

P.R.I.D.E.

**Policies for Roma Inclusive
Dimension in Europe**

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Toolkit

June 2022



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1. Policies at educational systems

Two main non-exclusive categories of policy approaches can be adopted by countries towards **the inclusion of Roma students and Roma communities in general in mainstream society** (European Social Fund (ESF) Learning Network, 2015):

The targeted approach, whose goal is the improvement of the Roma minority specifically. Its defendants argue that Roma students **suffer from exclusion not only because of their socio-economic situation, but also because of discrimination** on the basis of their ethnicity. The fact that they are subject to a specific form of discrimination requires **policies tailored for Roma students as a distinct group**. Discrimination can take various different shapes, including bullying and physical violence, and be expressed at all levels, including in political and academic discourses, the classrooms, schools and educational policies. **Targeted policies towards Roma communities might therefore be seen as needed in order to reduce the specific barriers to inclusion and imbalances faced by Roma individuals.**

The mainstream approach that aims to **foster inclusion for the whole school population without categorising a distinct ethnic minority** that would endure specific issues. Its tenants argue for an ethnically blind approach with a special focus on civic equality embodied in a general anti-discrimination and human rights frame. In this case, policies aim **to increase opportunities for Roma in dealing with institutions of education as a whole**. They worry that a targeted approach might “ethnicise” Roma identity which would be against inclusionary principles, and prefer **a rights-based approach directed to all citizens** without special attention to a group based on ethnic characteristics. They may also criticise targeted policies for ignoring satellite problems and/or homogenise the Roma population that is highly diverse, not only in terms of practices but also in terms of socio-economic status.

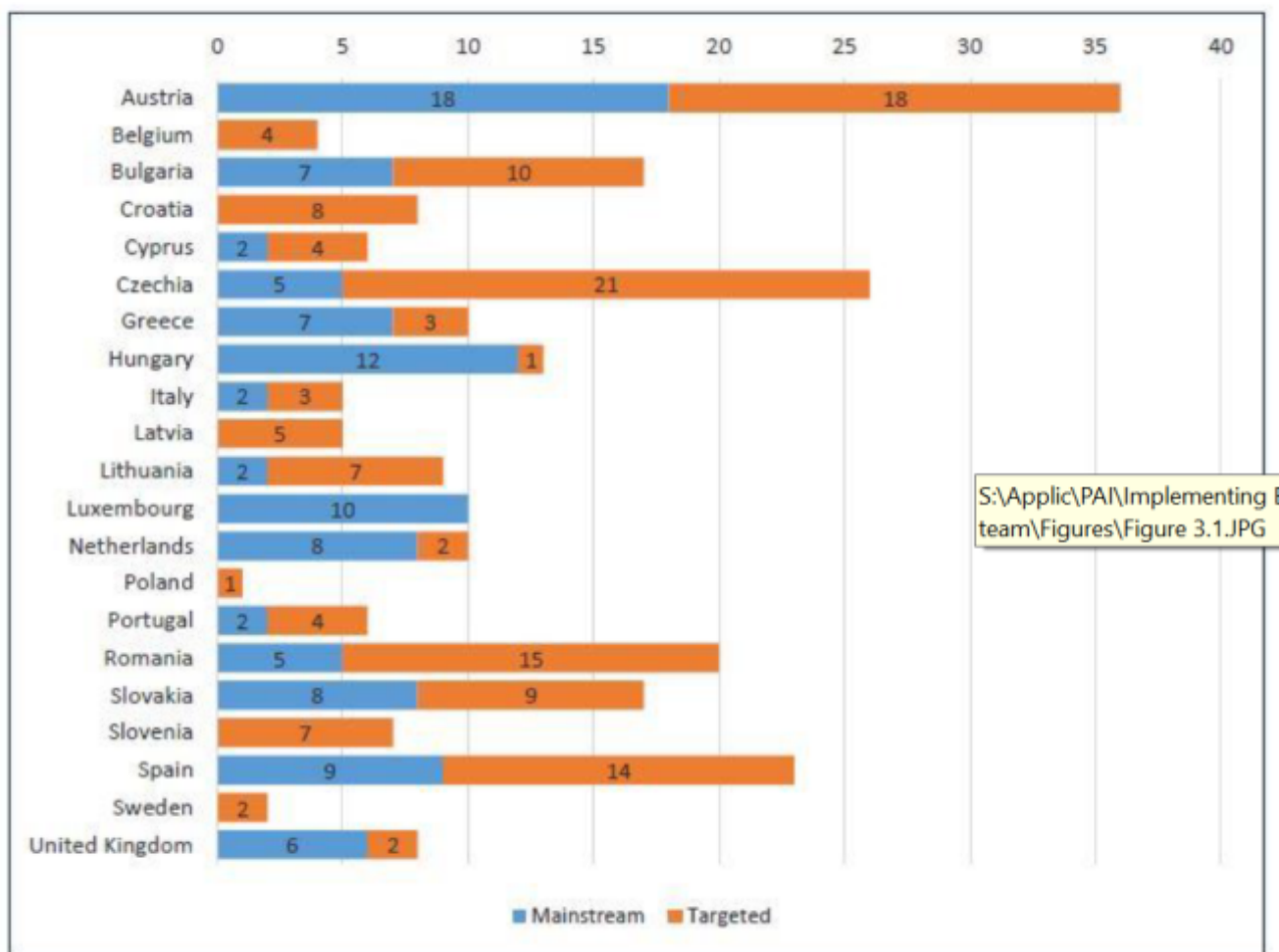
On the contrary, the mainstream approach has been criticised **for making Roma invisible and ignoring prominent issues at the roots of their exclusion**. In those countries that adopt a colour-blind approach when it comes to policy making and/or do not officially recognise Roma groups as an ethnic national minority, few national policies target them specifically. As a result, in all areas including education, they tend **to target socio-economic disadvantage** and do not implement complementary measures to respond to marginalisation or exclusion challenges linked to racism and ethnic discrimination.

European institutions have tried to solve this dilemma by arguing for **policies based on the explicit but not exclusive targeting principle**. It guides the European level governance on Roma inclusion and corresponds to the second principle of the ten **Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion**.

Regarding the type of measures implemented by countries, the Commission 2019 Staff Working Document identifies that in 2017, out of a total number of 243 measures relevant for education, more than half (140) were targeted. The following Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the types of measures adopted by different countries.

Figure 3.1. Number of measures implemented in the area of education by type of measure (mainstream or targeted) in 2017

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OECD DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS Inclusion of Roma Students in Europe: A literature review and examples of policy initiatives OECD Education Working Paper No. 228
[https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP\(2020\)16&docLanguage=En](https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP(2020)16&docLanguage=En)

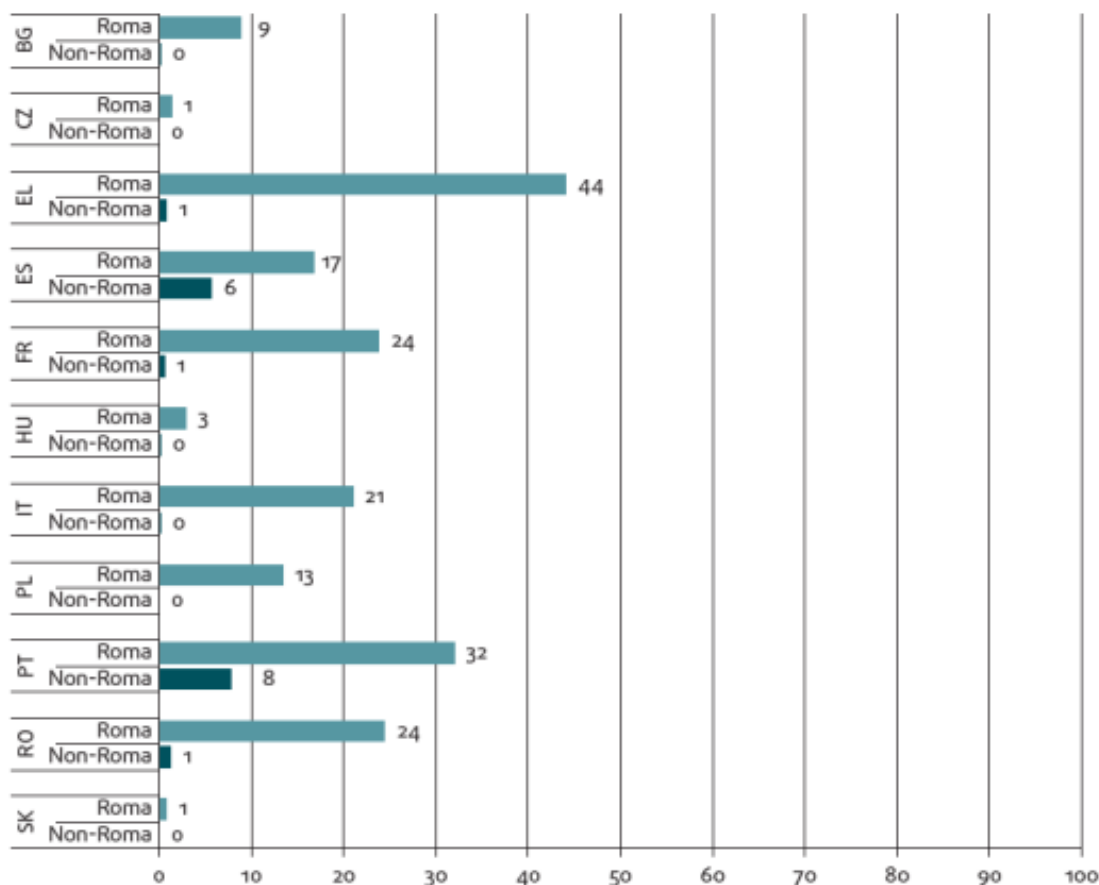
2. Participation in formal education

Data on the attainment of formal education suggest strong differences between Roma and non-Roma (Figure 11). In some countries, many Roma have not had any formal education. In Greece, 44 % of Roma respondents aged 16 and above said that they had never been to school. For Portugal, that figure was 32 % and in France, Italy and Romania it stood between 20 % and 25 %. In contrast, in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, the share of Roma who reported never having been to school is very low. The expansion of education for Roma is apparent in all Member States: the percentage of Roma respondents who have never attended school is lowest among the youngest age group. The share of respondents in the oldest age group who report that they have never been in school is highest in Greece (66 %), Portugal (57 %) and Spain (43 %). Portugal and Spain have made particular headway: younger Roma in those two countries are far more likely to have attended school than older Roma.

