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“Working together  
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Education”

## Working together for Roma Inclusive education

2<sup>nd</sup> transnational project meeting, Romania, 27-28 March 2017

Newsletter #3  
April 2017



Following approximately one month of pilot testing of the small scale interventions in all three countries the second transnational project meeting and study visit took place in Bucharest and Ialomita in Romania in 27 & 28 March 2017. The aim of the study visit was to exchange experience and best practices with organizations and schools related to Roma inclusive education in Romania. In total 16 representatives of the six partners’ organizations of the project participated in the study visit and the transnational project meeting.

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On the first day of the study visit partners had the opportunity to visit the school of Cazanesti village in Ialomita county, where Roma and non-Roma children of the school along with all the school personnel, and other local representatives related to Roma issues warmly welcomed the project’s representatives with a traditional custom.



The partners visited the kindergarten “Ready Set Go” which implements an action with preschoolers and the “Toy library”. The “Ready Set Go” project has achieved to set up a



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kindergarten with 20 preschoolers who were not included in the public education system before the project began. From the group constituted at the beginning of the project, nine children were enrolled in the school year 2016-2017 in preparatory class of the High School of Technology Cazanesti.



One objective of the project was the rehabilitation space for conducting instructive-educational process, inaugurated in October 2016 and equipped with furniture, educational materials, games and toys. Children and their families also received material support consisting of

clothing and vouchers offered under the condition of constant participation in the project activities. The pre-mediator has an important role in the project and he is involved in liaising between the community and the kindergarten. The good cooperation between educator-mediator and community facilitator was crucial for the attendance of the children and the success of the project. Some of the project’s key achievements included children learning to speak Romanian (they were speaking only Romanes prior to participation), become more sociable, and learn to respect social norms, like hygiene.

The “toy library” is a place where children and their parents from vulnerable groups can play with toys such as chess and many others, with the aim to improve their life skills, logic and strategic thinking. Games, books and toys can be borrowed by the children and their parents.



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“Your story” and the “second chance” educational projects and all the ongoing activities of the centre were then presented by the coordinator of the centre. The “Your story” activity

teaches illiterate Roma mothers, coming from a very closed Roma sub-group called “Kalderash,” how to read stories to their children. As a result of the willingness of Roma mothers to continue learning the “Second chance” activity emerged with the aim to support Roma



mothers to learn to read with the aim to be able to read stories to their children and assist them in doing their homework. About 70 storybooks with attractive titles have been distributed to families involved in the project, helping to develop their home libraries.

One more activity of the school was presented which is entitled “Home-School Liaisons”. The project is meant to develop a sense of trust in school and education in general by supporting parents to become teachers for a day and present a lesson to the children in kindergarten. Mothers attended special sessions and workshops, proposing various topics and guided by the teachers, the facilitator and volunteer of the “Your story” project and they became the “educator of the day” along with her child.



The visit to the school ended with an amazing musical event in the schoolyard where the children sang songs and played theater for the visitors.



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Following the visit to Ialomita County, the project partners took part in the methodological seminar which held at AEVB offices in Bucharest. The seminar aimed at discussing and analyzing the methodological aspects of the pilot implementation of the three small scale interventions. The partners shared their thoughts and concerns and each partner explained how the intervention has been adapted to the specific socio-economic conditions of each country.



On the second day of the study visit partners had the opportunity to visit the Bora Multifunctional Centre of Slobozia, in Bora neighborhood to Ialomita County, which is currently implementing the pilot small scale intervention. The Bora Multifunctional Centre of Slobozia is a project

implemented from 2012 within the framework of the “Priority Interventions program” financed by the Romanian Government through the Romanian Social Development Fund. The partners of the project were the Municipality of Slobozia, the Initiative Group of Roma people from the neighborhood Bora and the organization “Justice and Fraternity” Ialomita. The beneficiaries are children enrolled in School District Gymnasium Bora, aged between 6 to 14 years old, from class 0 to class V.



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The center promotes intercultural awareness and provides to the children with the following services:



- After school education;
- Educational training and artistic workshops;
- Social Skills development;
- Psycho pedagogical and educational support;
- Intercultural activities;
- Legal advises and social assistance.

In its five years of operation the centre has managed to support and motivate around 70 children. A key to its success is mandatory attendance. All children enrolled must attend daily in order to enjoy Center’s facilities. This is a strict obligation “which all children must follow otherwise they cannot enroll” as the director of the center mentioned.

The meeting ended with a fabulous dancing event where children, Roma and non-Roma, danced traditional Romanian, Bulgarian, Greek and Roma dances and recited some of the poems which will be translated into Romani and English languages as per the selected small scale interventions of the project.

The second study visit closed with a visit to Ialomita County School Inspectorate where the second translational project meeting took place. The representatives of all project partners shared their thoughts on project implementation, discussed the best practices and planned the next steps of the project. The next study visit will be in Pavlikeni in 15-16 May 2017. Until then, all partners are continuing the implementation of the pilot small scale interventions.



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