, Croatian pupils are surprisingly ahead of the International pupils when the age of acquiring outcome number 8: *Be able to read texts written in a range of forms* is being compared. While Fieldwork Education (2019)

envisions International pupils will be familiar with different text forms up till the age of 9, precise text types are introduced to Croatian pupils as soon as they start their schooling. MZOŠ (2006) therefore cites that picture book, story and a poem should be introduced to 7-year-old pupils; fairy tale, play and notice should be introduced to 8-year-old pupils and a novelty song, a fable, a children's novel and a short story should be understood and distinguished by the 9-year-old Croatian pupils. If the main subject outcome of the Croatian Syllabus, which is perfecting language knowledge, is taken into consideration, the aforementioned examples do not seem to appear as highly uncommon.

When comparing writing skills, one may once again notice how International pupils are slightly more advanced if comparing their skills with the Croatian pupils. The given statement is best represented in the example 14: *Be able to write in order to convey simple ideas*, since Croatian pupils pursue the topic “Creative writing - forming a shorter composition” that is proposed by MZOŠ (2006) at the age of 9, opposed to International pupils whose writing skills have been developing since the age of 5. Moreover, despite the fact the following outcomes: 12: *Be able to write by using accurately formed letters* and 13: *Be able to form a shorter written message* are being fulfilled by the both groups of pupils by the age of 7, these are not identically defined and conducted. Starting from the basic writing skills, Croatian Syllabus obliges its pupils to master both cursive and capital letters in terms of their shape and size in the nicest possible way, whereas Fieldwork Education (2019) does not expect of International pupils to write neatly and legibly before the age of 12. Secondly, although Croatian pupils eventually develop the ability to write simple messages, the main goal of Croatian Language in the first year of learning is developing and perfecting basic writing skills. Croatian pupils will succeed in the aforesaid only after they learn how to: “determine sentence boundaries and write them in accordance with the orthographic norm, recognize and independently use according to intonation and punctuation declarative, interrogative and exclamatory sentences, learn how to write multi- word proper names and compose a sentence from a given string of words” (MZOŠ, 2006, p. 27-29). On the other hand, the main focus of the IPC is once again skill and creative learning rather than knowledge. International pupils will, for that reason, in addition to writing simple messages also “be able to use writing to describe familiar persons, places, objects and experiences; be able to make simple plans of what

they are going to write and use strategies to organise their writing (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p 35).

As expected, the Language area is undoubtedly the most demanding area when it comes to its comparison. Not only, majority of International pupils use English as an EAL, but different International schools use different self-created programmes in order to teach the Language awareness outcomes since the specific language study program is not proposed within the IPC guide. Hence, some identical outcomes are noted in both curricula such as 15: *Be able to name and use simple punctuation marks* and 16: *Be able to use simple sentences*. These are in addition, achieved by both groups of pupils at the same age, as presented in the table 3. Regarding the issue of syntactic categories, it is visible how International pupils are already familiar with basic parts of speech at the age of 7, while Croatian pupils are introduced to the following outcome 17: *Be able to recognise and distinguish nouns, verbs, adjectives* at the age of 9. Fieldwork Education (2019) additionally states that International pupils will at the given age be able to recognize and distinguish adverbs and know the basic structure of elements within word structure. Adverb as a term within one of the Language topics is not introduced to the Croatian pupils until the age of 11, when pupils are already in their fifth grade of primary education. Alternatively, while IPC does not put much focus on particular devices in written texts, Croatian pupils are imposed to identify and acknowledge different figures of speech from the age of 8, as stated in the example number 18: *Be able to recognise common devices used by writers*. Croatian pupils will consequently detect and distinguish simile and repetition in given songs by the age of 9 and recognize and apply personification by the age of 10, while International pupils start to apply different devices when being 12 years old. Moreover, although Croatian pupils learn how to pronounce and write vast majority of Croatian words until the age of 7 opposed to International pupils, the following outcome under the example 19: *Be able to spell words accurately* should be treated with great caution. As already explained, not only that large majority of International pupils come from different backgrounds and therefore use English as their second language, but the English itself departs from Croatian Language in many aspects. One of its features, which is not common for Croatian Language, is that it is spelled differently than it is pronounced. Since this may be challenging for many International pupils, Fieldwork Education (2019) expects only familiar words to be spelled accurately up till the age of 9, while

rules for spelling should be acquired by the age of 12. The preceding can help explain why Fieldwork Education (2019) designates the Language area as “Language Awareness”.

Ultimately, while IPC cites Drama as one of the five areas within Language Arts, its common activities can be traced within the Croatian Media Culture area. As for the example 20: *Be able to perform a short play*, both International and Croatian pupils are involved in the act of play when being 7 years old. Be that as it may, Croatian pupils are at that stage limited to a certain type of play, more precisely to a puppet play, as the MZOŠ (2006) cites pupils should perform a short act of play using a stage puppet. Apart from role reading, Croatian pupils, become fully active participants of a play in their second grade of primary, when they are approximately 8 years old.

Table 3

*Comparison of International and Croatian pupils in the acquisition of Language outcomes according to age acquiring Language outcomes*

Area	Outcome		Age of a pupil	
	No.		IPC	CNC
Listening and speaking skills	1	Be able to formulate question and answer	7	7
	2	Be able to follow the rules of conversation	7	7
	3	Be able to listen to the interlocutor	7	7
	4	Be able to understand and to respond to oral directions	7	7
	5	Be able to participate in group discussion	7	9
	6	Be able to give out simple oral presentations	9	7
Reading skills	7	Be able to read given text aloud with expression	7	8
	8	Be able to read texts written in a range of forms	9	7
	9	Be able to identify the main idea and characters in a text	7	7
	10	Be able to retell the text they read	7	9
	11	Be able to summarise the text they read	7	10
Writing skills	12	Be able to write by using accurately formed letters	7	7
	13	Be able to form a shorter written message	7	7
	14	Be able to write in order to convey simple ideas	7	9
Language	15	Be able to name and use simple punctuation marks	7	7
	16	Be able to use simple sentences	7	7
	17	Be able to recognise and distinguish nouns, verbs, adjectives	7	9
	18	Be able to recognise common devices used by writers	9	8
	19	Be able to spell words accurately	9	7
Drama	20	Be able to perform a short play	7	7

On a final note, Croatian pupils are exposed to great quantity of Croatian authors and their works such as poems, picture books, fairy tales, fables, children’s novels, as well as Croatian films, radio shows, television- shows, comics, but also theatre plays.



Through these, they are not only learning about different Croatian dialects and customs, but are “developing respect for the language of the Croatian people, its literature and culture” (MZOŠ, 2006, page 25). Analogously, Croatian National Curriculum puts great emphasis on language knowledge in terms of grammar and syntax. Croatian pupils will therefore, not only develop their speaking and listening skills, but acquire Croatian language in terms of orthography and be able to use written language with great competence. These outcomes could possibly be shared with the IPC, if the assumption of its combination with English National Curriculum is taken into account. Nevertheless, as the case may be, remaining International pupils are highly unlikely connected to the Anglo- American culture and its customs and values. However, this at the same time means International pupils will, compared to Croatian pupils, have the ability to learn about great amount of different nationalities, their languages and traditions. Moreover, International pupils are not only exposed to greater majority of foreign literary works, but are using library from an early age and therefore are able to select and choose suitable reading materials individually. What is more, apart from technology, dictionary and variety of sources, International pupils are using language as a tool through which they express opinion, find, gather and present information and deliver their self- possessed knowledge.

In concluding, language is and always will be an important part of each’s persons culture and identity. Despite the fact that majority of International pupils do not acquire basic language skills in their mother tongue, International schools are undoubtedly teaching its pupils to respect and cherish each culture. In addition, “learning about other people and their cultures, and learning how to respect others, will make children better global citizens in their future lives” (Hayden and Thompson, 2012, page 449). As a result, vital question school systems face nowadays in terms of Language subject is – should the main focus of the subject be on the history and values of particular language, or should schools primarily prepare their children for the future?

### **5.3. Science**

Science, as a mandatory and essential subject in vast majority of curricula, is a multidisciplinary field observing and explaining the ever-changing world around us. While Gardner (1983) states verbal activities are the most important activities within the subject of Science, many of the scientific problems cannot be described in verbal

form and instead the pupil's spatial ability should be used. Spatial abilities, as a part of spatial intelligence are, according to Gardner (1983,) ways of capturing information, as well as formulating and solving the problem in a scientific and critical sense.

