



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 Turkey – Executive Summary

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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 for Turkey.

- Turkey has been challenged by a high volume of refugees, mainly Syrians, fleeing from the war in the last few years. Among more than one million Syrian school-age children, only 60% are registered in school. Syrian pupils, families and teachers face several problems in education. The curriculum in state schools lacks a socially inclusive perspective.
- Regarding Roma population, although there is not enough data about drop out rates, rates of absence, and enrollment of the Roma children, the research reveals that the participation of Roma children to school education is very low.
- Adopting the principles of inclusive education is crucial for peaceful co-existence of different groups, including refugees and Roma. Inclusive education provides a ground to make schools and society more democratic and pluralistic.



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The summary of the initial study at hand points out some main results of the initial study in Turkey. 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 Turkey. 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:

- Turkish society and education system has been challenged by the influx of large numbers of Syrian refugees and school-age children in the last few years.
- An effective educational policy was not developed for the inclusion of Syrian pupils since bureaucrats, school administrators and teachers regarded 'this situation' as temporary and believed that they had to help Syrian children until they returned home, to Syria.
- Policies of inclusion of Syrian children in the public education system have gained pace especially in 2016 even if their accession to state (public) schools have been legalized in 2014.
- Ministry of National Education (MoNE) developed a road map for the education of the Syrian children in Turkey in August 2016, which resulted in the increase of the schooling rates in 2016-2017 academic year.
- There are two alternatives for the education of Syrian pupils: State schools where education is based on the Turkish curriculum and the medium of instruction is Turkish; and Temporary Education Centers (TECs), founded by national and international non-governmental organizations, which teaches a revised version of Syrian curriculum in Arabic.
- With a circular published by MoNE in 2014, TECs are expected to be closed gradually, and all Syrian children will be educated in state schools in accordance with the Turkish curricular program.
- Legislative regulations pertaining to the education of Syrians remain inadequate. This causes arbitrary practices which prevents Syrian children from going to school.
- Language barrier faced by pupils in state schools is a crucial problem which not only leads to poor educational success but also may result in dropping out of school.
- A problem which needs urgent attention relating to the education of the Syrian children is language education. The quality of the teaching in the Turkish language courses provided in state schools and TECs remain inadequate.
- Syrian children are vulnerable to numerous protection risks, including psychological trauma, discrimination, economic and sexual exploitation and child marriage.
- Syrian children's adaptation to state schools is harder than their adaptation to TECs due to language barrier (which excludes the first languages of the children) and lack of inclusive education perspective.
- Syrian pupils are not only exposed to bullying by their peers, but also they are excluded by parents and teachers in state schools, which finally results in drop-outs.
- Roma pupils encounter several obstacles (related to discrimination and poverty) in school.
- Although there are some civil societal efforts for the inclusion of Roma pupils, state and NGO collaboration to this aim needs to be strengthened.



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

<https://romigsc.eu>



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- Turkish education practices and the school curriculum are far from adopting a multicultural perspective.
- In developing a critical and intercultural pedagogic understanding which promotes social justice, teacher training (including the development of teaching materials) is vital.
- From a macro perspective, educational strategies and content targeting Syrian children offers a great opportunity for the development of an inclusive educational understanding for all children in Turkey. Inclusive education is of utmost importance in fostering a culture of peace.
- Public policies and NGO interventions should not only focus on the refugee groups but also the hosting societies.
- Effective coordination of public, private and non-governmental organizations is needed.
- Strengthening the rights-based approach, diversifying the social base of non-governmental organizations and improving the informative work about volunteerism are required to improve conditions for civil society participation and to improve volunteer work.

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

- “Empowerment Project for Young Refugees” (Genç Mültecileri Güçlendirme Projesi, by Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı) aims to encourage self-improvement and socialization of young refugees.
- “Back to School Program” by Small Projects Istanbul assists Syrian refugees for increasing participation to formal education.
- “Syrian Refugees Program” by Yuva Foundation includes establishment of community centers and educational programs for Syrian refugees.
- “Educational Support Project” by Mavi Kalem Association aims at enrolling Syrian children in public schools and improving Syrian refugee children’s academic achievement in two neighbourhoods in Istanbul.