

OVERALL SUMMARY of NATIONAL REPORTS ON NATIONAL SEMINARS 2019 (SPAIN, NMK, SLOVENIA, ITALY) – WP7

1. GENERAL

In all countries, national seminars were delivered in the period between June and September 2019 as one-day events per country. International experts, who shared the experiences with participants (Slovenia and Spain had experts from North Macedonia, North Macedonia brought an expert from Slovenia, Turkey invited experts from Spain and Slovenia, and Italy had experts from Slovenia, North Macedonia and Germany) were involved in all of them. The total number of participants per country is as follows:

- Slovenia - 36 participants
- Italy - 50 participants
- North Macedonia - 30 participants
- Turkey- 78 participants
- Spain - 47 participants

All the participants had the possibility to access the material on the project's e-classroom and e-platform (most of material was available in national languages).

2. OVERAL ANALYSIS OF EVALUATION

We received a total of 67 filled questionnaires, which is 41 % of all participants. Below, a short summary of analysis of evaluation questionnaires is shown:

- Majority of respondents were teachers, except in Slovenia where the majority of the attendants were public administrators and civil servants, and in Turkey where 40% of the attendants were volunteers.
- There is also a relationship between the profile of the attendants and the main target group of the country. Indeed, the majority of respondents had been working with migrant children in Turkey (47%), Spain (57%) and Italy (40%); while in Slovenia (72%) and North Macedonia (74%) most participants had been involved in working with Roma children.
- The overall analysis of all countries shows that the participants' level of previous experience with specific methods to integrate migrant/Roma children differ: while in Turkey (67%), Slovenia (60%) and North Macedonia (70%) the majority of the respondents reported to have previous experience with specific



methods to integrate Roma and migrant children into a learning environment, in Spain (14%) and Italy (40%) these figures were low.

- Participants were, in general, very satisfied with the training; on a scale from 1 to 4, the global satisfaction level was 3,7.
- Regarding the opportunities to express suggestions and opinions, the data shows that, on average, 83,75% of the participants claimed that they had many opportunities to express their suggestions and opinions; 11 % of respondents stated that they had only a partial opportunity to express their suggestions and opinions, and only 5,25 % of them expressed that there were no opportunities to give out any suggestions.
- On the question whether the attendants to the seminars believe that they have gained new knowledge at the events, 74 % respondents claimed that they did; but 9,25% expressed to have obtained only some new knowledge, and 16,75% of them felt that did not obtain any knowledge. The highest satisfaction with the new knowledge obtained was achieved in Spain and Turkey (100%) and the least satisfaction level belonged to Slovenia (56 %).

3. IMPACT

The participants provided some recommendations about what works in the system and what needs to be improved (the most valuable lessons can be found on the section "Policy recommendations").

The majority of the respondents to the seminars' evaluation survey stated that the most valued areas of new knowledge were:

- how to work in multicultural classrooms,
- social responsibility and ethical behaviour,
- stereotypes and prejudices,
- competency development to work successfully in an intercultural social environment focusing on discrimination in various social contexts,
- the meaning of intercultural education and how to improve it,
- and the key role of volunteering for a better inclusion of Roma/migrants in schools.

The attendants also revealed that they valued the chance to learn about the project from a national and international perspective in the sessions where the speakers shared several projects about national and international practices in the area, as well as from the rich supporting materials available on the e-platform. They also appreciated the opportunity to participate in lively discussions with experts in Roma

studies research, in educational policies and in training for inclusion, usually under the format of a round table.

The ensuing debate put in value the need for interdisciplinary action when considering school inclusion and the role of volunteers in schools, as well as a demand for a more comprehensive training for educators and professionals working with Roma and migrant children.

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The topics considered most relevant by the speakers at the Seminars were:

- the difficulties that might be shared among all the stakeholders and how to contextualize and tailor the possible actions to the different realities,
- the importance of sharing experiences and innovative projects with other actors,
- the comparisons between different national educational systems,
- how to improve student motivation to go to school by carrying out activities that interest them,
- how to transfer intercultural competencies from teachers to students, and last but not least,
- the importance of understanding diversity as a potential and as a resource for learning instead of as a burden.

The most valuable lessons learned in the events were the following:

- There is a need for better coordination and cooperation efforts between schools and teachers. It would be beneficial to exchange examples on what to consider when teaching in multicultural environments, how to deal with stereotypes in classroom and learn from other national strategies for the development of more successful policies about school inclusion and society integration.
- It is essential to be knowledgeable in learning strategies on psychology and emotional management to deal with students. There should be more discussion on the role of intercultural competencies of teachers and volunteering in schools for a better integration of Roma/migrant students, as well as for raising awareness on the importance of volunteering for the activation of youth.