Fieldwork Education (2019) has clearly recognized the importance of spatial intelligence within Science and therefore claims International pupils will through Science develop:

- curiosity about the world around them
- be able to interpret scientific information
- make links between scientific activities and ideas
- be familiar with the ways in which scientific issues affect people and the world in general

Common subject goals are present within the Croatian National Curriculum and state Croatian pupils will:

- understand the role of knowledge in the development of technique and technology
- be able to find reliable data from various sources and notice their importance in the acquisition of knowledge
- analyse, evaluate and interpret the collected data
- be able to show the results of observations and measurements with a graph, table, mathematical expression, thematic map
- use information technology in data collection, processing and presentation (MZOŠ, 2011, page 133).

Be that as it may, the results of a research conducted by Borić and Škugor (2012) indicate that none of the Croatian Science textbooks and workbooks meet the requirements given by the Croatian National Curriculum from 2011 nor the suggestions made by Croatian Syllabus from 2006.

The role of the teacher in terms of IPC, is completely different: it is no longer based on following textbooks and it can be different with every new unit – which makes it more attractive for the children and much more challenging for the teachers! (Hayden and Thompson, 2012, p. 228). IPC units, as already mentioned, mostly revolve around Science, History and Geography, while simple connections are made with the rest of

the subjects. In the Croatian context, the subject Science, which literary translates as *Nature and Society*, consists of different segments related to History, Geography and Physics, cited subjects will be incorporated within the subject of Science and compared between the two curricula. Apart from History and Geography subjects, Fieldwork Education (2019) implies International pupils should gain knowledge of *Materials*, *Living things* and *Physical processes* and therefore lists them as a particular areas of Science. Although, MZOŠ (2011) proposes the following categories: *Man and Nature*, *Life*, *Planet Earth*, *Energy*, *Motions* and *Forces and Materials and Types* as a part of the Croatian National Curriculum, current Croatian textbooks are primarily based on the first three categories. Therefore, the vast majority of above noted subject goals may significantly differ or not appear in any way within the following subject outcomes and topics.

Table 4 represents some common subject outcomes regarding Science that can be found within International and Croatian Curriculum, as well as the compared age of the pupils when acquiring them. Those outcomes are closely related to Biology and Health Education as these areas are the most prevalent categories within the Croatian National Curriculum. As the Table 4 shows, both International and Croatian pupils will achieve the following outcomes: *Be able to sort living things into simple groups*, *2: Know the names and characteristics of a range of animals* and *3: Understand animals should be treated with care* by the age of 7. Although both groups of pupils will, at that age, be able to differentiate humans from animals and plants, the utmost scope of acquired living things may vary. After 7-year-old International pupils complete the IPC unit *I'm Alive (Living Things)* they will be able to differentiate a broad spectrum of animals from different habitats such as oceans, deserts and rainforests. Croatian pupils will, on the other hand, become familiar with a variety of animals connected to their region. They will, after covering the topics *Nature is Changing (Autumn Changes)* and *Nature is Awakening – Spring* that are designed by MZOŠ (2006), be able to recognize and identify numerous migratory birds, hibernating animals, and animals that live in nearby forests and country sides. In addition, Croatian pupils will gain knowledge of different types of trees, flowers and their fruits that farmers plant in gardens, fields, orchards or vineyards. Consequently, they will understand plants should as well as animals be treated with great caution and care. Common examples are introduced to International pupils when they are 9 years

old, as can be seen from example 4 (Table 4): *Know the animals and plants from their environment*. Similarly, as stated in the example 5: *Know about the living things that live in different environments*, both International and Croatian pupils will acquire knowledge of different living things that can be found within various places up till the age of 9. However, different environments covered within the *Different Places, Similar Lives (Similarities and Differences)* unit intended for the 7 to 9-year-old International pupils include lakes, rivers, seas, oceans, deserts, forests, rocks and icebergs from all around the world. Croatian pupils will until the age of 9 be able to differentiate living things that can be found within their four main Country regions that include valleys, mountains, hills and forests, as well as rivers, lakes, ponds and seaside area. Further to this, when comparing the examples 6: *Know the names of the parts of plants* and 7: *Know about the basic conditions needed for living things to survive* from the Table 4, one may notice the noted outcomes are achieved by International pupils at the age of 7 or less, while corresponding outcomes are not to be found within Croatian Syllabus before the fourth grade of primary education, when Croatian pupils are 10 years old. What is more, while the outcomes under the examples 8: *Know about the main stages of the life cycle of a plant* and 9: *Know the differences between living and non-living things* are introduced to International pupils when they are 9 years of age, *Life of a Plant* and *Nature* topics are cited by MZOŠ (2006) within the fourth grade Syllabus intended for 10-year-old Croatian pupils. However, noted outcomes under the example 6,7,8 and 9 have been recognized by MZOŠ and incorporated into the third grade outcomes within the National Curriculum Framework from 2018. Therefore, Letina, Ivanda and Braičić (2020) in their Science sample textbook state 9-year-old Croatian pupils are capable of understanding the distinction between living and non-living things and thereby can gain knowledge about their basic living conditions, as well as structure and life cycle of a plant.

When it comes to basic human characteristics, MZOŠ (2006) suggests the following outcomes from the Table 4: 10: *Know the names of the main external body parts of humans*, 11: *Know about the senses* and 12: *Be able to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and other people* should be acquired by the 8-year-old Croatian pupils through the topic *Child*. The same outcomes are listed within *Sensational (The Senses)* and *Who Am I? (Ourselves)* IPC units aimed for the 5 to 7-year-old International pupils, who are additionally encouraged to discuss their feelings

and emotions. The following outcome stated under the example 13: *Know about the main stages of the human life cycle* is achieved by both groups of pupils at the age of 9. In the same manner, MZOŠ (2006) proposes *Health* topic should be introduced to Croatian pupils when they are 7 years old. Therefore, they will, as stated in the examples 14, 15 and 16, *know about care of teeth, know about the importance of exercise and healthy eating* and *know about the role of drugs as medicines*. While International pupils will acquire knowledge about exercise and healthy eating within the *Shaping Up (Health and Fitness)* IPC unit, they will not learn about teeth care and different food groups until the age of 9 when they encounter with the *Fit For Life (Health Education)* IPC unit intended for the second milestone of learning. Through this unit, International pupils will additionally acquire outcomes under the examples 17,18 and 19 and therefore *know about the functions of skeletons and muscles in humans, know about the effects that tobacco and alcohol have on the human body* and *know about function and actions of the heart in human body*. Croatian pupils will become familiar with different effects and consequences alcohol and drugs can cause to a human body when they are 10 years old since the unit *Why Addictions are Harmful* within *My Body* topic is proposed by Letina, Ivanda ,Nejašmić and De Zan (2014) in the fourth grade of primary education. Letina et al. (2014) in their fourth grade Science textbook also propose topics such as *Circulatory and Excretory Organs* and topics related to respiratory organs and organs responsible for movement, digestion and breathing. Not only that Fieldwork Education (2019) does not cite similar outcomes in the IPC Guide, but Letina et al. (2020) specify them for 9-year-old pupils.

**Table 4** Comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring Science outcomes related to Biology with respect to age

Outcome		Age of a pupil	
		IPC	CNC
No.			
1	Be able to sort living things into simple groups	7	7
2	Know the names and characteristics of a range of animals	7	7
3	Understand animals should be treated with care	7	7
4	Know the animals and plants from their environment	9	7
5	Know about the living things that live in different environments	9	9
6	Know the names of the parts of plants	7	10
7	Know about the basic conditions needed for living things to survive	7	10
8	Know about the main stages of the life cycle of a plant	9	10
9	Know the differences between living and non-living things	9	10
10	Know the names of the main external body parts of humans	7	8
11	Know about the senses	7	8

12	Be able to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and other people	7	8
13	Know about the main stages of the human life cycle	9	9
14	Know about care of teeth	9	7
15	Know about the importance of exercise and healthy eating	7	7
16	Know about the role of drugs as medicines	7	7
17	Know about the functions of skeletons and muscles in humans	9	10
18	Know about function and actions of the heart in human body	9	10
19	Know about the effects that tobacco and alcohol have on the human body	9	10

Apart from what has been stated in Table 4, Fieldwork Education (2019) cites International pupils will at the age of 7 be conscious of the fact that living things grow and reproduce. Although MZOŠ (2006) implies Croatian pupils should acquire this information at the age of 10, Letina et al. (2020) suggest this outcome should and can be achieved by 9-year-old pupils., Both International and Croatian Curriculum put great focus on water and sun safety and therefore both groups of pupils will be introduced to such guidelines up till the age of 7. Furthermore, both groups will be familiar with names of the days of the week, names of months, seasons and antipodes, as well as telling the time up till the age of 9.