This elevated share of young Roma who have never been in formal education stems from a combination of social, geographical and infrastructural factors, such as social exclusion, sub-standard living conditions, the

lack of accessible schools.

Figure 11: Roma and non-Roma respondents aged 16 and above who have never been to school, by EU Member State (%)



Question: H1. At what age did you finish or leave school? 94 never been in education.
 Notes: Reference group: All Roma and non-Roma respondents aged 16 and above.
 Source: FRA Roma pilot survey 2011

Source

https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2014-roma-survey-dif-education-1_en.pdf

3. Causes of poor educational outcomes

To identify possible reasons for non-attendance the survey asked respondents why they stopped going to school or why they never attended school. Respondents could choose up to three different answers from a list of twelve. Possible responses included financial reasons, such as the need to work and the cost of education, given that households have associated costs. Other responses reflect circumstantial reasons, such as illness, long distance from school, marriage and childbirth or a lack of documents, as well as other reasons, such as did poorly at school or judged to be sufficiently educated. Finally there are reasons related to the school environment, which may, for example, be hostile. Migration and the necessity to assist in the household or family business were not among the defined response categories and fall under 'other', the response chosen most frequently in Portugal, Italy, Spain and France.

Table 1 presents the three reasons the Roma respondents most frequently chose. These reasons related to low aspirations, such as the respondent's belief that he or she was sufficiently educated, or employment, he or she needed to work for income or had found a job.

The second group is actually poverty related because it hints that education is simply unaffordable for an important share of the respondents. Given that the employment-related reasons for quitting education are just another dimension of poverty, poverty emerges as a primary reason for stopping education.

Two options – ‘judged to be sufficiently educated’ and ‘need to work for income/found job’ were more frequently selected in all countries, indicating that the respondents seem to view the level of education they have attained as sufficient for the jobs they can get.

The results cannot tell us about the nature of these jobs, but it is reasonable to assume that they would be low-skilled. This could reflect the need to find work to address immediate needs at a lower education level thus limiting opportunities for improving their labour market situation through longer stay in education.

Some clear regional patterns emerge from the results. Romania registered the highest scores for poverty-related reasons (costs of education), which also emerged among the top three categories in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary and Slovakia. The choice between education and income is also reflected in ‘the need to find a job’ option, with poverty again acting as a major factor pushing Roma out of education. Dropping education in favour of income generation backfires, however, in the long run, because it reduces future income generation opportunities and effectively locks Roma in a self-perpetuating cycle of poverty. There is a real risk that people simply extrapolate their experience onto their expectations, perceiving this vicious cycle as the only realistic approach, which may also at least in part explain their low educational aspirations.

Table 1: Roma respondents’ three most frequently mentioned reasons for stopping school aged 16 and above, by EU Member State (% based on all answers)

Bulgaria (n=1,274)		Czech Republic (n=1,565)	
	%		%
Judged to be sufficiently educated	30	Judged to be sufficiently educated	25
Need to work for income/found job	24	Did poorly, failed at entrance exam	19
Cost of education too high	19	Need to work for income/found job	19
Hungary (n=1,540)		Romania (n=1,191)	
	%		%
Need to work for income/found job	30	Cost of education too high	36
Judged to be sufficiently educated	24	Need to work for income/found job	18
Cost of education too high	11	Judged to be sufficiently educated	17
Slovakia (n=1,662)		Greece (n=1,588)	
	%		%
Judged to be sufficiently educated	30	Need to work for income/found job	34
Need to work for income/found job	20	Cost of education too high	14
Cost of education too high	14	Judged to be sufficiently educated	13
Poland (n=833)		Spain (n=1,101)	
	%		%
Need to work for income/found job	22	Need to work for income/found job	40
Judged to be sufficiently educated	21	Judged to be sufficiently educated	21
Marriage, pregnancy or childbirth	15	Other reason	18
Portugal (n=1,214)		Italy (n=656)	
	%		%
Other reason	40	Other reason	29
Judged to be sufficiently educated	19	Need to work for income/found job	25
Need to work for income/found job	12	Judged to be sufficiently educated	13
France (n=795)			
	%		
Other reason	29		
Judged to be sufficiently educated	24		
Need to work for income/found job	15		

Question: Why did you stop going to school? Why did you never go to school?

Reference group: All Roma respondents aged 16 and above. Respondents were asked to provide up to

three answers.

Source: Education: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States Roma survey – Data in focus
https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2014-roma-survey-dif-education-1_en.pdf

4. The right to quality education

Education has to be of the highest possible quality to help every child reach his or her potential, and governments must ensure that Roma children in all schools, including preschools, are able to receive the same quality of education as all other children. The Committee on the Rights of the Child stipulates that the curriculum, in early childhood and in school, must be of direct relevance to the child's social, cultural, environmental and economic context, and to his or her present and future needs, and take full account of the child's evolving capacities. Curriculum must therefore be inclusive and adapted to the needs of children in different and/or difficult circumstances. Quality in education can only be achieved through the development of child-friendly learning environments that have a holistic approach to children's development. All learning environments and educational content, teaching and learning processes should reflect human rights principles. This means addressing children's multiple rights, using strategies that build links between the school and the family and community. **Child-friendly learning environments** seek not only to equip children with basic learning skills, but also to enable them to take control of their lives and to promote justice, democracy, peace and tolerance.

Child-friendly schools and preschools

UNICEF has established specific benchmarks for educational environments within its child-friendly schools (CFS) framework. The CFS framework conceives of the learning environment and all of its components as an interdependent whole, rather than concentrating discreetly on different aspects of the learning environment. This holistic approach is fundamental to the creation of environments in which Roma children can learn effectively. In the larger context, the CFS framework is "a means of translating the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) into school management and classroom practice, and ensuring the right of all children to have access to quality basic education."

For preschools, schools and education systems to be child-friendly, they should:

- Be **inclusive** of all children, particularly Roma, children with special educational needs and children with a disadvantaged social background
- Offer **good quality** teaching and learning processes with individual instruction appropriate to the developmental level, abilities and learning capacities and outcomes of all children, thus ensuring that no child is left behind; the curriculum and educational content must be **relevant** to the needs of the society, its social cohesion and labour market
- Provide a **safe, healthy and protective** school environment in which children are protected from violence, abuse and harm and in which essential life skills and values of respect, tolerance and democracy are promoted
- Be **gender-sensitive** and promote gender equality in both enrolment and achievement; adequate attention must be given to the situation of girls in some countries, but also to the growing disadvantage of boys in upper-secondary and higher education throughout the region
- Promote the **participation of stakeholders** – children, families and communities – in all aspects of school life encouraging the involvement of parents and families through the development or strengthening of effective parent-teachers associations (PTAs), and fostering local partnerships in education through working with the civil society – NGOs and community-based organizations.

In particular, early childhood education needs to meet the following criteria:

- Be close to communities
- Link with other services
- Be flexible and openly managed
- Be physically and emotionally secure
- Have a child-centred pedagogy
- Involve parents
- Have a curriculum reflecting diversity
- Be a democratic learning environment
- Involve teachers with an understanding of child development

A broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum

Roma children, together with all other children, have a right to acquire the core academic curriculum and basic cognitive skills, together with essential life skills that equip them to face future life challenges, make wellbalanced decisions, develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships, critical thinking and the capacity for non-violent conflict resolution. The curriculum must develop respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and promote respect for different cultures and values and for the natural environment.

Rights-based learning and assessment

Every child should be valued as **an active contributor to their own learning** rather than a passive recipient. This recognition of the inherent value of each child is particularly important in building confidence and self-esteem among Roma children, who commonly experience profound prejudice and lack of respect. The role of teachers and others involved in creating or strengthening learning opportunities is to facilitate participatory learning rather than simply transmitting knowledge. This involves utilizing interactive teaching methodologies instead of a topdown approach. A **human rights-based education** requires that learning environments be sensitive to the needs of Roma children and conducive to the optimum development of their capacities. A **child-centred methodology** would allow children, in part, to follow their own interests, discovery and learning. Schools should support the introduction of individualized instruction, taking into account the specific developmental level, interests, skills, and knowledge of each child.

