



Inclusion of Roma and Migrants in Schools  
Trainings, Open Discussions  
and Youth Volunteering Activities

<https://romigsc.eu>



Erasmus+, KA3: Initiatives for policy innovation –  
Social inclusion through education, training and youth  
Project number: 580228-EPP-1-2016-1-SI-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN  
3-year project: 31 December 2016–31 December 2019.  
Project countries: Slovenia, Germany, Spain, Italy, FYR of Macedonia, Turkey

## RoMigSc – WP2 Initial Study - National Reports

# National Report the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Executive Summary

### Prepared by:

- Veli Kreci
- Merita Zulfu Alili
- Besa Kadriu

### About the Project.

**The main aim of the RoMigSc project** is to support a better integration of Roma and migrant children in education through various activities that stimulate innovative policy development, policy dialogue and implementation, as well as the exchange of knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth.

**Project Goals.** The project, which is funded by the European Union in the scope of the Erasmus + programme, aims to contribute to:

- creating inclusive and democratic learning environments.
- encouraging youth participation, developing inclusion and outreach practices for young people.
- preventing and combating any form of discrimination and segregation in education.
- fostering mutual understanding and respect among people.
- enhancing the quality of non-formal learning activities, youth work practices and volunteering.

**It does so through a number of Key Activities**, such as Initial Study, Training for Volunteers, Volunteering Activity, E-Platform on Inclusion in Schools and Intercultural Topics, Training for Teachers, National Seminars for Different Stakeholders.

### The project is particularly relevant in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM).

- Key activities of the project are particularly important in providing innovative approach in dealing with high drop-out school rate among Roma children while including multiple stakeholders in drafting preventive policy measures and working on identifying effective solutions.
- School teachers are in greater need for developing skills, attitudes, and values for better dealing in multicultural class environment, establishing learning environment and prevention of discrimination in schools.



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- Education (good teachers and good schools) is crucial for the successful integration of vulnerable groups in the society. Transnational diversity is an opportunity to make schools more inclusive, creative and open-minded.

**The summary of the initial study** at hand points out some main results of the initial study in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A second summary paper will discuss the relevance of the overall findings in all of the partner countries, including policy recommendations, for the situation in fYRoM. The full reports, which provide the information for these summaries, are available through the website of the project.

**The main findings** from studying the relevant literature and good practices as well as from discussing the topic with a number of key informants (practitioners from schools, relevant administrations, social workers and volunteer organisation staff) are:

- Provision of sufficient resources, human resources and better and enhanced communication and coordination between the authorities and organizations that are in charge of implementing the programs, i.e. the strategies relating to the realization of the rights of migrant/refugee children (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Education and Science, Crisis Management Center, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Health, etc.).
- Need for a day center which will help Roma children engaged in schools to get help with their homework, participate in different activities, volunteering work, which will prevent them to go back to street as beggars.
- need for a special unit which will deal with the registration of Roma children since as mentioned above there is a large number of Roma children without any documentation so called “children – phantoms”.
- need for a detailed urban plan in the municipality of Tetovo that will identify unregistered residential houses and residents in those quarters. Many Roma in Tetovo live in illegal settlements and consequently without access to water, electricity etc.
- About 10% of Roma children have not attended school at all, high level of absenteeism and drop out
- Main problem is lack of Macedonian language competence
- Risk factors include poverty, bad health and malnutrition, mobility, segregation, insufficient facilities and lack of cultural sensitivity of school staff.
- No social support to increase school attendance, administrative barriers for enrollment, part privatisation of pre school education limits accessibility
- “Schools are generally unwelcoming and unsupportive of Roma children”
- Segregation in special schools and classes are very common
- No policies to attract Roma teachers
- Significant increase in attendance of high school from modest level in last two decades. 23% increase in primary and 57% in secondary school, University students up to 400 (150 graduates) from 10 in 2005.
- National Roma Strategy in the frame of the Roma decade 2005-2015 inspires widespread civil society activities and has been extended until 2020.



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- Strength of policies include commitment to internationally accepted principles of non-discrimination. Weaknesses include a lack of operational implementation of concrete policies to implement the principle.
- Pending 1700 refugees from former Kosova conflict with unresolved legal status.
- Multi-culturality in education through classes formed along mother tongue Macedonian, Albanian or Turkish. Co-existence in daily life.
- UNICEF lobbies for more integration of migrants in regular education. >National Action Plan for Integration of Refugees 2017-2027<
- A list of policy recommendations is given, among them support for investment by migrants and better health provision and integration into regular structures.
- Greater awareness of role of civil society and volunteerism in inclusive school education for achieving social cohesion.
- Volunteer work recognized in some University courses and obtained adequate ECTS credits for volunteerism.

**Good Practices.** The initial study has identified a number of good practices targeted at building good contact to migrant parents, forming inter-professional and inter-agency support networks and volunteer engagement to assist migrant, refugee and Roma children. **Good practices presented in the report include:**

- Roma Resource Center (fYRoM): very active NGO providing special educational services to Roma population in the form of supporting local assistants, providing special trainings and advocacy. Its mission is through mobilizing local authorities and all related societal structure to achieve faster and smoother integration of Roma community.
- USAID Roma Education Project: After ten-year of implementation 3,000 Roma students benefited at all levels of education-from pre-school to university. The project rates of student enrolment, retention, and graduation.
- A Good Start: Access to Early Childhood Education and Care Key to equal start of Roma Children. It provides daylong preschool for 57 children in predominantly Roma municipality-Shuto Orizari.
- Strengthening Local Actors in Refugee Integration in Macedonia: Strengthening capacities of local actors, in this case municipalities, with integration of refugees.
- Social Protection of Refugees in Macedonia: Providing social services-psychological and emotional support-to the vulnerable groups of refugees travelling through the Balkan Route or temporarily accommodated at the Transit Centres.