In relation to the Table 4, Table 5 presents most common Science outcomes related to History, Geography and Physics cited within the two curricula whilst comparing pupils' age when first encountering with them. Starting with History, one may notice IPC units connected to the History topics are intended for the International pupils from the age of 5 up till the age of 12, while topics linked to Croatian History first appear within Croatian Syllabus when pupils are 9 years of age. Great distinctions additionally appear when the outcomes presented in Table 5 are studied more closely. Firstly, as can be seen in the Table 5 under the example 1: *Be able to distinguish the past from the present and the future* is adopted by International pupils at the age of 7, while MZOŠ (2006) states Croatian pupils should differentiate the terms past, present and future in their third grade, when being 9 years old. MZOŠ (2006) additionally proposes Croatian pupils should: distinguish ancestors from descendants, understand the concept of decade and century and be able to determine the noted on a timeline. Rowley and Cooper (2009), on the contrary, believe International pupils should, apart from the timeline, be able to **use** something more advanced and should acquire more than just sequence of events, but the interconnectedness of all events in order to follow them across time. Therefore, they reinvent the time line into a "time scroll" tool, which

is according to Rowley and Cooper (2009) a piece of wall-lining paper which could be wound up and its directly connecting History with Mathematics. Moreover, as reported by Rowley and Cooper (2009), International pupils are apart from acquiring the term “ancestors”, “century” and “decade”, discuss and define the term “generation”. Secondly, while International pupils have been encountering with broad spectrum of different scientist, explorers and inventors from the age of 7 or less, important people from the past are not mentioned in the Croatian Syllabus until the fourth grade, when Croatian pupils reach the age of 10. The noted statement is best represented in the example under number 2: *Know about the range of people who had lived in the past.* Aside from the vivid age difference between the two groups of pupils, main focus of the Croatian Syllabus is solely on the historical people who have been important for the forming of the Republic of Croatia that is known today. MZOŠ (2006) for that reason states Croatian pupils should at the age of 10 know the names of most important rulers of the Trpimirović dynasty, first and the current president of the Republic of Croatia and the most famous historical figures of their region. Letina et al. (2014) also propose 10-year-old Croatian pupils should within the *Croatia from the 13th to the 17th century* topic get familiar with the most important foreign and domestic rulers, dukes and kings. Additionally, Croatian pupils encounter names of famous poets and writers within their Language lessons, as well as famous Croatian painters and composers within the Art and Music lessons. Similarly, the majority of Croatian schools and streets are named after famous Croatian writers and poets, hence Croatian teachers will most commonly propose this particular person to be mentioned as well. While Croatian teachers may choose the most important people from their school region, particular people from the past are ought to be mentioned.

On the other hand, International teachers are offered certain number of units to choose from such as: *Explorers and Adventurers, The Great the Bold and the Brave, Space Scientists, Electricity, Investigators, They Made a Difference (Significant People)* etc. Consequently, International schools worldwide may differ in terms of particular famous people International pupils will acquire, however, all will most likely be familiar with: Galileo Galilei, Christopher Columbus, Neil Armstrong, James Watt, Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Queen Elizabeth the II. Needless to say, many of the aforementioned people are mentioned in the Croatian National Curriculum no sooner than when the Croatian

pupils reach their secondary education. Besides, when famous people from the past are being introduced to International pupils, IPC most likely uses the home country- host country approach. So, when working on a theme of *Explorers and Adventurers*, for example, children will learn about explorers and adventurers from and of the country where they are living and about explorers and adventurers from the country that they might call 'home' (Rowley and Cooper, 2009, page 149). Likewise, not only the quantity of famous people from the past is much higher, but the International pupils have, in certain instances, the opportunity to investigate and suggest people that should be discussed. Thirdly, similar issue occurs when comparing the following outcome: 3: *Know about certain events and dates of the past*. While, International pupils already become familiar with the high scale of events connected to Anglo-American culture, but other cultures as well until the age of 9, Croatian Syllabus proposes such outcomes when Croatian pupils are 10 years old. Some of the suggested IPC topics connected to the History are: *Treasure (Archaeology)*, *Young Entrepreneurs (Money and Trade)*, *History AD900*, *Romans and Saxons* and *Myths, Legends and Beliefs*. Therefore, vast majority of International pupils become familiar with World War I, World War II, Remembrance Day, St. Patricks Day, Declaration of Independence and other crucial events in the British and American history. What is more, Rowley and Cooper (2009) state that the main aim of History subject within IPC is not to expect of children to remember precise dates but to have understanding of the given event, know how to determine how long ago that was and be able to place it within other periods of time. The most important events MZOŠ (2006) proposes for the Croatian 10-year-old pupils to know are: the time of immigration of Croats to their new homeland, the century of the adoption of Christianity and the Homeland War in 1991 when Croatia became independent and stopped being a part of Yugoslavia. Although, International pupils are not being evaluated in terms of knowledge and facts, the quantity of mentioned events, such like mentioned famous people from the past, is once again much greater than the events stated in the Croatian Syllabus.

Regarding the Geography area, even greater variations between the two curricula are undoubtedly present. While the outcomes under numbers 4: *Know that people can harm or improve the environment*, 5: *Be able to follow directions* and 6: *Know about the weather and its changes in their vicinity* are achieved by both International and Croatian pupils at the age of 7, many differences appear within further given outcomes.



Starting from the example 7: *Know about land and buildings used in their localities* which is achieved by the International pupils up till the age of 7, while Croatian pupils come across the same topics when being 8 years old. More precisely, MZOŠ (2006) implies Croatian pupils will at the given age: get to know significant buildings near the school and notice the peculiarities of their homeland. What is more, Croatian pupils will at that age, as specified by MZOŠ (2006) be able to name, distinguish and know the basic purpose of cultural and health institutions within their homeland. However, both groups of pupils will up till the age of 7 differentiate the terms house and home. When it comes to example 8: *Understand how the weather in their home country affects the lives of people living there*, while International pupils discuss basic feudal lordships within their country of schooling up till the age of 9, the noted topic is presented to the Croatian pupils at the of 10, when they are in their fourth grade of primary education. In addition, International pupils are, as stated in the previous examples, according to the home country – host country approach, also introduced to the weather, climate changes and its effect on their country of origin. When Croatian pupils reach the age of 10, MZOŠ (2006) specifies they are able to understand the conditionality of natural-geographical conditions and economy and therefore can list basic feudal activities of four main regions of Croatia. The noted regions and their characteristics are being introduced to the Croatian pupils by MZOŠ (2006) at the age of 9, as well as the types of waters and its most common examples within Croatia, including the Adriatic Sea. Although, Croatian pupils will *Know about similarities and differences between different localities (example 9)*, these do not surpass the area of the Republic of Croatia. Correspondingly, when it comes to the example 11: *Be able to use maps to locate the position of particular localities*, MZOŠ (2006) states Croatian pupils should be able to locate Croatian neighbouring countries, which means they will be familiar with 7 countries in total, including Croatia when they reach the age of 10. The same outcome is achieved by the International pupils at the age of 9, while they have been encountering with various countries, nations and ethnicities since the beginning of their schooling. Wherefore, it should come as no surprise that apart from various number of countries, such as their countries of origin, their travel destinations and countries suggested by English National Curriculum and / or their teachers, International pupils are at this point additionally able to locate continents and oceans. While the basic knowledge of continents and oceans is proposed by Fieldwork Education (?) to the International pupils when being at their second milestone of

learning, more precisely 7 to 9 years old, Croatian pupils first encounter with the noted information in terms of spelling at 11 years old, while MZOŠ (2006) expects from them to name and differentiate the continents and oceans when being 13 years old. Same age distinction appears when comparing outcome 10: *Be able to use map to locate the position and geographical features of their home country*. International pupils are not only expected to locate their home and host countries on the map when being 7 years old, but Fieldwork Education (2019) proposes they should also be in ability to make maps and plans of real and imaginary places by using pictures and symbols. Such outcome is acquired by Croatian pupils at the age of 9, as they are then encountering with maps and atlases for the first time.

