



May 2008

## BBC report on Mozaik in Macedonia

English Transcription

Ten years ago Mozaik groups started to work in three public kindergartens in Macedonia; Mozaik is a model for bilingual, multicultural preschool education. Mozaik is a programme of Search for Common Ground.

In the three pilot Mozaik groups Macedonian and Albanian children have been educated and socialized together; now this model has been expanded on other languages opening Macedonian-Serbian and Macedonian-Turkish groups.

Diana Ristova has visited Mozaik group in the kindergarten Rosica in the municipality of Cair in Skopje. In this interview, she speaks with Mozaik teachers Noemi Shileva and Ilimije Hoxha, and Vilma Venkovska Milcev, Country Director of Search for Common Ground Programmes in Macedonia and Kosovo.

*Journalist (Diana Ristova):* Through games and activities, children ages 3-6 years, from Macedonian and Albanian nationality are learning both languages and they mutually introduce each other.

Noemi Shileva and Ilimije Hoxha are teachers in this group:

*Noemi, Macedonian teacher:* Children communicate very easy among each other even though they are coming from different ethnic and religion background. They understand each other very well.

*Ilimije, Albanian teacher:* An Albanian speaking child is eager to answer in Macedonian, while the Macedonian speaking child responds in Albanian and so children learn both languages very well.

*Journalist:* The Mozaik approach differs from the "classical" programme for preschool education by the two components, explains Vilma Venkovska-Milcev, Program Director.

*Vilma:* The first component is pedagogical-development, which includes new skills for conflict resolution. Teachers and children are trained how to solve everyday conflicts in a collaborative, non-violent way. The second component is introduction to a bilingual way of working with children through usage of the two languages.

*Journalist:* She says that there is a lot of interest in the Mozaik model.

*Vilma:* There is a high interest for such an approach and at the moment there are more than 70 children on the waiting lists to receive entrance to the kindergarten.

*Journalist:* Rabija Loku, director of the kindergarten "Bratstvo i Edinstvo", explains that the initiative for opening new Mozaik groups often come from parents:

*Rabija Loku, kindergarten director:* This initiative came from the parents and we support every such initiative that is for the benefit of our children.

*Journalist:* Why do parents want their children to be in the Mozaik group? Avdija Halidi is mother of a four-year-old child.

*Avdija Halidi, Mozaik parent:* The child learns a foreign language much easier before they start with primary school, and here my child learns Macedonian which is the official language in this country.

*Journalist:* Gazmend Ajdini, a parent, thinks the benefit of this model is that children who speak different languages are getting together and knowing each other better.



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*Gazmend Ajdini, Mozaik parent:* Not knowing each other can create stereotypes which become huge problems not only for this age group, but certainly in the future lives of our children.

**Journalist: From Skopje for BBC – Diana Ristova**