The presentation in the Seminars of best practices in the area of inclusion of Roma/migrant children show the success of projects with the following aims:

- Development of digital learning and textbook materials in all subjects (e.g., geography, history, maths...) to help students to be able to learn while, at the

same time, they acquire the local language through this topic specific learning material.

- Implementation of a holistic concept for the intercultural opening of schools which extends the school to the parents, aided by a pool of voluntary language mediators to preserve their identity, language and culture (e.g., when preparing an elective course/subject, key experts from the field of Roma language and Roma culture should be involved although the course/subject itself should be taught by qualified staff, regardless of their cultural background).
- Dissemination of personal stories of successful Roma and migrant people and the opportunity to exchange opinions, experiences and global points of view.

5. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

From the annual reports of the project's partners, the following policy recommendations/conclusions related to the inclusion of Roma/migrants in schools can be extracted:

1. Policies must be adapted to the needs of these target groups taking into account the national/ local context. Each country has specific problems for each target population.
2. There is a need to create more spaces for bringing together different stakeholders working in the field of inclusive education with a specific focus on migrants and refugees.
3. A larger effort should be paid to make best practices and materials more visible and accessible for teachers. It is imperative to learn from success cases in the resolution of specific problems and put them in value.
4. Civil society actors must be active in monitoring the process and pointing out areas for improvements within the different national integration strategies, while, at the same time, sharing at the same time, the good practices and experiences in a national/ local area.
5. A protocol for data on circular migration and social administration must be prepared and coordinated; and such a protocol must be forwarded to local administration and schools.
6. The stability of the teaching staff in the schools must be ensured, and the inclusion programs' bureaucratic procedures lightened to prevent the failure of a long-term and sustainable strategy for a tailored follow-up of the children.
7. The difficulties in recruiting teachers who are interested and prepared on this topic and are willing to work in a school with a high percentage of Roma and migrant children and adolescents must be eradicated.



8. The staff in schools should be reinforced with supporting profiles such as psychologists, mediators and social workers to help students and the school management to improve the attention to these groups. Besides, social workers should be included in the policy making process.
9. The inclusion of the parents into the school environment must be supported, to satisfy the need to strengthen the dialogue family -school and the need to overcome the barrier of the families' distrust of the educational centre (the role of the mothers of Roma children is critical for the results of integration processes).
10. Topics such as multiculturalism and the implementation of work strategies in intercultural classrooms should be a part of the study programmes for future teachers and volunteers on because this is the current reality, there are almost no single-cultural classrooms anymore. Also, the curricula could incorporate some elective courses in Roma culture and Roma language, or a university volunteering course could be included in the curriculum as a formal and elective training course.
11. The overall understanding of cultural diversity and trust in migrant and Roma children should be stressed at all school system levels: the need to carry out multicultural days and workshops in educational centres associated with the countries of origin of children and adolescents.
12. There is a need to raise awareness and improve knowledge of the specific cultures due to the lack of dissemination of success stories of people who serve as an example and reference for young people, to avoid dropping out of school. More focus should be put on the preservation of Roma culture and language.
13. Likewise, pre-emptive measures must be undertaken to ensure the children know and learn the language of the destination country.
14. The importance of volunteers that work in schools should be stressed and advertised. Volunteering in schools is essential for a better inclusion of vulnerable pupils, in order for the latter to be embedded into them school system by means of a strong engagement of volunteering organisations for learning assistance to pupils in language, math and other subjects, carrying out creative workshops for interconnecting and spending spare time, visiting parents of the children with problems in schools, participating in the performance of sports and cultural days and other activities, socializing with Roma and migrant children during morning care, drawing, telling stories, etc...
15. Personalised follow-up strategies of the individual problems of the children should be developed.
16. Social workers must have the means to visit the families of Roma children who do not attend schools in order to lower the dropout rate. There is a need for early warning system to Social Services and parents to let them know that 'your child is not at school'.



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

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

In sum, policies from the EU in the realm of school inclusion of Roma and migrant children must: support multiculturalism in the classrooms; foster a stronger cooperativeness between the members of the Roma and migrant community, parents and schools; endorse the training of professionals in transcultural competencies; activate volunteering actions for non-formal support of the children; and create initiatives to involve the parents of Roma and migrant children to promote their trust on the school system.

Also, it is very important to teach all stakeholders how to act in an inclusive way. In this sense, the importance of having common forums with other teachers and professionals with the same circumstances where they can exchange and expose experiences has been revealed as essential.