Lastly, as presented in the Table 5, outcome 12: *Know about everyday appliances that use electricity* is achieved by the International pupils at the age of 7 or less, while MZOŠ (2006) proposes the topic *Household appliances* to be covered by Croatian pupils when they are 8 years old. In contrast to Croatian Syllabus, Fieldwork Education (2019) additionally cites the *Physical processes* area according to which International pupils will at the given age gain knowledge on simple electrical circuits and their effects on different devices. Consequently, they will according to Fieldwork Education (2019) by the age of 9 be able to construct different circuits and receive information about different forces and magnetic properties of different materials. Common outcomes are cited by MZOŠ (2006) within the topics *Macroscopic physical properties of matter* and *Force*, nevertheless these are part of Physics subject and are aimed for 13-year-old Croatian pupils. Be that as it may, MZOŠ (2018) has identified the importance of Energy as an essential category within Science and therefore Letina et al. (2020) suggest topics such as *Energy Usage and Transmission*, *Energy Conversion and Saving* and *Renewable Energy Sources* to be incorporated in the Science textbooks aimed for the 9-year-old Croatian pupils.

**Table 5**

Age comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring Science outcomes related to History, Geography and Physics

Area	Outcome		Age of a pupil	
History	No		IPC	CN
	1	Be able to distinguish the past from the present and the future	7	9

	2	Know about the range of people who had lived in the past	7	10
	3	Know about certain events and dates of the past	9	10
Geography	4	Know that people can harm or improve the environment	7	7
	5	Be able to follow directions	7	7
	6	Know about the weather and its changes in their vicinity	7	7
	7	Know about land and buildings used in their localities	7	8
	8	Understand how the weather in their home country affects the lives of people living there	9	10
	9	Know about similarities and differences between different localities	7	9
	10	Be able to use map to locate the position and geographical features of their home country	7	9
	11	Be able to use maps to locate the position of particular localities	9	10
Physics	12	Know about everyday appliances that use electricity	7	8

Apart from the above stated, MZOŠ (2006) states Croatian pupils will additionally gain knowledge regarding specific details and information about their own country such as: national symbols, legends of their homeland, cultural and historical monuments and Croatian anthem, currency and script. Moreover, MZOŠ (2006) notes particular Holidays should be mentioned and discussed such as Easter, Christmas, Statehood Day, World Bread Day and the Day of Remembrance of the Dead. Noted may not be achieved by International pupils whose culture is not closely connected or differs in large proportion from the Anglo-American culture or the host country they are currently living in. Nevertheless, International pupils will unlike Croatian pupils gain knowledge about different cultures in the past and their everyday lives. Fieldwork Education (2019) states 7 year-old International pupils will be able to retell various stories about a range of people who have lived in many different cultures in the past and at the same time be aware of the fact that the past can be represented in various different ways. Correspondingly, 9-year-old International pupils will understand and distinguish the main characteristics of past societies and be familiar with various lifestyles of different periods in time. Croatian pupils gain this kind of knowledge when introduced to the subject History in their fifth grade of primary education, at the age of 11.

What is more, although some specific outcomes are not defined in the International Primary Curriculum Guide, additional topics are suggested within the IPC units. For example, apart from numerous countries, flags, continents and oceans, the IPC unit *Gateways to the World* that is predesigned for the second milestone of learning, more precisely International pupils aged 7 to 9, offers different materials related to the topics

of traveling. Both groups of pupils will up to the age of 9 differentiate different types of transportation, get familiar with the airport and its features and understand the importance of transport connections. While MZOŠ (2006) proposes Croatian pupils should be able to show different roads and railways on the map of their homeland region, International pupils will be familiar with the connections with different countries in the world. Moreover, Croatian pupils should, according to MZOŠ (2006) acquire specific terms and knowledge, such as types of roads, types of public transportation, types of stations and ports and so on, while International pupils, as Rowley and Cooper (2009) report, gain similar knowledge through different activities such as role-play where they pretend to arrive at the airport, check in their bags with their classmates and pretend to travel by the plane. Within the unit titled *Travel and Transport*, International pupils additionally learn about the history of transport, while through the unit *Gateways to the World* they learn how to design an in-flight entertainment pack, about various airline logos and designs and how to use passports, visas and Google Maps application. Both IPC and Croatian National Curriculum underline the importance of traffic behaviour and safety, as this is something both groups of pupils will acquire at the age of 7 or less. Additionally, while Croatian pupils become familiar with different jobs and professions at the age of 8, *The Things People Do (Jobs)* unit is intended for the first Milepost of learning, more clearly for the 5 to 7-year-old pupils. Moreover, International pupils aged 7 to 9 can within the *Explorers and Adventurers (Discovering The World)* unit learn about planets, solar system, space and constellation, as well as the connection between Sun, Earth and passing of time. Whereas MZOŠ (2006) proposes the topics *Movements of the Earth and the Sun and Earth in a Space* to be covered within the Geography subject syllabus when Croatian pupils are 11 years old. Common outcomes regarding Space, atoms, force, energy, magnets and even evolution are specified by MZOŠ (2011) within the Croatian National Curriculum as part of first cycle of learning, yet particular textbooks mostly rely on the Croatian Syllabus from 2006.

To conclude, apart from the age differences between the pupils when achieving noted outcomes, Croatian pupils are additionally operating with vividly smaller scope and breadth of knowledge. Besides, according to the research conducted by Borić and Škugor (2012), Croatian textbooks related to Science from the 1st to the 4th grade of primary school mostly encourage students to reproduce given facts with little

application in different situations and thereby the acquisition of abilities, skills and attitudes such as creativity itself are clearly absent. Nevertheless, it is evident from the ongoing school reform that Croatian School System is gradually realizing the importance of research-based and project-based teaching, as well as incorporating technology, experiments and data handling into each lesson, especially with respect to Science. For example, Palička, Grgić, Križanac and Lukša (2020) in their 2020 sample Science textbook suggest 9-year-old Croatian pupils can make their own compasses, maps, city models, ground plans and guidebooks by using the help of Google Maps and Street View applications. Moreover, Palička et al. (2020) propose the idea of small research conducting where pupils are challenged to assume, investigate and conclude before each Science lesson is presented to them. In finalising, Croatian pupils may be ahead of International pupils regarding their knowledge on its culture and its past, their future undoubtedly depends on what is done in the present.

#### **5.4. Music**

Music, as one of the disciplines of the Arts, is a mandatory subject in both International and Croatian Curriculum, alike the majority of curricula around the world. Still, most of Croatian children, according to Baranović (2006), perceive it as less challenging and therefore, less important subject. The main argument against this statement that explains why Music should and must be an important part of each curriculum is reasonably justified in the International declarations and conventions. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2006) every child has the right to an education and therefore participation in cultural and artistic life which will ensure maximum development. Consequently, “Arts Education is a universal human right, for all learners, including those who are often excluded from education, such as immigrants, cultural minority groups, and people with disabilities” (UNESCO, 2006, page 3). Besides, Šimunić (2013) points out how Music is an important part of human culture and hence its culturally- aesthetic significance is recognized in Croatian schools alone.

This directly explains the reason MZOŠ (2006) decided to incorporate the term “culture” into the very name of the subject, which today literally translates as *Musical Culture*. This may not be the case when it comes to International Primary Curriculum, where the subject is simply referred to as *Music*. One may conclude that IPC places

less focus on culture when it comes to the subject alone, but the reality is quite the opposite. As previously mentioned, IPC schools acknowledge different race, religions, ethnicities, nationalities and cultures. The pupils are through Music, introduced not only to their own culture, but inestimable number of cultures from all over the world. This makes it nearly impossible for Fieldwork Education to allege the subject in the same way as the Croatian school system can. Nonetheless, in terms of Music, both school systems have many resembling characteristics regarding subject goals, outcomes and the age when pupils achieve those. Some common Music subject goals presented by both MZOŠ (2011) and Fieldwork Education (2019) are:

- expressing emotions, feelings and experiences through Music
- developing creativity and self confidence
- expressing one selves by using all 5 senses
- improving communication and social skills
- performing by singing and playing instruments
- creating small musical compositions
- appreciating, understanding and analysing musical compositions
- getting familiar with musicians and classical music pieces from different countries, including those from their home country