Assessment of learning also needs to be sensitive to the situation of Roma children, including their language and culture. A commitment to ensuring that Roma children are able to fulfil their educational potential implies the need for sensitive and constructive methods of appraising and monitoring their work that take account of their cultural context, and do not discriminate against those whose first language is not the medium in which education is provided. In addition, given the poor educational outcomes for Roma children, there is a need for clear and measurable expected results and indicators in order to track their learning achievements over time and monitor progress.

Improving teaching quality

Investment is needed to support teachers to understand their role and responsibilities in delivering quality education, promoting equal access and retention in schools. This might include: Teacher training. Training of head teachers to strengthen their capacity to build inclusive learning environments is of fundamental importance. The leadership provided by head teachers is essential if the prevailing negative culture of schools towards Roma children is to be challenged. In addition, teacher-training courses should instruct teachers in how to work positively and respectfully with Roma children and their parents. It will be necessary to review both initial and in-service training and to develop a flexible programme to provide all teachers and administrators with such training. These courses should include an emphasis on the following:

- Child-centred methodology
- Sensitization to Roma culture and identity
- Gender awareness



- Teaching in inclusive and multicultural environments
- Non-discrimination as a human right
- Understanding and recognizing both direct and indirect discrimination
- Positive strategies for promoting tolerance and tackling discriminatory behaviour
- Working in a bilingual teaching environment

Minimum standards.

Governments need to establish and implement minimum standards for all teachers and Roma teaching assistants. These standards need to be enforced equally across all schools and municipalities. Additionally, governments need to establish **desired student teacher ratios**, and those ratios should again be the same across all schools and localities. Consideration could be given to building in a system of ongoing support for teachers – through, for example, fortnightly or monthly meetings of teachers in schools in the local community – to allow for opportunities to share ideas, challenges, strategies and solutions. In addition, tools and resources should be developed for teachers on how to **promote positive and inclusive learning environments**. Support should also be given to **members of the Roma community to become teachers or classroom assistants**.

Roma assistants and mediators.

Commitment needs to be given to the development of **a network of Roma assistants, mediators or coordinators working within mainstream schools**, with clearly defined responsibilities for supporting students in class, providing out-of-school academic support and working with parents and the Roma communities. Efforts should be made to raise awareness of their role and importance so that their work is appreciated by the school and accepted by the Roma parents. Proper training and payment for their services is essential.

Supporting teachers

If teachers are expected to respect the rights of children, it is equally important that their rights are upheld. They need to **be supported, adequately paid and respected**. Lack of support, low status, poor pay and inadequate training and supervision diminish the motivation of teachers and the quality of their work. Improved management, higher pay, effective appraisal systems, forums through which teachers can influence policy, acknowledgement of their concerns and opportunities for them to identify their training and other needs would all contribute to improving morale and motivation and, in consequence, raise teaching standards. In addition, stipends for teachers working in unpopular schools might be considered. Research evidence from the region indicates that such approaches have improved educational outcomes. Efforts are also needed to encourage Roma to become teachers.

A child-centred, safe and healthy environment

For learning environments to be optimized to enable children to reach their full potential, schools need to take a holistic approach to their education, health and well-being. Roma children, in particular, may also need additional targeted assistance, such as extra financial aid, in-school meals, extra homework and academic support. This will necessitate attention being paid to the following concerns:

Physical health. In order for children to be able to maximize their learning experience, they need to be in proper physical condition to learn. Schools need to take an intersectoral approach in order to bridge gaps in health and nutrition for Roma children. This could mean working together with the health ministry and other relevant bodies to provide basic health screenings, vaccinations and the provision of free meals to the poorest.

Basic health and safety standards for school buildings need to be set and equally implemented. Schools should take measures to contribute towards children's health and well-being, taking into account the differing needs of children – for example, consideration as to the location of schools, travel to and from school, factors which might cause illness or accidents in the classroom or playgrounds,



and appropriate facilities for girls. It also requires the proactive provision of facilities, services and policies to promote health and safety of children, and the active participation of the local community. A healthy environment also needs to provide safe and stimulating opportunities for play and recreation.

Design and equipment. All schools should be equipped with appropriate and adequate educational equipment and materials, with attention paid to special needs such as multilingual texts books in Romani-speaking areas. The design of the schools and kinds of facilities, materials and equipment to be included should be developed with the input of the local community, parents, teachers, children and other stakeholders. For instance, the socio-economic position of some Roma children may affect their chances of having appropriate places to do school work. Many live in cramped housing conditions or may be homeless. For these children, it is important that schools provide facilities to enable them to study safely and quietly, after formal school hours.

Source

UNICEF, 2011, The Right of Roma Children to Education: Position Paper. Geneva: UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEECIS).

5. A human rights-based approach to education

Principles underpinning a rights-based approach to education

A rights-based approach to education is informed by seven basic principles of human rights:

- 1. Universality and inalienability:** Human rights are universal and inalienable, the entitlement of all people everywhere in the world. An individual cannot voluntarily give them up, nor can others take them away.
- 2. Indivisibility:** Human rights are indivisible. Whether civil, cultural, economic, political or social, human rights are all inherent to the dignity of every person.
- 3. Interdependence and interrelatedness:** The realization of one right often depends, wholly or in part, on the realization of others.
- 4. Equality and non-discrimination:** All individuals are equal as human beings, and by virtue of the inherent dignity of each person, are entitled to their rights without discrimination of any kind.
- 5. Participation and inclusion:** Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to and enjoyment of civil, economic, social, cultural and political development.
- 6. Empowerment:** Empowerment is the process by which the capabilities of people to demand and use their human rights grow. The goal is to give people the power and capabilities to claim their rights in order to change their own lives and improve their communities.
- 7. Accountability and respect for the rule of law:** A rights-based approach seeks to raise levels of accountability in the development process by identifying 'rights holders' and corresponding 'duty bearers', and to enhance the capacities of those duty bearers to meet their obligations.

Obligations to ensure the right to education for Roma children

When governments ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, they undertook to take all necessary measures to ensure that children's rights are realized. This involves action to:

Fulfil the right to education by ensuring that education is available for all children and that positive measures are taken to enable children to benefit from it, such as by tackling poverty, adapting the curricula to the needs of all children or engaging parents to enable them to provide effective support to their children's education.

Respect the right to education by avoiding any action that would serve to prevent children from accessing education, such as legislation that categorizes certain groups of children with disabilities as uneducable.

Protect the right to education by taking the necessary measures to remove the barriers to education

posed by individuals or communities, such as cultural barriers to education or violence and abuse in the school environment.

A conceptual framework for promoting the right to education

Taking the basic principles together with the overarching government obligations, it is possible to construct a clear conceptual framework to guide the actions necessary to ensure that Roma children are able to realize their right to education. This necessitates a focus on three interdependent and interlinked dimensions: the right to access education, the right to quality education and the right to respect within the learning environment. These dimensions reflect the importance of a holistic approach to the right to education, which requires addressing the realization of all three.

Right of access to education

Every child has the right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity. Roma children are particularly at risk of being marginalized or discriminated against in the realization of this right. Governments need to invest in the following universal and targeted measures to ensure that Roma children are equally able to realize the right to education alongside other children:

Provision of free, early childhood education for at least two years for every Roma child

Available, accessible and inclusive basic education for all children, supported by the necessary resources, and measures within schools to overcome discrimination and exclusion

Equality of opportunity through the removal of social and economic barriers to education faced by Roma children

Right to quality education

It is not enough to provide access and equal opportunities to education. That education has to be of the highest possible quality to help every child reach their potential, and that quality should be consistent across regions, different populations, and urban and rural settings. Although there is no single definition of 'quality education', it is broadly understood to incorporate the opportunity for both effective cognitive learning, together with opportunities for creative and emotional development. In order to achieve these goals, education for Roma children must encompass:

A broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum that enables Roma children to acquire the core academic curriculum and basic cognitive skills, together with essential life skills, that are fully respectful of their culture

Rights-based learning and assessment in which the role of teachers is to facilitate participatory learning rather than simply transmitting knowledge, and in which assessment processes are sensitive to the situation of Roma children, including their language and culture

A child-friendly, safe and healthy environment to enable children to reach their full potential, and which adopts a holistic approach to their education, health and well-being

Right to respect in the learning environment

Human rights are 'inalienable' – that is, they are inherent in each human being and must be respected within learning environments, as in all other contexts. In order to realize the right of Roma children to education, other key rights must also be respected, including:

Respect for identity: Recognizing the right of Roma children to their culture and language

Respect for participation rights: The right of children, including Roma children, to be involved in matters concerning their education, at the level of individual decisions affecting them, in the way that their school is run and in relation to broader education policy and delivery

Respect for integrity: Roma children have the right, both within school and when travelling to school, to be protected from all forms of violence, and also to school discipline that is respectful of their dignity

6. Right to access education

The right to access education

The right to education on the basis of equality of opportunity imposes obligations on States to establish the legislative and policy framework, together with sufficient resources, to ensure access for every Roma child. Achieving this goal will necessitate the following:

Early childhood development services

Although the Convention on the Rights of the Child does not require governments to provide early childhood education, the Committee on the Rights of the Child strongly encourages them to do so, recognizing that **learning and development starts from the very beginning of life**. The convention calls on governments to ensure that young children have access to **programmes of health, care and education** designed to promote their well-being, and stresses that the right to optimum development implies the right to education **during early childhood, with systematic and quality family involvement**. Early childhood development and education, from conception to primary school age, is important to the overall achievement of the full inclusion of Roma into society, and to ensure the equal realization of their rights. As a marginalized and vulnerable population, they are at greatest risk of not having pre- and post-natal and early childhood needs met. **Investment in early childhood development and education should be a priority, as this is the stage of life where the most rapid development occurs and is the basis for future learning.**

Early childhood development is widely recognized as the foundational stage to developing effective life skills, to socialization and education and to access and inclusion into the regular educational system. An accumulating body of evidence now exists to indicate that **early childhood interventions to remedy disadvantage are more effective than interventions that come later in life**. The first few years of a child's life are the most critical period of human development, and early disadvantage, if left untouched, is shown to lead to academic and social difficulties in later years. Indeed, investing in disadvantaged young children is a public policy initiative that simultaneously promotes fairness and social justice for the families involved, while enhancing productivity in the economy and in society at large.

