**OVERALL SUMMARY of VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY-WP4 2018 (SPAIN, NORTH MACEDONIA, SLOVENIA, ITALY): Summarizing the facts and recommendations from national reports**

1. **GENERAL**

**Main aim of the volunteering activity was:**

* To provide opportunity for volunteers to identify needs of community, develop program in working with youth, increase participation and raise awareness for benefits of volunteering in community
* Provide venue for volunteers who have gone through the training for volunteers to put in place their competence, skills and values when volunteering
* Awareness raising of social responsibility in the community for sustainability and promotion of diversity
* Help in promoting inclusiveness as value for all and in building sustainable communities

**General characteristic:**

Volunteering activity schedule had been designed to take place after delivery of training for volunteers, which except Spain all partner countries had delivered during the year of 2018 -Italy and Slovenia completed between March-June 2018; North Macedonia May 2018-until February 2019;and Spain could not organize the volunteering activity due to bureaucratic limitations. This activity came after long preparatory phase in identifying mentors, host institutions, and in some countries dealing with administrative barriers. Therefore, project partner countries Spain, North Macedonia, Italy and Slovenia responsible for volunteering activity as specified under WP4 monitored the volunteering activity during period of March 2018 until later February 2019. As the time schedule of delivery of volunteering activity differs, number of volunteers per country shows some variations as well due to local conditions. However, due to first year of implementation of this activity some partner countries run into unexpected administrative barriers in delivering of the activity which resulted with lower number of volunteers recruited as planned for 2018. Namely, except Slovenia the rest of project partner countries either had less than 20 volunteers per year per country or in the case of Spain had no volunteers at all. Project partner countries are committed to put all their effort for fulfilling this gap in 2019 cycle of volunteers. Below number of volunteers per country is provided.

* Slovenia - 21
* Italy - 15
* North Macedonia - 11
* Spain - 0

Total number of volunteers in 2018 is 47 active volunteers delivering of 5504 volunteering hours-working with mentors in reporting their volunteering hours-with impact of 3058 beneficiaries including, parents, community actors, school teachers, children, and other volunteers.

The volunteers in all partner countries worked to establish partnerships with institutions, organizations, and community centers while enlarging their network of host institutions for volunteers. Host institutions for volunteers have been kinder gardens, primary schools, high schools, community centers, NGOs and special schools/centers for integration of migrant or Roma.

Number of mentors overseeing the work of volunteers has been 19 in all partner countries whose work as mentors had been recognized with delivery of certificates for mentorship.

1. **SHORT OVERAL ANALYSIS OF VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES DELIVERED IN ALL 4 PROJECT PARTNER COUNTRIES**

Participants going through the training for volunteers organized prior to volunteering activity were trained in gaining knowledge for volunterism, developing skills and recognizing values in contributing to improving conditions for vulnerable groups in society. Main aim of volunteering activity has been to ease inclusion of vulnerable groups namely, migrants and Roma children or adults. During volunteering activity excluding Spain volunteers in partner countries volunteers had covered wide range of areas identified based on the needs of target groups while the country and local social conditions imposed areas for the volunteering. Below we provide common areas and country specific areas of volunteering covered by 46 volunteers during period of March 2018-February 2019.

***Common areas of volunteering activity***

* Creative workshops for interconnecting, socializing and spending quality spare time-cooking workshops, learning something new about other cultures, work in garden.
* Participation in the performance of sports and cultural days and other activities in intercultural environment.
* Socializing with Roma children during morning care, drawing, telling stories etc.

***Specific areas of volunteering by partner country***

***SLOVENIA***

* Learning assistance to pupils in Slovene and other subjects.
* Learning Slovenian language for parents.
* Participation in the performance of sports and cultural days and other activities.
* Participating in organizing events with an overview of the characteristics, culture and traditions of migrant states.

***ITALY***

* supporting learning process for pupils (mainly supporting their process of learning Italian)
* organizing social & cultural events that can make a significant contribution to integrating into peers’ society and social environment

***NORTH MACEDONIA***

* Learning assistance to pupils in Macedonian language, math and other subjects.
* Visiting parents of the children with problems in schools.
* Preparing high school pupils for the state Matura exam.