Analogously, subject outcomes of both curricula are highly corresponding. Some of the shared outcomes are presented in the Table 6, along with the pupils' ages when achieving them. It can be observed how there is no age difference between the two groups of pupils when acquiring each of these outcomes. This occurrence may seem unexpected since the International Subject Curriculum was carried out in 2019 and the Croatian Syllabus more than 10 years earlier, more precisely in 2006. In spite of everything being said, differences ought to be identified when closely studying the curricula. To start with the example 1: *Know a number of songs*, the fact remains both International and Croatian pupils will by the age of 7 be familiar with the number of songs. This, however means International pupils have been acquiring different songs from the age of 5, more specifically for 3 years, while it has only been a year since Croatian pupils have gotten familiar with the same pattern. Also, the term "a number of" tends to be very broad and can be interpreted in many different ways. For example, MZOŠ (2006) suggests 30 songs and expects at least 15 of them to be introduced to the pupils by their teacher. The teacher, is in fact entitled to choose a different song,

but it is, according to MZOŠ (2006) obliged to respect the principle of regionalism and keep in mind the song is suitable to age and needs of each pupil. Songs to be found in the Croatian National Curriculum are mainly Croatian artistic or folk songs such as number rhymes and lullabies originating from Croatia or neighbouring Slavic countries. Songs suggested by Fieldwork Education mostly revolve around topics that are analysed within other subjects, as the Music is both independent and interdependent subject. Teacher has the autonomy to choose the song, regardless of its type, origin, function or even language. For example, even though the main medium of teaching is mainly English, International pupils in Zagreb, Croatia may be introduced to a traditional Croatian song, while International pupils in Italy may learn a song in Italian. The same rule applies to holidays and traditions. “The learners can sing a variety of songs related to celebrations for each particular culture. These can be Jewish Folk songs to celebrate the Jewish Festivals, Hindi basic songs, which could be used during Diwali or Christmas Carols which is used to celebrate Christmas during the Christian Culture” (Muller, 2019, p. 647). Also, a small amount of songs is incorporated into each IPC unit. For example, when 6 to 7-year old pupils are covering the topic *Circus is Coming to Town*, Fieldwork Education (2016) suggests minimum of 4 hours of Music during the total of 8 weeks of teaching. All songs are connected to theme of Circus and vary in type, origin and function. For example, some of the 5 different songs suggested by Fieldwork Education (2016) are circus music theme from USA and military march from Czech Republic. One significant difference that stands out when comparing the two curricula in the terms of Music is that International pupils have the ability to “choose some music that they think best matches or suits the activity” (Fieldwork Education, 2016, p. 68). Be that as it may, nor Croatian or International pupils are obliged to learn the text by heart. Moreover, similar differences occur when it comes to example 2: *Be familiar with a number of classical music pieces* and 3: *Be familiar with a number of musicians – including some from their home country*. MZOŠ (2006) suggests 15 classical music pieces, from which at least 5 to 10 should be covered. Their composers are mainly Croats, although some acclaimed artists are mentioned, such as: Ludwig van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Modest Petrovič Musorgski and so on. Croatian pupils are, pursuant to MZOŠ (2006), only required to recognize and distinguish classical music pieces, while the teacher is in the ability to introduce several other composers and their artworks. As stated in the Fieldwork Education

(2019), International pupils are not only introduced to musical pieces from their host country, but from their home countries as well. The concept of comparing the host country to the home country in every unit of work really enhances children's development of an international mind-set and formation of a global view on how the world actually works (Hayden and Thompson, 2012, p. 449). Moreover, as presented in the example from the *Circus is Coming to Town* Unit, Fieldwork Education (2016) suggests artists from various countries such as Czech Republic, Hungary and France can be introduced. The teacher and pupils, as previously stated, have the autonomy to choose additional artists and their musical pieces according to their preferences. The outcome listed as the example number 4: *Be able to listen carefully to pieces of music in order to analyse them*, is once again achieved by both groups of pupils at the same age, hence some differences do exist. Croatian pupils at the age of 7 are specifically required to analyse classical music pieces in order to determine musical elements, which are based on MZOŠ (2006): instruments, tempo, dynamics and atmosphere. In the research activity conducted by Fieldwork Education (2016) in the *Circus is Coming to Town* unit, 7 year-old International pupils are expected to determine instruments, tempo and rhythm within given songs. Nonetheless, International pupils are being taught from the early age how a number of musicians use musical elements to create different effects and for different purposes (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p. 45). As it can be noticed from the example 5: *Be able to play simple rhythms with a steady beat*, both International and Croatian pupils are introduced to rhythm and beat from the early age. Still, MZOŠ (2006) explicitly requires that Croatian pupils learn it only through given songs, whilst International pupils are once again free to choose or even improvise the melody. Regarding improvisation, as presented in the example 6: *Be able to compose simple musical patterns*, both groups of pupils are indulged in such activities at the age of 7. However, International teachers have complete autonomy when it comes to methods and processes required to accomplish the outcome itself. According to Müller, they are even suggested to direct pupils in creating and recording their own music by using music technology. Croatian teachers, once again, are given very specific instruction on how to achieve the preceding outcome. MZOŠ (2006) states that pupils should learn how to improvise with the melody through dialogs with their peers and should only work in groups when improvising with the movements. Nonetheless, MZOŠ (2006) does give the Croatian pupils an opportunity to improvise with instruments, their hands, legs and voices but only when creating a small



rhythmical patterns. This may be the best example of an important subject goal that is omitted from the Croatian National Curriculum and can be found in the IPC (2019) and that is developing imagination and enjoying music. Taking this into the consideration, it may seem condescending how MZOŠ (2006) decides to name this area *Musical Creativity*, stating *creativity* as its main key term. Correspondingly, the outcome number 7: *Be able to perform individually, in pairs and in groups* represents how both International and Croatian pupils are familiar with different kinds of working methods by the age of 7. Be that as it may, Fieldwork Education (2019) does not specify cooperation and respect as its crucial personal goals when it comes to Music.

**Table 6** *Age comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring Music outcomes*

Outcome		Age of a pupil	
No.		IPC	CNC
1	Know a number of songs	7	7
2	Be familiar with a number of classical music pieces	7	7
3	Be familiar with a number of musicians – including some from their home country	7	7
4	Be able to listen carefully to pieces of music in order to analyse them	7	7
5	Be able to play simple rhythms with a steady beat	7	7
7	Be able to compose simple musical patterns	7	7
8	Be able to perform individually, in pairs and in groups	7	7

When it comes to International Curriculum, subject Music is very interdependent and hence an additional outcome is stated and it claims pupils “should be taught about functions of music in people’s lives now and in the past” (Fieldwork Education, 2019, page 45). For example, in the music unit called *Celebrations* investigated by Müller (2019), International pupils are exploring and comparing different cultures through music. “The learners can imagine they are traveling to India as part of the Entry Point, whilst listening to music from India this could be anything from Hindi folk songs to the popular Bollywood music?” (Müller, 2019, p. 647). International teachers, as Müller states, are encouraged to present different kinds of videos, while International pupils, from the age of 5 to 7, are challenged to make presentation about what has been discussed. This way, pupils are able to understand real connection between music and culture. Even though, MZOŠ (2006) does acquire Croatian pupils to distinguish vocal, instrumental and vocal- instrumental music, and a number of historical folk songs are presented, similar outcome is not stated nor achieved through Croatian National

Curriculum. Similarly, Croatian teachers may use technology when representing classical musical pieces and motivational videos, but MZOŠ (2006) does not necessitate Croatian pupils should use technology in any way.

Common observations appear when studying the additional outcomes expected to be achieved by the age of 9. Table 7 represents some common outcomes both International and Croatian pupils will have already acquired when being 9 years old. Previously mentioned best applies to example 1: *Be able to recognize how musicians organize sounds in their music pieces*. Moreover, example 2: *Be able to perform a number of songs by following specific rules*, shows how pupils are, at this point, no longer expected to just pronounce the text clearly and sing with an expression, but have to respect certain requirements. MZOŠ (2006) states how pupils will from the age of 8 be required to sing and distinguish songs that have a different tempo, dynamics, duration and pitch. International pupils, on the other hand, are expected to sing in tune and use limited range of notes at the age of 9 (IPC, 2019), The same age difference occurs in the example 3: *Be able to compose simple musical pieces*, where Croatian pupils are encouraged by the MZOŠ (2006) to improvise and create a short musical composition which focuses on melody and rhythm.

Having taken all of the above mentioned outcomes into consideration, Croatian pupils seem to have a slight advantage when it comes to age as Croatian Syllabus suggests specific methods and processes when acquiring them. Still, Fieldwork Education (2019) does not eliminate the fact Music is strongly linked to History and gives its pupils the opportunity to explore other people’s culture, traditions and customs. What is even more important, an International teacher is encouraged to propose using technology, organize the lesson independently and to prioritise enjoyment as the crucial component of Music class.