The OECD *Starting Strong* report makes it clear that **investment in early childhood services impacts positively on both educational returns and in the social, economic and labour market spheres**. Quality services will alleviate social disadvantage and inequality, and further, it enhances social and economic outcomes by reducing gaps in school achievement, breaking the poverty cycle, improving long-term health and employment options, reducing reliance on social services and avoiding criminality.

Governments need to consider introducing:

A commitment to two years of free preschool education for at least 80 per cent of Roma children.

The segregated location of many Roma communities militates against inclusive early childhood educational environments, as they would involve sending very young children long distances to unfamiliar environments and restrict the active involvement of parents. In remote areas, where there are no local preschools, consideration could be given to temporary measures such as:

- Satellite or mobile preschools run close to communities
- Non-formal kindergartens in Roma settlements
- Community-based or family-based preschool education for children under 4 years old
- Preschool teachers visiting families
- Preschool provision accompanied by literacy courses for parents
- Supported home learning environments by providing books for families, family literacy programmes, and TV/ radio programmes that reach communities

However, these measures should not be allowed to develop into permanent lower quality parallel educational systems. Preparation for early childhood education school should be organized according to

community preferences, funded at the same level as non-settlement options, and all preschools (state-funded, whether in or out of settlements) should be open to Roma and non-Roma and seek diverse populations. It is essential to ensure training of staff working with the children, either Roma or non-Roma, in order to provide quality education and to ensure links and regular visits to the formal preschools in the vicinity.

Support and education for mothers. Good parenting and the well-being and education of mothers is an important dimension of effective early childhood education. Investment is needed in programmes designed to strengthen mothers' own literacy and capacities to support their children's readiness for school.

Holistic service approaches. Early childhood educational programmes cannot alone address the issues of poverty and institutional discrimination. They need to be comprehensive and linked with other services. For example, for the youngest children up to 4 years, there should be an emphasis on screening, health, nutrition and capacity-building of parents; for children 4 to 7 years, more attention needs to be paid to their transition to primary school. Cooperation is needed to ensure that health and education ministries collaborate to provide effective and holistic services for young children, including wider community-based services.

Building demand. Governments need to undertake awareness-raising programmes on the value of early childhood education, its potential to facilitate the successful transition of children into primary school, as well as the importance of play in children's development, in order to strengthen demand from Roma communities. Creating opportunities for Roma parents to visit early childhood educational facilities, play an active role in their design and get involved as support workers will all help in building understanding of and confidence in early childhood services. Parents need to be reassured that the culture and environment within preschool education is receptive to the Roma community and that their children will not experience discrimination. In addition, it is important to create mechanisms through which parents can raise concerns, talk to staff members and lodge complaints where they feel their child has been treated inappropriately.

Ensuring access to and availability of education

States have obligations to establish the legislative and policy framework, together with sufficient resources, to fulfil the right to education for every Roma child. As a starting point, governments need to commit to a goal of achieving universal access to basic education for every child, including Roma children. However, in order to overcome the barriers facing Roma children, the following additional measures are needed.

Ending segregation and promoting inclusion

Inclusion in both the educational system and in society as a whole is integral to improving the conditions and opportunities afforded to Roma. As an overarching goal, authorities should strive for balanced and diverse classrooms and schools. A **holistic policy** framework facilitating desegregation and promoting inclusion and diversity needs to be created. Effective inclusion needs to **go far beyond simply changing the ratios of children in schools**. A move towards inclusion is not simply a technical or organizational change, but involves **a cultural and philosophical change of approach based on a commitment to respect for every child, and recognition of the obligations of the education system to adapt to accommodate and address their needs**.

General measures to end segregation.

Desegregation is an **important dimension of the move towards inclusion**; it brings an end to the physical separation of children, and contributes to ensuring that every child has access to the same form of schools. Governments first need to recognize segregation as a problem, and establish a long-term commitment to move towards inclusive education. This might entail:

- Action plans to promote inclusion, based on in-depth analyses of the **factors contributing to segregation**, with appropriate financial, legal and administrative steps toward desegregation.
- Governments have to be committed to providing **the extra funding needed** for inclusive quality education for Roma children.

- Consideration of legislation committing to the **gradual elimination of segregated education** and the introduction of an inclusive system. Legislation is also needed to prohibit segregation of children on the basis of ethnicity.
- National information and monitoring systems to **track school placements** in the future to ensure that they sustain inclusive practice. Monitoring and evaluation of programmes to promote inclusion should also be undertaken. Consideration could be given to developing a set of indicators for monitoring segregation, taking into consideration proportions of Roma and non-Roma in a region, in classrooms, mainstream schools and special schools.
- Introduction of **accessible complaints mechanisms for Roma families** so that they can challenge inappropriate placement of their children in segregated schooling, discriminatory actions and other barriers to realizing their rights.

Elimination of segregation between schools

Measures need to be undertaken by municipalities, local authorities and schools to address the structural exclusion of Roma children caused by living in segregated settlements. Such measures include:

- A requirement that all local municipalities produce **desegregation plans** to be implemented over a given time period, and **linked with financial incentives**. These plans need to be based on direct consultation **with both Roma and mainstream communities**.
- Ensuring that, for as long as children remain in segregated schools within their own communities, the level of expenditure, staffing ratios and standards among teachers are **directly comparable to those in schools in the non-Roma community**.
- Investment in **affordable and accessible transport** to take children from settlements to mainstream schools that do not have a significant Roma population.

One of the challenges is the **reluctance of families** from mainstream communities to accept a greater proportion of Roma children in the schools. There is a pattern in some areas of 'white flight', whereby parents simply remove children from schools that accept higher numbers of Roma children. There are no easy solutions to the problem, but consideration could be given to:

- Making development assistance conditional upon a clear integration/desegregation plan of municipalities or regions and its implementation
- Ensuring that development assistance covers integration activities such as **planning, school transport, monitoring and capacity-building of municipal/regional authorities** rather than the pure education work in schools/preschools or Roma education centres, which should be the responsibility of the education authorities through their regular budgets
- In addition, local municipalities need to invest in:
 - Sensitization and awareness-raising within local communities to **promote greater understanding of Roma culture** and the challenges confronting it. Investment can be made in multi-pronged approaches towards working with communities, building tolerance within schools and collaboration with parents. Whole localities can be made targets of measures to help raise awareness, build tolerance and promote desegregation in all sectors.
 - Improved **housing, sanitation, employment and social welfare programmes** within Roma communities in order to narrow the socio-economic and cultural gaps that entrench prejudice and xenophobia between Roma and non-Roma communities.

Elimination of segregation within schools

Efforts are needed to ensure that Roma children are not segregated into separate classes, based **on assessments of academic ability or attainment**, and in which they are simply taught a remedial curriculum. They should be educated within the mainstream student population, with **additional support teachers** provided where necessary. Instruction needs to be "integrated and differentiated, whereby all students participate together in the classroom and the teacher effectively and efficiently

reaches all students in a heterogeneous environment, thus avoiding the issue of placement of students in separate, special or other classrooms.”

Accordingly, action is needed to:

- Include a commitment to inclusive classroom teaching in the national action policy and plan on inclusion.
- Develop **municipal policies for inclusive classroom environments**. Schools, teachers, municipal officials, school administrators, Roma parents and children, as well as other stakeholders should be involved in that process.
- Provide **support within mainstream classes** to Roma children needing additional assistance.
- Monitor schools on a regular basis to ensure that **segregation is not taking place, either formally or informally**. Monitoring should involve Roma parents to ensure that systems are transparent and accountable to them and their children.

Achieving comprehensive desegregation will necessarily take a number of years to implement. Accordingly, in schools with a high concentration of Roma pupils, the quality of education should be improved simultaneously with the implementation of desegregation strategies.