***SPAIN (identified areas for volunteering but not delivered)***

* To help children learn Spanish / Valencian
* To assist children in learning other courses (for example: maths, English, sciences, etc.)
* To develop activities or meetings with families in multicultural environments
* To help parents learn Spanish / Valencian

1. **Summary of reflections and learning outcomes from the volunteering activity in partner countries :**

Volunteers each delivering over 100 hours work in volunteering activity or total of 5505 hours covering wide range of areas had observed and learned many issues when dealing with children at risk of exclusion and migrants with cultural backgrounds other than the host society. Below is some important extracts of national reports based on reflections of volunteers and beneficiaries happened during volunteering activity.

* Opportunity to gain new experiences, skills and competencies, such as: empathy, feeling good for helping others, motivation and inspiration for further volunteering activities, learning to work in a team, community experience.
* Have ‘enriched’ my general knowledge by learning about other cultures.
* Have extended my social network, made new friendships.
* Have learned how to work in a team.
* This experience had important impact on my personal and professional growth.
* Volunteers helped in overcoming social and cultural barriers of beneficiaries; through several activities (Macedonian language, help in other courses such as math, geography etc, storytelling, different social & cultural activities, other activities for social inclusion …) which helped beneficiaries to feel more confident and succeed in passing exams or having good marks
* knowledge, social networking, a good sense of helping someone else (and spreading his knowledge and horizons), getting to know their environment (religion), breaking stereotypes), developing an understanding of public speaking, experiencing the role of mediator, teamwork, adapting, developing new learning techniques,
* personal growth, references for further work, the feeling that I helped someone,
* I see it as acquiring new experiences and competencies, and acquaintances.
* experience in work with children, self-initiative in preparation for labour, acquaintances,
* knowledge, experience, better job opportunities,
* community experience,
* extending the social network,
* work experience,
* knowledge, strengthening employability,
* contact with children,
* better job prospects, charity.
* Beneficiaries benefited from informal & spontaneous contacts with volunteers, what facilitated their integration within society
* One of important methods that volunteers used was story telling.
* Some of volunteers were also migrants (who know the culture and language of beneficiaries), what gave an added value to this activity …
* Volunteers helped in overcoming social and cultural barriers of beneficiaries; through several activities (Italian language, storytelling, different social & cultural activities, other activities for social inclusion …) which helped beneficiaries to fell more comfortable in a new environment
* Volunteers enriched regular activities of host institution

1. **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

From national reports of partners, we can extract the **following (policy) recommendations:**

* There is a need for inclusion of more volunteers, debates, trainings for the integration of Roma children in schools.
* Systemic and continuous long-term solution should be initiated to support inclusion and better learning opportunities for Roma and migrant children.
* More intensive work with the parents of Roma children is needed.
* Prejudices, stereotypes, not enough understanding of the diversities in the society are considered also as an obstacle for inclusion of Roma children in schools.
* Roma children need to learn Roma language as a course in primary schools.
* Special programs are needed and applied in some cases for pupils who cannot write and read.
* Enrichment/informal activities for mixed groups of children (Roma, migrants, host nationals) shall be widely promoted
* Volunteering is important aspect of non-formal learning (increases references, knowledge, skills and competencies of volunteers)
* Volunteering is more and more needed in schools (due to more and more diversity society), and shall be embedded in school system
* Volunteering shall start already at the beginning of school year
* Teaching children (of 'mainstream population' ) about the Roma culture and the culture of migrant children
* The Ministry should provide more hours for learning the national language –particular in the first year of enrolment of migrant children in national schools; since it is extremely difficult for them to follow the lessons
* Volunteers shall be trained for work in multicultural environment
* Volunteering shall be supported at local/regional/national level, and well-coordinated by institution that host volunteers
* Important is to include migrant volunteers into volunteering activities
* Volunteering activities needs to be well coordinated, progress in beneficiaries of volunteering (children) carefully monitored
* School inclusion activities are under budgeted and under recognised.
* Some schools are ghettos: a policy of no-isolation is a must.
* More support to programs in secondary school (dropout danger zone: when passing from primary to secondary school).