**Table 7**

*Comparison of International and Croatian pupils with respect to age when acquiring Music outcomes*

Outcome		Age of a pupil	
No.		IPC	CNC
1	Be able to recognize how musicians organize sounds in their music pieces	9	9
2	Be able to perform a number of songs by following specific rules	9	8
3	Be able to compose simple musical pieces	9	8

## 5.5. Visual Arts

Another discipline of Arts that is nowadays mandatory subject in vast majority of schools is Visual Arts. Regarding subject preference, it may still for many seem as useless and less important subject. According to Baranović (2006), Croatian pupils address it, after Religion, as the subject one should put a very limited amount of effort in. Yet, Gardner (1983) recognized the importance of visual art and according to him it is a crucial factor for developing spatial thinking. For that reason, Gardner (1983) defined spatial intelligence as one of the multiple intelligences which, based on him, is a significant component of science and it should be considered equal to linguistic intelligence. It enables pupils to develop skills and knowledge which are rarely incorporated in other subject and may be crucial for their everyday life. Both Fieldwork Education (2019) and MZOŠ (2011) have recognized many and therefore claim children will, after being introduced to Visual Art, be able to:

- develop communication and social skills
- develop creativity and use art as a means of self-expression
- acquire basic knowledge of work of artists from different cultures, including the ones from their home country
- explore and use different materials, means and processes
- explore visual art using all 5 senses
- understand and respect visual art and expressions
- gather knowledge about visual art in the past and present

Despite previously mentioned subject goals, IPC and Croatian National Curriculum share few common features when it comes to Art. Starting from the very name of the subject, it can be observed how MZOŠ, in like manner to Musical Culture, decides to use a term *Visual Culture*, while the Fieldwork Education simply designate is as *Art*. Dating back to subject goals, one may think they are quite similar, but the fact remains, they highly differ when being studied more closely. For example, both curricula aim to teach pupils to respect visual expressions, but Fieldwork education (2019) puts focus on enjoyment, while MZOŠ (2011) sees visual art as a tool that teaches pupils how to develop aesthetic experience, sensitivity, and criticality. Moreover, MZOŠ

(2011) is very detailed about the traits pupils should acquire through Art, such as self-esteem, self-confidence, curiosity, spontaneity, independence, individuality etc. Nevertheless, an important and in the terms of Art, an essential characteristic stays unmentioned, but cited in the International Primary Curriculum –imagination. IPC may, according to these two examples, seem to have a more modern approach, but Fieldwork Education unfortunately fails to specify its important personal goals cooperation and respect. These are, however, present through the lessons, as it is required of pupils to work in pairs, groups and so on. Cooperation is visibly of great importance when it comes to Croatian National Curriculum, as it clearly states that Croatian pupils are expected to „develop collaborative relationships and empathy in collaborative activities and creative work with peers, especially those with special needs“ ( MZOŠ, 2011, page 209). Even more significant when it comes to Croatian National Curriculum is the notion of patriotism. It is of no surprise that the subject goals related to patriotism in Art, but also other subjects, are mainly specified at the very beginning of the syllabus. Croatian pupils are, in the terms of Art, expected to acquire “positive attitude towards Croatian culture and cultures of other nations, towards cultural and natural heritage...” and to “actively participate in the cultural life of the community” (MZOŠ, 2011, page 209). This clearly justifies why the word “culture” is present in the very name of the subject. IPC, on the other hand, due to its multicultural background remains unable of incorporating such request.

Additionally, despite the fact that some subject goals may seem quite comparable, a typical Art lesson in Croatian school hardly corresponds to an Art lesson in an International school. Since Art is, like Music, not only independent but also interdependent subject, it is an important part of each IPC lesson. For example, in the *Circus is Coming to Town* unit that is intended for 6-year-old pupils, Fieldwork Education (2016) encourages teachers to include at least 6 hours of Art into the unit that approximately lasts for 8 weeks. Nonetheless, many Croatian teachers have recognized all the advantages Art brings into a classroom, and based on Baranović (2006) 97,6% of them agree that Croatian schools should increase its hourly rate. The fact remains, as stated in the MZOŠ (2006) Croatian pupils at the age of 7 are exposed to only 1 hour of Art a week. Secondly, most of the crafts International pupils are expected to make are related to the studied topic. For example, when covering the topic *Circus is Coming to Town*, pupils are expected to draw everything that can be found

in a circus, such as lion, tiger, clown etc. Independent Art lessons similarly revolve around ongoing topic, such as seasons, holidays, school events and books and texts that are being analysed. This means the most common themes are animals, plants, sceneries, book characters and famous people being studied. Croatian teaching syllabus, on the other hand, has a specific teaching topics ought to be covered. According to MZOŠ (2006) these are: *Dot and Line, Plane, Colour, Surface, Mass / Volume and Space*. For each teaching topic, the key concepts (visual language problems related to art) that are addressed in the teaching units are listed (MZOŠ, 2006, page 51). For example, when Croatian pupils are learning about dot and line for the first time, there are specific types of lines they are about to acquire. The specific theme, is on the other hand, not predisposed. This means, pupils can simply listen to music and draw different types of lines according to what they have heard. Croatian Curriculum does not exclude drawing specific motives and patters such like flowers, trees and so on, but no reference about abstract art is noted in the IPC.

A more detailed distinction can be recognized if comparing subject outcomes and objectives in general. Table 8 shows most important subject outcomes shared by the two curricula comparing the age of pupils at the time of acquisition. Looking at example 1 *Be able to use a variety of materials and processes*, it can be noticed how both Croatian and International pupils are of the same age when acquiring this outcome. However, it is important to remember how MZOŠ (2006) lists specific processes Croatian pupils should use when creating their artwork and these are: drawing, painting, graphics, moulding, construction and design. The teacher is also the one who is responsible for choosing the appropriate material that will be used. IPC, on the other hand, uses terms designing and making when describing its Art processes. Not only these terms assuredly have quite broad meaning, but the teacher is not formalized to give out the order of which material should be used exclusively. As a consequence, International pupils are “able to choose materials and techniques which are appropriate for their task”(Fieldwork Education, 2019, p. 24). This can, with the right guidance, lead to a tremendous development of creativity and imagination, which is not the main priority in the Croatian school system. Not the less, examples 2: *Be able to comment on works of art* and 3: *Know about some of the forms used by artists in their work* show how basic art outcomes are achieved by both groups of pupils at the same age. When studying example number 4: *Be familiar with number of artists*

– *including some from their home country*, it may be recorded how Croatian pupils are introduced to a number of artist from the age of 7, more specifically when encountering with the Visual Art for the first time. International pupils, on the contrary, are expected to do so when being 9 years old. The reason why Croatian pupils get familiar with such information at an early age is that MZOŠ (2006) explicitly claims how one art piece should be presented in each art lesson. Artworks are suggested by MZOŠ, but are selected individually. Most teachers, consequently choose a Croatian artist among the other foreign ones. Their task is to give information about the name of the artist and the artwork, but pupils are never evaluated based on this information. International pupils may be slightly behind Croatian pupils regarding their age, but once they get familiar with the works of art, they explore it on a deeper level. Not only do they get familiar with both artists from their home and host country, but they learn to “understand that the work of artists can be seen in a wide variety of places and situations” (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p 23). Functions of visual art is something that is unfortunately unmentioned in the Croatian Teaching Syllabus. In addition, similar differences occur in the example 6: *Be able to talk about works of art, giving reasons for their opinions*. Croatian pupils begin to discuss art only at the age of 7, while International students do the same at the age of 9. Additionally, Croatian pupils are expected to correspond to an art problem, using specific key concepts prescribed by the MZOŠ. International pupils, may not have specialized knowledge but are encouraged to think, imagine and make connections with Science, History and Language. Lastly, example number 5: *Be able to explain their own work in terms of what they have done and why* once again represents the age difference between the two groups of pupils. Croatian pupils are expected to reason their work at the end of each Art lesson from the first grade of their Primary Education. International pupils, again start indulge in the same experience 2 years later. Anyhow, one important goal is mentioned in the IPC and that is the following: “students will be able to suggest ways of improving their own work from the early age” (Fieldwork Education, 2019, p. 23). The Croatian curriculum evidently rules out similar outcomes and precisely claims teachers are the ones that should be “adapting teaching forms, methods and means of work to the individual needs of the students, in order to ensure the educational success of each student” (MZOŠ, 2006, p. 11). Such statement surely brings other desired objectives such as developing individuality and independence into question.