Ending the placement of Roma children in special schools

Urgent action is needed to address **the factors that contribute to the practice of placing Roma children in special schools**. Having the vast majority of Roma children **go through the mainstream school system** from the very beginning of their compulsory education should be the goal of policies. This requires examining the process that leads to segregation into special schools and eliminating barriers in accessing regular mainstream schools. Practical measures to work towards that end should include:

- ✓ **Critical reviews of the current school entry testing systems** used to assess whether or not a child is ready to enter regular primary school. In order for testing to be fair and accurate, both the testing commissions and criteria need to be reformed in order to eliminate biases and take account of differences in language, socialization, and experience. A **baseline assessment of children** when entering compulsory education can be an effective tool for teachers to plan their instruction. However, any such assessment should be based on reliable and valid instruments that are fair to students of all backgrounds, should be used to assess all students and not just those considered to have special needs, be conducted in an objective way without incentives for a particular outcome, and be done in a transparent way involving the informed participation of parents. If these conditions are not met, no testing regime should be used.
- ✓ **Remove the financial incentives for special school placements**. The current financial benefits that accrue to children with disabilities can and do serve as an incentive for parents to support their child’s assessment for a special school placement. It is imperative that public policy should not promote socio-economic incentives that encourage parents to accept a lower quality education for their children. However, measures taken to address the problem should enhance choice rather than reduce it, and not penalize parents. Governments should conduct analyses of the incentives and reasons parents have for sending their children to special schools, and use the findings to help construct appropriate solutions. One approach might be to introduce the **same benefits for placing students in mainstream schools as they would receive for attending special schools, such as providing free transport and free school meals**.

Opportunities for reassessment. Where children have been placed inappropriately in special schools, mechanisms should be in place to enable them to be reassessed and placed in a mainstream school.

Involve all stakeholders. As with all initiatives, efforts to reduce the number of Roma children in special schools should be done with the cooperation of all stakeholders and with adequate funding, clear policies and guidelines. As special schools close down due to lower enrolment,

teachers at these schools need to be a part of the process. Policies can be developed to help integrate teachers from special schools into the mainstream schools, perhaps having them help with the integration of new students transferred from special schools. Special schools can also be transformed into resource centres for mainstream schools, providing expertise and support. Municipalities and the central government need to work with the teachers to ensure that most of them will be able to access gainful employment afterwards.

Removing the social and economic barriers to education

Making schools **accessible, available and inclusive** is an important first step in fulfilling the right of every child to access education, but this does not ensure the full realization of this right. Equality of opportunity can only be achieved by also **taking action to remove the barriers in schools and local communities**. Even where schools exist, factors such as **poverty, discrimination, fear of violence or abuse, attitudes towards girls' education, or a lack of understanding of Roma culture** may serve to keep children out of school. Governments have obligations to develop legislation, policies and support services to remove these barriers in the family and community that impede Roma children's access to school.

Preparation for and retention in school Preparatory programmes for the start of school, catch-up classes for those students who had dropped out and are **re-entering the school system, and extra academic support**, especially when transitioning from one educational level to the next, are needed to help increase enrolment and retention rates, and lower drop-out rates. These initiatives should be designed **in collaboration with the Roma community and aim to promote confidence and self-esteem, build academic skills, and familiarize Roma children with the school environment, expectations and codes of behaviour**. Short-term focused interventions can also be provided for children struggling with language and reading. Affirmative action policy measures are needed to ensure high-priority early enrolment of children in poor communities, including free access to preschool for Roma children and abolishing enrolment prioritization of children whose parents are both employed. Efforts need to be made to **provide information to parents through Roma civil society activities** in order to encourage and support early enrolment into preschool.

Addressing poverty

Governments need to take steps to address the poverty that is a primary cause of low enrolment and high drop-out rates among Roma children. Any such measures will need to reflect the particular needs and barriers faced by different Roma communities across the region. One of the challenges is the **reliance of families on having their children work**. In the short term, this might be accommodated by the creation of flexible school years for families that migrate for **seasonal work, or differing school hours for working children**. Ultimately, the goal needs to be the **elimination of children from child labour**, together with a minimum age for leaving school that is consistent with the age at which children can begin to work. In addition, in order to overcome the gender-based dimension to school exclusion and the long-term poverty of women, **a minimum age of 18 years should be established for marriage**. Active measures would be needed to promote **raising the age for both work and marriage**, including community engagement, awareness-raising and social support to encourage Roma communities to understand the potential benefits to their children and to the wider community of these measures.

Building bridges with the Roma community

The **active participation of parents in their children's education is a key factor** in ensuring both the child's continued engagement in their education, as well as successful educational outcomes. Given the challenges faced by many Roma parents in engaging in the formal school system, including their understandable wariness in the face of prejudice and hostility, extra investment is needed to **enable these parents to play a role in supporting their children's education**. School and local authorities need to make positive efforts to actively seek out Roma parents and involve them as **partners in their child's**

education. Mechanisms to support parents and encourage their increased participation include:

- Inviting **Roma parents to visit schools, building partnerships between them and local schools, encouraging them to join school boards and developing programmes that explicitly address their concerns**
- Providing **adult education classes, adult literacy and local or mobile libraries** to help overcome the barriers caused by low levels of education, especially among **Roma mothers**, which can inhibit involvement in their children's education
- Increasing **parental skills** and encouraging their involvement in their children's development and learning at home and in kindergartens, or community-based services through parental counselling offered by the preschool professional team, such as parent-to-parent counselling, mother-child clubs, or civil society outreach through house visits
- Gradual and respectful inclusion of parents in preparing children for school, taking into account the beliefs and needs of local families, their social values and experiences
- Increasing the number and enhancing design of parent meetings, and opening schools prior to enrolment and in the first months of attendance
- Supporting early preschool enrolment through the joint action of preschool institutions and Roma civil society organizations
- Engaging Roma pedagogical assistants and/or mediators

Analysing local barriers

Local authorities, in collaboration with community partners, have responsibilities to promote awareness of the value of education among Roma communities and enlist their support for local schools and the rights of all children to education. Local authorities, in partnership with the Roma community, need to undertake an **analysis of where the barriers to education** lie. Action can then be taken to address the specific barriers that arise. Actions might include:

- Raising awareness of the right to education
- Promoting the value of education for both girls' and boys' future opportunities
- Stressing the importance of play as part of children's learning and development
- Providing information about any available stipends, cash transfers or food for education programmes
- Addressing parental concerns, such as violence when travelling to school, and adapting school timetables to accommodate domestic labour commitments
- Highlighting the role that parents can play in supporting and strengthening their children's learning
- The importance of active engagement in the life of the school and the ways in which parents and communities can contribute
- Listening to children and engaging them as active participants in their own learning
- Promoting respect for children as learners and ending all forms of violence in schools

7. Role of non-state actors

States cannot fulfil their obligations with regard to education for Roma children **without the active support and engagement of many other actors, including parents, extended family members, unions, teachers, religious communities, NGOs or local politicians.** Human rights are not simply legal entitlements that can be realized through enactment of legislation and policy. They are standards and principles that directly **affect the day-to-day relationships between individuals in their communities.** The creation of an environment in which Roma children can learn without discrimination and on the basis of equality of opportunity requires that the concept of education is understood and owned by parents, families and all members of the community. The actions, attitudes and behaviours of **all members of communities impact on the realization of a child's right to education.**

The nature of the obligations for parents and members of communities differ from those of the State, and it is essential that clear and appropriate lines of accountability are drawn. For example, parents cannot fulfil their obligations to **ensure that their child is prepared for and attends school on a regular basis** unless the government has provided the schools and the economic environment to support that attendance. Recognition also needs to be given to the fact that **every adult has rights as well as responsibilities**. Teachers are entitled to respect, remuneration and appropriate training and support, and cannot fulfil their obligations to children unless these rights are realized. There is, then, a **close interrelationship between rights and responsibilities**. Respect for human rights is not contingent on the exercise of responsibilities, but their realization is necessarily dependent on those responsibilities being taken seriously.

It is also necessary to acknowledge **that some of the actors involved in the lives of Roma children can and do serve to erect barriers to the right to education**. A necessary dimension of a human rights-based approach is to work **with the Roma community** to overcome those barriers. Roma children's opportunities to attend school will be influenced by parental recognition of their right to an education, the extent to which the school welcomes their attendance, and freedom from the necessity to work. Children's commitment to education will be influenced by the regard in which it is held within their own community, by the relevance and the quality of the education they receive and by the respect with which they are treated within the school. Children's achievements in education will be influenced **by the degree of support they receive at home, the quality of teachers, the teaching methods employed, the extent to which they are engaged as actors in the educational process, the availability of the necessary teaching aids and resources, and a willingness to offer the necessary flexibility to facilitate their regular attendance**. All these factors can be supported through government action. But for their implementation, they rely on the mobilization of all members of the community.

Parents and other caregivers

Parents are **key stakeholders** in their children's education. It is important that they are engaged at every level in the building of educational opportunity for their children.

Provision of education for parents

Many Roma parents, **particularly mothers, have not been to school, lack literacy and are therefore restricted in their ability to support their children's education**. Local authorities, together with national governments, can help parents to improve their levels of literacy through **community-based programmes, and in so doing prevent the transmission of poor educational outcomes across generations**. If parents acquire skills in reading and writing, they can not only better understand what their children are doing at school, but they can help them in their school work and communicate better with their children. Parenting education programmes are also needed that acknowledge the different support and information required by parents at different stages of their children's lives. Such programmes also need to include the promotion of **equal gender practices**. It is often assumed that parenting support is only required for preschool children. In practice, the demands of parenting change and parents can benefit from advice and information on the evolving capacities of children throughout childhood. With education, parents will acquire greater capacity to support their children's education from birth, greater understanding of their children's needs and more confidence in collaborating with schools to help improve the quality of education provided.

Consultation and engagement with parents

Programmes to improve access, quality and respect for rights within education should involve and consult with parents of Roma children at every stage. This will not only serve to ensure that the barriers to education are more effectively understood and challenged, but will also **encourage the active engagement and participation of Roma in their children's education**. There is a need for engagement with parents in all areas, including:

- Policy development at the national, local and school level
- Local analyses of the barriers to education for Roma children

- Data collection
- Placement of individual children in school
- Progress reports of individual children
- Development and design of accessible complaints mechanisms to address problems as they arise
- Participation on parent-teacher associations or governing bodies of schools

Provision of information

Parents need to be provided with **information on legislation, policies and services available** to them and their children. Only with accessible, accurate and comprehensive information, provided **in the Roma language** where necessary, can parents ensure that they are receiving the services to which they and their children are entitled. They need to know **who to approach when they face difficulties, who is responsible for what services and how to approach them. They also need information about the school their child is attending, the school curriculum, the expectations of parents and the role that they can play in the school. Finally, they need information on where to go and how to make a complaint if their child is discriminated against or treated inappropriately in school.**

Parents as partners and advocates

Parents need to be recognized and supported **as advocates for their children's right to education**. They can play a critical role in holding schools and education authorities to account in fulfilling their obligations to children, pressing for stronger legislation where needed, monitoring progress, identifying weaknesses in implementation of education policies, ensuring compliance with the right to education and challenging rights violations. Some parents may need support to enable them to organize among themselves to advocate for enhanced education rights for their children. For example, support could be provided on how to: form and run an organization, write funding proposals, deal with the media, advocate for a cause, get help from national or regional organizations.

Parental responsibilities

If governments provide appropriate support and provision for the education of Roma children, their parents can **contribute to fulfilling their children's right to education** through:

- Provision of an environment in the early years that ensures the **child's preparedness to start school**
- Support and recognition of **the right to education and its value for all their children**
- Ensuring that children **are not over-burdened with domestic and other work to** the detriment of attending school
- Ensuring that children are prepared for school and able to arrive ready and on time when school is in session
- Getting involved in the school and supporting its work through participation in fundraising, meetings with teachers, committees, consultations and governing bodies
- Showing encouragement and support for their child's work and helping with homework where possible
- Ensuring to the greatest extent possible that their children are **healthy and well-nourished** and hence able to learn
- Ensuring that **local traditions and customs**, such as early marriage, do not prevent their child going to school

Civil society organizations

There are a growing number of international, regional and national civil society organizations playing a key role in promoting the rights to education of Roma children. In the absence of state provision, these groups have often played an important role as a service provider in the field of Roma education. Clearly, NGO s cannot be a substitute for properly funded government provision of education for all Roma children, nor should they be seen as a stop-gap solution to problems within municipal education. However, they can and do also **play a key role in strengthening education provision and they can play a vital role**



in empowering Roma communities to advocate for the right to education. Building partnerships with these organizations is therefore of considerable importance.

Collaborating in the provision of education

NGOs are often the source of considerable expertise not only on where gaps in provision exist within local communities, but also on the strategies needed to address those gaps. It is important that national and local governments collaborate with civil society organizations to ensure that their experiences are reflected in the design and development of programmes to achieve the right to education for Roma children. NGOs are often the source of experimentation and piloting of innovative methods of achieving improved educational outcomes that can subsequently be scaled up by governments.

For example, in Serbia, the Roma Education Fund has supported the following initiatives in recent years:

- Inclusion of Roma children in preschool education one year before compulsory schooling
- Development and provision of a new model to help Roma finish primary school and gain a first vocational certificate through second-chance education
- Piloting a programme on inclusion of Roma parents in school boards and school councils, and development of a regional Roma integration action plan
- Mentoring of Roma students, research into the needs of the employment market and helping Roma students who have graduated to start careers in accordance with their education level, as well as promoting the concept of university studies to meet the needs of the Roma community
- Preventing discrimination and segregation of Roma children within the education system
- Scaling up the approach of the obligatory preschool programme for all Roma children into a complete support system for the Roma community, educational institutions and municipal governments

Mobilizing and capacity-building

Despite their numerical strength in a number of countries in the region, Roma in Central and Eastern Europe are significantly under-represented in political life. A combination of factors – including poverty, stigma, discrimination, and lack of citizenship status – all serve **to marginalize Roma**. This absence from political participation weakens the capacity of Roma to influence the agenda and advocate effectively for their rights, including the right to education. Civil society organizations, particularly those of Roma people themselves, can play a key role in helping members of the Roma community overcome this political marginalization.

The work undertaken by NGOs can play a role on both the demand and supply side. On the demand side, NGO efforts strengthen advocacy, lobbying and ensure accountability and transparency of duty-bearers – for example, monitoring whether governmental policies and programmes have been effectively implemented. NGOs can also play a role in helping guarantee the continuation of successful programmes when there are changes of government or administration. On the supply side, NGOs have contributed by building capacity of:

- Roma communities, parents and traditional leaders, through training, awareness and sensitization that enables communities to participate in, for instance, social auditing and monitoring exercises of government services
- Governments – by training and sensitization of public officials

The international community

The international community has a key role to play in providing support to build the capacity of both governments and individuals in the realization of the right to education for Roma children. This role has been further affirmed in the OECD Report, *Integrating Human Rights in Development*, which calls upon development partners to do the following:

- Deepen their institutionalization of human rights considerations, looking at their systems, procedures and staff incentives and allocating adequate resource to better translate their policies into practice

- Support the strengthening of national ownership of human rights in the context of development partnerships, in particular around poverty reduction strategies
- Push for the integration of human rights into thinking and practice around new aid effectiveness processes, instruments and modalities of aid delivery



8. Summary of approaches to realizing the right of all Roma children to education

1 Government-wide measures

Political will and good governance

- Measures to promote accountability, transparency, access to justice and the rule of law
- Recognition of and commitment to comprehensive and sustained measures to tackle the extreme marginalization and exclusion of Roma children in the education system
- Scaling up of programmes, policies and strategies that have been successful – evidence-based advocacy should be used to increase the scale of impact
- Investment in new and innovative programmes to overcome the barriers to the right of Roma children to education

Government structures

- Government-wide strategies to address Roma education involving collaboration across all ministries
- Integrated education ministries – a commitment to achieve integrated administration of education to bring an end to separate structures for special education
- Devolved government structures – devolving responsibilities to the local level to strengthen local accountability, to be accompanied by capacity-building, guidance, dedicated budgets and transparent reporting

Financing

- Action to address both demand and supply side of education – investment in education infrastructure to overcome disadvantage and financial incentives to increase enrolment and retention
- Commitment to equitable allocation of funding to promote equality of opportunity
- More effective tracking of expenditure to strengthen accountability, transparency and ensure more effective use of funds
- Investment in improved housing, sanitation, employment and social welfare programmes to narrow the socio-economic gaps that fuel discrimination

Data collection and monitoring

- Improved disaggregated data collection to provide accurate information on the Roma community and identify disparities, inequalities and exclusion from education
- Advocacy to overcome the resistance to disaggregated data
- Consultation with Roma community on measures needed to ensure protection of integrity, privacy and appropriate designations of ethnicity
- Capacity-building in data collection
- Mechanisms to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of programmes to promote Roma children's right to education
- Monitoring schools regularly to ensure that formal or informal segregation is not taking place
- Monitoring preschool and school attendance for regularity and dropout
- Evidence-based advocacy to replicate programmes, policies and strategies that have been successful and increase the scale of impact
- Development of national indicators of social disadvantage

Legislation

- Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race and ethnicity, backed by commitment of policies, resources and training to promote its implementation
- Guaranteed equal right to education for Roma children to bring an end to segregation and promote inclusion
- Prohibition of all forms of violence against children, backed up by policies to ensure its implementation
- Legislation to require registration of every birth, backed up by a commitment to achieving registration

of all Roma children through:

- consultation with local communities to identify barriers to registration
- information campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of birth registration
- simplifying forms and registration processes
- translating forms into the Romani language
- removing the requirement for parents to present their own identity papers
- Raising the age of marriage to 18 years for both boys and girls, with effective mechanisms for implementation and enforcement
- Raising the legal minimum age for full-time work to align it with the school-leaving age, accompanied by both effective enforcement and social protection measures
- All laws and policies to be backed up by effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms that are effective, accessible and ensure access to justice
- Establishment of children’s ombudsmen or commissioners with a mandate to promote and protect the rights of the most marginalized children

Partnerships, participation and community mobilization

- Involvement and consultation with Roma communities in policy development and implementation
- Investment in civil society programmes to promote empowerment of Roma communities to claim their rights
- Involvement of children in development of education and school policies
- Respect for and recognition of diversity within Roma communities
- Sensitization of local communities towards the Roma population, including multi-pronged approaches to building dialogue and promoting tolerance
- Development and dissemination of mechanisms through which Roma communities can make complaints or challenge decisions, actions or treatment of their children in schools
- Active collaboration with NGOs and other community-based organizations to engage their commitment to programmes designed to promote the right to education of local Roma children
- Schools to be utilized to build closer relationships with the community, especially to address issues between Roma and non-Roma