In concluding, it appears Croatian pupils are by far more advanced than the International pupils regarding age they achieve given objectives. Be that as it may, Croatian National Curriculum once again brings emphasis on knowledge, whereas main focus of the IPC is imagination. The question remains, which should come as the most meaningful when it comes to Art?

**Table 8**

*Age comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring Art outcomes*

Outcome		Age of a pupil	
		CNC	IPC
No.			
1	Be able to use a variety of materials and processes	7	7
2	Know about some of the forms used by artists in their work	7	7
3	Be able to comment on works of art	7	7
4	Be familiar with number of artists – including some from their home country	7	9
5	Be able to explain their own work in terms of what they have done and why	7	9
6	Be able to talk about works of art, giving reasons for their opinions	7	9

## 5.6. Physical Education

Last but by no means the least important subject when it comes to schooling is Physical Education. Although, as stated in its very name, educational and pedagogical components are essential parts of the subject itself, many tend to associate it only with physical activities. The noted misapprehension was best confronted by Gardner (1983) in his famous work *Frames of Mind* when he recognized the importance of processing information through physical movements and as a result defined Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence. Characteristic of such an intelligence is the ability to use one's body in highly differentiated and skilled ways, for expressive as well as goal-directed purposes... (Gardner, 1983, p. 274).

If the preceding statement is taken into the consideration, each curriculum should keep in mind to enable means through which each student will not only develop their skills but also their knowledge. Alić, Petrić and Badrić (2016) believe that creating the best physical education curriculum will additionally affect students in the terms of their lifelong involvement in physical activities. Both Fieldwork Education (2019) and MZOŠ (2011) also anticipate International and Croatian pupils will through Physical education:

- gain an understanding of the importance of personal health
- develop an awareness of collaborative behaviour in order to enable teamwork
- develop communication and social skills
- gain self-awareness and develop confidence
- acquire basic knowledge on monitoring their physical development

However, when comparing the subject alone the Croatian approach to Physical Education departs from the IPC's approach in many aspects. In like manner to Music and Art, MZOŠ (2006) designates the subject as *Physical and Health Culture*, while emphasizing that sports and recreation are an infallible part of Croatian way of life MZOŠ (2006) accordingly indicates the importance of getting to know and respecting the traditions of your Country and region and therefore suggests implementing one unit of *Folk Dance* into each school year. More significantly, main focus of the Croatian National Curriculum, is once again knowledge. Principal aim of Physical Education, according to MZOŠ (2006), is acquisition and application of theoretical and motor knowledge. Fieldwork Education (2019), on the contrary, apart from the healthy lifestyle, stresses out the importance of developing creativity and imagination and addresses skill as the most important and only type of learning in terms of Physical Education. Moreover, the two curricula differ in stated areas Physical Education should cover. As stated by Alić et al. (2016) Croatian Syllabus has 4 different categories: *Athletics, Gymnastics, Games and Dance*. On the contrary, Physical Education in International Primary Curriculum (2019) consists of 5 different areas: *Athletics, Gymnastics, Ball games, Dance and Swimming*. Due to the fact, Croatian National Curriculum is mainly intended for public Croatian schools, it is understandable how Swimming, as an additional fifth area is not prescribed by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. Nevertheless, the schools that in fact have particular possibilities are advised to include swimming as an optional subject. Additionally, as Alić et al. (2016) claim, Croatian schools are expected to include swimming program as an extracurricular activity lasting from 20 to 30 hours in their annual program. Both examples are unfortunately not directly related to the regular physical education classes. Fieldwork Education, on the other hand, has the ability to propose specific outcomes related to Swimming. As stated in the International Primary Curriculum (2019) pupils will be able to spend time at ease in water by the age of 7, while 9-year-old pupils will be familiar with basic principles of



water safety and therefore, be able to move easily through water. Similar outcomes can, according to Alić et al. (2016) be found in total of 19 out of 25 school curriculums in the European Union. Based on their research it can be concluded that Croatia is one out of six countries in the European Union that has not incorporated Swimming as a mandatory part of its school system. For this reason, it is inevitable how the same subject outcomes should be considered and consequently inducted by the Croatian National Curriculum.

What is more, above stated IPC areas are evenly distributed through each school year. To be more precise, Fieldwork Education (2019) has specific concept according to which each area lasts approximately 6 weeks and outcomes that are related to specific area are dominant in the given period of time. For example, International pupils are conducting a unit called *Football* as a part of *Ball Games* area during the period of 6 weeks in which they are introduced to its features and rules, but also main characteristics of other ball games and games in general. Opposed to that, Physical Education teaching content in Croatian school system is undoubtedly distributed in an unequal way. As Alić et al. (2016) state, frequency of categories appearing within Croatian Syllabus is: Athletics (33%), Gymnastics (28%), Games (27%) and Dance (12%). Beyond that, each Croatian Physical Education lesson has specific parts that are intended to help pupils in achieving particular outcomes. Accordingly, Neljak, Milić, Božinović and Delaš (2008a) suggest each lesson should consist of introductory part preparatory part, main part and final part. A similar structure is not evident in the International Primary Curriculum (2019).

If studying the differences between subject outcomes of the two curricula, many distinctions can be detected. Table 9 serves as a visual display of most common outcomes related to Physical Education that are present in the both curricula, while showing the age difference between the groups of pupils when developing them. Starting from the *example 1* that claims pupils will be able to *understand the importance of warming up before an activity*, one may see International pupils are not required to acknowledge this fact until the age of 9. Croatian pupils are, on the other hand, starting to acquire all the kinesiological knowledge from their first year of Physical Education. Each Physical Education lesson in Croatia, as suggested by Neljak et al. (2008a), should include a preparatory part that consists of numerous warming up activities, performed both by teachers and pupils. Croatian pupils are, in like manner,

instructed to take care of their hygiene and dress accordingly. The mentioned outcomes are not required to be adopted by International students until the age of 12, when being in their third Milepost of learning. To continue, the outcome from the example 2: *Be familiar with the rules of numerous games*, is treated very differently by the two curricula, although both groups of pupils do acquire it up till the age of 7. Various games Croatian pupils are introduced to, are mainly constituted in the beginning and ending of each lesson. Neljak and associates (2008a) suggest vast majority of games that vary in type, strategy and function such as different elementary games and warming up activities in the introductory part, many team-building games in the main part and various types of relay races and brain and breathing exercise in the final part of a lesson. Croatian teachers are for the given reason in a major advantage if compared to their International colleagues. However, International teachers are advised by Fieldwork Education (2019) to involve pupils when it comes to game invention. The specific activity *Invent a Game* can be found in the Exercise and Quality of Life (2015) where International pupils, from the age of 9, are put in groups and given different pieces of equipment in order to create an activity in the shortest amount of time possible. Croatian teachers are not restricted to doing the same with their pupils, thus similar outcome is certainly not present within Croatian Syllabus. Accordingly, as presented in the example 3: *Understand the importance of rules and fair play*, Croatian pupils are being introduced with the educational aspects of Physical Education from the earliest stage. MZOŠ (2006) expresses how pupils are through games learning about respect, overcoming anger and dissatisfaction and most importantly, acknowledging victory to the opponent. International learners, are up till the age of 7, expected to acknowledge and understand the rules, while no educational component is mentioned. To proceed, Example 4: *Be able to observe and repeat simple actions* is another objective both International and Croatian pupils will acquire until the age of 7. Still, the term “simple” tends to be very broad and is not precisely defined. According to MZOŠ (2006) simple movements Croatian pupils should achieve until the age of 7 are: walking, running, jumping, throwing, catching, rolling, climbing, crawling, hanging and balancing. Their main task at this age, as stated by MZOŠ (2006), is to adopt and perfect given basic motor skills before moving to the next stage. On the other hand, as the Physical Education is incorporated into IPC lessons, International pupils are not only getting to encounter with additional simple movements but are encouraged to suggest and rehearse many different actions and