Capacity-building and awareness-raising

- National campaigns to challenge xenophobia and prejudice against Roma communities
- Training and capacity-building for all those responsible for Roma education, including national and local government officials, school administrators and teachers
- Awareness-raising for Roma communities to inform people of their rights and how to use them

2 Education policies and strategies to promote the right to access education

Measures to make school accessible and available

25. Investment in early childhood education for every Roma child that offers on an inclusive basis wherever possible:

- a minimum of two years provision of quality education¹³²
- a holistic approach to addressing health and nutrition needs
- collaboration and awareness-raising with local Roma communities to encourage demand
- Investment in promoting parental literacy to strengthen support for children’s education
- Provision of an accessible school place for every Roma child in primary and lower secondary education, together with sufficient numbers of adequately trained teachers and appropriate resources and equipment, with consideration given to:
 - numbers of places needed
 - location of school building programmes
 - type of schooling required
 - availability of transport

- wishes and needs of local Roma communities
- achieving inclusive educational environments
- the particular barriers facing girls in accessing education

Measures to end segregation and promote inclusion

- Comprehensive policies to implement a long-term commitment to inclusive education that include:
 - national and local action plans to promote inclusion, supported by financial, legal and administrative measures
 - commitment to address segregation both between and within schools
 - national and local monitoring systems to track progress in achieving inclusion
 - introduction of complaints mechanisms for Roma families to challenge breaches of their right to inclusion
 - provision of specialized training for teachers in mainstream schools to work in more inclusive environments
 - requirement for local municipalities to produce desegregation plans
 - financial incentives to promote desegregation
- Commitment to ending inappropriate placement of Roma children in special schools by:
 - abolition of current school entry testing systems to ensure that bias against Roma children is removed
 - removal of the financial and material incentives for special school placements in ways that do not penalize Roma parents or parents of children with disabilities
 - introduction of opportunities for reassessment of children placed in special schools
 - involvement of all stakeholders, including parents and teachers in both mainstream and special schools, to maximize support and utilize all available expertise in transferring children to mainstream schools
- Integration of special school staff into mainstream schools
- Financial support for local municipalities taking measures to address ‘white flight’

Measures to remove the socio-economic barriers to education

- Preparatory programmes and additional academic support for Roma children:
 - to facilitate readiness for school
 - to support the transitions from one educational level to the next
 - to re-engage those who have dropped out of school
- Financial incentives to overcome the poverty that impedes access to school including:
 - free school meals or food programmes
 - free transport
 - stipends
 - help with school materials
 - conditional cash transfers to mothers at a level high enough to compensate for the costs of sending a child to school
 - scholarship with additional academic support
- Measures at the local/municipal level
- Opportunities for Roma parents to play an active role in the design, development and delivery of early childhood education facilities
- Collection of disaggregated data on local populations to identify the numbers of preschool and school places needed and where they should be located
- Provision of temporary satellite or mobile preschools in areas where no preschools exist until more permanent solutions are found
- Local desegregation policies to be implemented within a given time limit, which include a commitment to inclusive classroom environments
- Supporting schools to develop their own action plans on inclusion
- Investment in accessible, safe and affordable transport to enable Roma children older than preschool age to travel to schools outside their local communities

- Involvement of Roma parents in monitoring to ensure transparency and accountability
- Investment in local programmes, including through local NGOs, to support children at risk of dropping out, provide catch-up classes, facilitate transitions between educational stages and promote readiness for school
- Mechanisms through which parents can raise concerns, talk to staff members and lodge complaints where they feel their child has been treated inappropriately

3 Education policies and strategies to promote the right to quality education

Child-centred learning and assessment

- Commitment to child-centred learning that engages children as active contributors and recognizes the inherent value of every child
- Provision of individualized instruction that takes account of the different developmental levels of individual children
- Introduction of assessment procedures that are sensitive to the culture and language of Roma children and enable them to fulfil their potential without discrimination

Curriculum development

- Development of a broad-based, relevant and inclusive curriculum for all children that:
 - promotes academic and cognitive development together with essential life skills
 - includes human rights education promoting peace, tolerance, and respect for diversity
 - is free of any negative stereotypes or representations of Roma communities
 - is free of gender stereotypes
 - includes the teaching of Roma language, culture and history
- Commitment to ensuring that Roma children are taught the core curriculum on an equal basis with other children and not marginalized by a remedial curriculum

Improving teaching quality

- Investment in pre- and in-service training for teachers to enhance their capacity to provide appropriate teaching for Roma children
- Revision of the teaching curriculum to address children's rights, sensitization to Roma culture and identity, gender awareness, teaching in inclusive and multicultural environments, understanding and addressing discrimination, working in a bilingual environment and promoting positive strategies to promote tolerance
- Introduction of minimum standards for teachers to be applied equally across all schools
- Introduction of appropriately trained and paid Roma assistants and mediators
- Improving support for teachers through higher pay, including stipends for those working in challenging schools, better management, effective appraisal systems and opportunities to influence policy
- Investment in measures to encourage greater numbers of Roma to become teachers
- Tools and resources developed for teachers on how to promote positive inclusive learning environments

Creating child-friendly, safe and healthy school environments

- Development of intersectoral approaches to promote the health and nutrition of Roma children in order to maximize their potential for learning effectively
- Establishment of basic health and safety standards for children to ensure that both girls and boys have equal access to facilities and can participate fully in school life without fear of violence, taking into account location of schools, safe travel to and from school, appropriate facilities for girls, safe spaces for play and physical standards of school buildings
- Provision of appropriate and adequate educational equipment and materials, including multilingual textbooks where needed
- Access to spaces in school or in other appropriate locations where Roma children who lack the facilities

and support at home can study after school hours

Measures at the local/municipal level

- Forums for teachers to share experiences, challenges and strategies for working in multicultural environments
- Audits of local schools, in consultation with children and parents including from the Roma community, to assess issues of quality, health and safety
- Consideration to be given to building a system of ongoing support for teachers –for example, through fortnightly or monthly meetings of teachers in schools in the local community – to allow for opportunities to share ideas, challenges, strategies and solutions
- Building capacity and links with Roma communities including:
 - inviting Roma to join school boards
 - providing adult education and literacy programmes
 - increasing parental skills and encouraging their involvement in children’s learning through mothers’ clubs, outreach programmes and parental counselling services
 - involvement of parents in programmes to promote children’s readiness for school
 - engaging Roma pedagogical assistants or mediators

4 Education policies and strategies to promote respect for rights within education

Promoting the right to identity and respect for culture and language

- Recognition of the right of Roma children to retain their own language and to the optimal linguistic environment to support their learning through:
 - provision of preschool learning for Roma children in their mother tongue
 - bilingual education in the first year of primary education
 - opportunities for all Roma children to learn Roma at school as an additional language
- Development of policies and guidance for schools, in partnership with representatives from the Roma community, on how to promote multicultural learning environments

Respecting children’s participation rights in education

- Consideration of legislation to provide children with the right to establish democratic school councils, based on principles of inclusion and non-discrimination
- Development of guidance to local municipalities and schools on the right of children to be heard, and approaches towards its implementation, which emphasize the necessity for inclusiveness and non-discrimination
- Establishment of advisory groups of Roma children to provide guidance on development of legislation and policies in relation to segregation, inclusion, school dropout or transitions between educational stages

Protecting children’s right to respect for their personal and physical integrity

- Legal prohibition against all forms of violence in schools, backed up by a strong message that all forms of violence against children are unacceptable, that schools should be rights-based and promote and practice human rights principles
- Promotion of non-violence, accompanied by policies with clear enforcement mechanisms, recognizing the particular vulnerability of Roma children as well as the gender-based dimensions of violence
- Clear codes of conduct reflecting child rights principles, established and promoted widely for all staff, students and their families and communities
- Schools should have trained and trusted adults to whom students can safely and confidentially report incidents of violence and receive advice



- All school staff to be trained and supported in the use of non-violent and respectful classroom management strategies, as well as specific skills to prevent patterns of bullying and other gender-based violence and to respond to it effectively
- Children, including Roma, to be actively involved in the design, development, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes, including through access to confidential complaints or reporting mechanisms
- Schools supported as a resource to build closer relationships with the community to address violence in and around schools between Roma and non-Roma, involving students, staff, parents and other partners such as police, health services, social services, faith-based groups, recreation and cultural groups

Measures at the local/municipal level

- Development of school policies in partnership with children on rights, inclusion, respect for diversity and non-discrimination, accompanied by mechanisms through which children can raise concerns or register complaints if they feel they are not being treated appropriately
- Monitoring of school policies on a regular basis to ensure that they are implemented effectively
- Consideration of forums – which would need administrative and financial support from the local municipality and could include adult Roma facilitators – where Roma children can meet and share experiences, concerns and ideas on how to improve the quality of their school experience
- Establishment of school councils in which both girls and boys from the Roma community play an active role
- Introduction of circle time where children can share issues of importance and concern and learn to respect each other's right to be heard and to be treated equally
- Consideration of peer counselling programmes in which Roma children play an active part, and through which they can access support if they are experiencing problems in school
- Introduction of safe and confidential complaints mechanisms through which children can raise concerns
- Support for individual schools in developing inclusive mechanisms for listening to children
- Introduction of mechanisms for ensuring that children are able to express a view on school placements, and have their views taken seriously in accordance with their age and maturity
- Initiate local campaigns to promote zero tolerance of violence against Roma communities, including by majority children against Roma children in and travelling to school