techniques. Therefore, Fieldwork Education (2016) expects pupils to invent and practise different tumbling and rolling movements and to experiment with various throwing and catching techniques as a part of *Circus is Coming to Town* unit. Additionally, International pupils are required, based on International Primary Curriculum (2019), to use simple movements in sequence when being the very same age. Croatian pupils are not expected to achieve the indicated outcome until the age of 9, as can be seen from the example 5. Similar applies when it comes to example 6: *Be able to perform simple activities with control and coordination*. Even though, both International and Croatian pupils do achieve same outcome at the same age, Croatian teachers mostly develop it only through previously named movements such as one-leg hop and two-leg hop, while International teachers have the ability to introduce additional activities that are suggested as a part of the IPC lessons, for example juggling as a part of *Circus is Coming to Town* unit. As visible from the example 7: *Be able to apply simple tactics*, each of the two groups of pupils will achieve this outcome when being 7 years old, at latest. Nonetheless, expected activities prescribed in the International curriculum and Croatian curriculum happen to appear at different stages. MZOŠ (2006) recommends that seven-year-old Croatian pupils should apart from folk dance, be introduced to the two types of rhythmic structures: Walking and running with musical accompaniment and Imitation of natural phenomena and moods with musical accompaniment. Some natural phenomena and moods that could be impersonated by Croatian pupils are recommended by Neljak et al. (2008a) and these are: the sound of waves, the howling of the wind, the chirping of birds, children's laughter, crying etc. Although, the abovementioned activity can be traced within the International Primary Curriculum, it is initially purposed for the International pupils that are in their third Milepost of learning, more precisely aged from 9 to 12. As stated in the Exercise and Quality of Life (2015), International pupils are then, as a part of the IPC unit *Saving the World – Rainforests*, not only being asked to imitate movements that will represent a rainforest, but to create a thorough dance. Based on the Exercise and Quality of Life (2015), groups of International pupils are additionally encouraged to work together and to integrate all ideas into an overall performance. As previously mentioned, various specific dances can be found within Croatian National Curriculum, but are proposed to be implemented according to the teacher's instructions. Following the example 8: *Be able to take part in a range of individual, pair, small group and team activities*, one may recognize the outcome itself is not

obliged to be achieved by International pupils until the age of 9, while Croatian pupils attain such trait when being 7 years old. Apart from already mentioned individual movements, Neljak et. al (2008a) propose different warming up activities for pairs, various relay races for groups and some team activities such as dodgeball to be introduced to Croatian pupils. Apart from the age difference, when the abovementioned outcome is eventually introduced to International pupils, they are not only required to achieve it physically, but are also expected to participate in a topic related discussion. In the example from the *Circus is Coming to Town* unit, Fieldwork Education (2016) advises International teachers to ask the pupils what a team game is, request some examples and point out specific team game rules. Largest distinction regarding Physical Education between the two curricula occurs in the area of Athletics. This is apparent from the example 9: *Know the principal rules of a number of established sporting and athletic activities*, that shows how International pupils get familiar with different sporting activities before the age of 9, while Croatian pupils indulge in such activities in their last grade of primary education, more accurately when being 10 years old. According to MZOŠ (2006), Croatian pupils are at that point introduced to children's football, children's basketball, mini handball and are acquiring some basic volleyball components. Even though, Athletics is the most prevalent category in the Croatian Syllabus, Croatian pupils are in their first three grades of Physical Education only engaging in activities that are a prerequisite for success in targeted sports. Thereby, Neljak (2008b) proposes how Croatian pupils should perfect their passing and guiding the ball skills and be familiar with a simplified version of children's football up till the age of 9. The same activities are being introduced to International pupils, yet it occurs during the period of approximately six weeks where International pupils are in the end expected to combine all the movements and to fully participate in the aimed activity, in this case football. All the above mentioned facts and examples demonstrate to what extent the two curricula dissent when opposing certain outcomes related to Physical Education. On one hand, main emphasis of Croatian National Curriculum regarding Physical Education is the educational and cultural aspect. Croatian pupils are used to specific working methods and lesson structure and are progressively acquiring appointed motor skills in order to make progress. International pupils, are on the other hand, permitted to propose and indulge in different activities of their own choice, which eventually leads to strengthening of creativity and retaining their individuality. If changing

perspectives, one may possibly conclude that International pupils are not being provided with sufficient quantity of knowledge or, on the other side, that Croatian school system presumably underestimates its pupils and their skills. Nevertheless, when the curriculum is being created, it should not be forgotten that one does not go without the other.

Table 9

*Age comparison of International and Croatian pupils when acquiring Physical Education outcomes*

Outcome		Age of a pupil	
No.		CNC	IPC
1	Understand the importance of warming up before an activity	7	9
2	Be familiar with the rules of numerous games	7	7
3	Understand the importance of rules and fair play	7	9
4	Be able to observe and repeat simple actions	7	7
5	Be able to apply movements in sequence	9	7
6	Be able to perform simple activities with control and coordination	7	7
7	Be able to apply simple tactics	7	7
8	Be able to take part in a range of individual, pair, small group and team activities	7	9
9	Know the principal rules of a number of established sporting and athletic activities	10	9

## 6 CONCLUSION

To finalise, there are certain differences that emerge when the International Primary Curriculum and the Croatian National Curriculum for General Compulsory Education are compared. To start with, the International Primary Curriculum promotes developing learning skills and imagination through fun and enjoyment, while the Croatian National Curriculum lists factual knowledge as the most important competence pupils should achieve through their education. Moreover, the IPC promotes research based and project-based teaching, whilst the Croatian educational system advocates particular textbooks and manuals designed on the basis of specific learning outcomes.

More specific differences appear when subject goals and learning outcomes of the IPC are contrasted to those of the Croatian National Curriculum. Starting from Mathematics, there is an observable age difference between International and Croatian pupils regarding outcome acquisition, especially in terms of Measurement, Geometry and Data Handling areas. Furthermore, the International Primary Curriculum primarily views language as a mean of communication, whereas the Croatian National Curriculum specifies the main subject goal within the Language area is developing respect for the language of the nation, its literature and culture. Hence, International pupils stand out regarding their reading and communication skills with regards to expressing opinion and presenting information, Croatian pupils perfect their writing skills and pronunciation in terms of grammar and syntax. As for the Science area, there are large dissimilarities regarding age, but also International pupils gain greater scope and depth of knowledge since they are introduced to various cultures and events from the past and their perception of the world goes beyond the host country they are living in. On the other hand, while the IPC perceives Art as a subject through which pupils should mainly develop their creativity, Croatian National Curriculum challenges its pupils to think critically of art and therefore recognize and produce visual language problems related to art. Similarly, within the subject of Physical Education International pupils are encouraged to suggest particular skills and activities, whereas Croatian pupils are expected to perfect specific motor knowledge before moving on to the next stage of learning. From the stated, one may conclude that International pupils are offered by

far more freedom and space to investigate when compared to Croatian pupils. However, there is possibility specific knowledge such as grammar, knowledge regarding art and motor knowledge will not be tested by International teachers and consequently not be acquired by International pupils. Therefore, thorough the implementation of the IPC within the national curriculum in regards to identifying precise outcomes is required.

In addition, one may recognize that the Croatian educational system should consider implementing more modern teaching methods such as experimental activities and investigations, but also technology usage. Although, the issue has been acknowledged and suggested in 2011 with the arrival of the new curriculum, specific teaching syllabus, manuals and textbooks haven't been proposed. Nevertheless, numerous innovations such as the implementation of the subject Computer Science have been suggested in the on-going educational reform. Apart from the more innovative teaching methods and technology application, Croatian pupils should, in my opinion, additionally be empowered to decide upon preferred literature and suggest most optimal type of expression and mean. For example, choosing favourite book or short text for reading assessment might bring out the best of pupils, while presenting information in the preferred way gives each pupil a chance to demonstrate their knowledge in the most effective way. Visual learners may present information using Power point, auditory learners may simply retell the story, while kinaesthetic learners may invent a short play. In this way, pupils will be focused on enjoyment rather than just a result. Individual experiences and preferences may be also taken into account within Arts where pupils can for instance suggest certain activities and games in Physical Education classes, most preferred materials during Art classes and favourite songs and dances for Music classes.

It is certain how both curricula can serve as a template for making the most optimal educational system. However, the question that arises is whether the educational system should simply be replicated or whether it needs to be adapted in its own way. To answer this question, one should bear in mind that the educational system is directly interlinked with politics, the economy and cultural context of a country. Since they are constantly changing, the prospect of education is unforeseeable. For whatever the future holds, it should be evident that the educational system cannot

and should not be replicated and not until the society grows a conscience of its significance will it utterly ameliorate.



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Adriana Jurašić

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