9. Roma population in Europe

There is a twofold major problem in collecting data on Roma individuals: the strong **mistrust of Roma** individuals and Roma organisations on the one hand, and **the rejection of ethnicity categories in official data** on the other. Across different official sources, the number of individuals perceived as Roma in Europe can then vary from 1 to 5 million. As a result, by fear or by lack of relevant category to identify to, a significant number of Roma individuals are invisible in most censuses. Based on some official statistics and academic research, an estimate of the number of Roma individuals in the different European countries can however be made (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1. Estimated Number of Roma in Europe

Table 1.1. Estimated Number of Roma in Europe

	Low hypothesis	High hypothesis		Low hypothesis	High hypothesis
Albania	90 000	100 000	Luxembourg	100	150
Austria	20 000	25 000	Macedonia	120 000	160 000
Belarus	10 000	15 000	Moldavia	20 000	25 000
Belgium	25 000	30 000	Netherlands	35 000	40 000
Bosnia-Herzegovina	30 000	40 000	Norway	2 000	3 000
Bulgaria	700 000	800 000	Poland	40 000	50 000
Croatia	20 000	30 000	Portugal	40 000	50 000
Cyprus	500	1 000	Romania	1 800 000	2 500 000
Czech Republic	250 000	300 000	Russia	300 000	400 000
Denmark	1 500	2 000	Serbia-and-Montenegro	400 000	450 000
Estonia	1 000	1 500	Slovakia	480 000	520 000
Finland	8 000	10 000	Slovenia	8 000	10 000
France	280 000	340 000	Spain	700 000	800 000
Germany	150 000	200 000	Sweden	30 000	40 000
Greece	200 000	300 000	Switzerland	30 000	35 000
Hungary	550 000	600 000	Turkey	400 000	500 000
Ireland	25 000	35 000	Ukraine	50 000	60 000
Italy	90 000	110 000	United Kingdom	90 000	120 000
Latvia	5 000	7 000	TOTAL	7 003 600	8 712 650
Lithuania	2 500	3 000			

Source OECD, DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS Inclusion of Roma Students in Europe: A literature review and examples of policy initiatives

10. Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion (European Platform for Roma Inclusion)

1. Constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies
2. Explicit but not exclusive targeting

3. Inter-cultural approach
4. Aiming for the mainstream
5. Awareness of the gender dimension
6. Transfer of evidence-based policies
7. Use of European Union instruments
8. Involvement of regional and local authorities
9. Involvement of civil society
10. Active participation of the Roma

Source European Union

https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/108377.pdf

11. European framework

Huge gaps exist between Roma people and the rest of the population concerning education, health, employment, and access to decent housing and essential services. Closing these gaps is crucial to improving the lives of Roma people.

To meet these challenges, the EU Framework sets four European goals.

Education: Making sure all Roma children complete at least primary school

Only 42 % of Roma children complete primary school in some EU Member States. This is often the result of discrimination or segregated education.

Employment: Closing the gap

Employment rates for Roma people are much lower than for the rest of the population. This is often due to discrimination in the labour market, which makes it difficult for Roma people to find or keep jobs.

Healthcare: Reducing inequalities

Life expectancy for Roma people is, on average, 10 years less than the EU average. High levels of infant mortality also exist in many Roma communities. These inequalities are linked to the poor living conditions of disadvantaged Roma people and their limited access to quality healthcare.

Housing and essential services: Closing the gap

Roma people often live in poor housing with inadequate access to services, such as water, electricity and gas. These conditions have a major impact on the health of Roma communities. They are also often the result of segregated living areas, which create further barriers between Roma people and the rest of the population.

The Commission sets **seven objectives at the EU level** for the period up to 2030. Three of these objectives are horizontal in the areas of equality, inclusion and participation. The other four are sectoral objectives in the areas of education, employment, housing and health.

ENSURE EFFECTIVE EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION

HORIZONTAL OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS BY 2030

Red: EU level target on minimum progress to be reached by 2030

Green: minimum progress to be reached for Roma by 2030

Blue: latest available data from which progress will be measured

1. Fight and prevent antigypsyism and discrimination

Cut the proportion of Roma with discrimination experience by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 less than 15% of Roma experience discrimination
- discrimination experience of Roma: 26% (past 12 months), 41% (past 5 years)

Decrease the proportion of general population who feel uncomfortable having Roma neighbours by at least a third

- to ensure that by 2030 less than 30% feel uncomfortable having Roma neighbours
- proportion of general population who feel uncomfortable having Roma neighbours: 46%

2. Reduce poverty and social exclusion to close the socio-economic gap between Roma and the general population

Cut poverty gap between Roma and general population by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 the majority of Roma escape poverty
- 'at risk of poverty' rate: Roma 80%; general population 16.8% (gap 63.2 pps)

Cut poverty gap between Roma children and other children by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 the majority of Roma children escape poverty
- Roma children: 85%; children in general: 19.6% (gap: 65.4 pps)

3. Promote participation through empowerment, cooperation and trust

Capacitate and engage at least 90 NGOs in EU-wide coordinated Roma civil society monitoring

- NGOs involved in Roma Civil Monitoring project: 85

Ensure participation of Roma NGOs as full members in national monitoring committees for all programmes addressing needs of Roma communities

- to ensure that by 2030 the majority of Roma NGOs are full members in national monitoring committees

Double proportion of Roma who file a report when they experience discrimination

- to ensure that by 2030 at least 30% of Roma victims report discrimination
- proportion who reported last incident of discrimination they experienced (in any area) in last 5 years: 16%

Encourage participation of Roma in political life at local, regional, national and EU levels (in Member States with significant Roma population)

- to ensure they register as voters, vote, run as candidates

SECTORAL OBJECTIVES

4. Increase effective equal access to quality inclusive mainstream education

Cut gap in participation in early childhood education and care by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 at least 70% of Roma children participate in pre-school
- early childhood education and care participation (3+): Roma 42%; general population 92.2% (gap 50.2 pps)

Reduce gap in upper secondary completion by at least one third

- to ensure that by 2030 the majority of Roma youth complete at least upper secondary education
- completed upper secondary or above: Roma 28%; general population 83.5% (gap 55.5 pps)

Work towards eliminating segregation by cutting at least in half the proportion of Roma children attending segregated primary schools (in Member States with significant Roma population)

- to ensure that by 2030 less than one in five Roma child attend schools where most or all children are Roma
- Roma children attending schools where most or all children are Roma: 44%

5. Increase effective equal access to quality and sustainable employment

Cut employment gap by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 at least 60% of Roma are in paid work
- paid employment: Roma 42%; general population 73.1% (gap 30.1 pps)

Cut gender employment gap for Roma by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 at least 45% of Roma women are in paid work
- gender employment gap - Roma: 27pps (women: 29%, men: 56%); general population gap: 11.7pps (women: 67.2%, men: 78.9%)

Cut gap in NEET rate by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 less than one in three Roma youth is not in education, employment or training
- NEET rate (16-24 years): Roma 62%; general population 10.1% (gap 51.9 pps)

6. Improve Roma health and increase effective equal access to quality healthcare and social services

Cut life expectancy gap by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 Roma women and men live 5 years longer
- life expectancy gap at birth (general population vs Roma): Roma women 10.4 years; Roma men 10.2 years

7. Increase effective equal access to adequate desegregated housing and essential services

Reduce gap in housing deprivation by at least one third

- to ensure that by 2030 the majority of Roma do not face housing deprivation
- housing deprivation: Roma 61%; general population 17.9% (gap: 43.1 pps)

Cut gap in overcrowding by at least half

- to ensure that by 2030 the majority of Roma no longer live in overcrowded households
- overcrowding: Roma 78%; general population 17.1% (gap 60.9 pps)

- Ensure that at least 95% of Roma have access to tap water access to tap water in dwelling: Roma 70%; general population: 97.7%

Source

EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation for 2020 – 2030

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/union_of_equality_eu_roma_strategic_framework_for_equality_inclusion_and_participation_en.pdf

12. A NEW EU ROMA STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK October 2020

The new EU Roma strategic framework sets a number of targets up until 2030, which aim to promote **effective equality, socio-economic inclusion and meaningful participation of Roma**.



41% of Roma have experienced discrimination over the past 5 years



85% of Roma children are at risk of poverty compared to 20% of children in the general population



62% of Roma youth are not in education, employment or training compared to 10% of youth in the general population

2030 TARGETS

The EU Roma strategic framework sets out a number of targets on **minimum progress** to be achieved by 2030 and provides guidance to EU Member States on how to do this.

Fighting and preventing antigypsyism and discrimination

- ▶ Halve the number of Roma who experience discrimination
- ▶ Decrease by at least a third the proportion of the general population who feel uncomfortable having Roma neighbours

Reducing poverty and exclusion

- ▶ Cut the poverty gap and the child poverty gap by at least half

Healthcare

- ▶ Cut the life expectancy gap by at least half

Promoting participation through empowerment, cooperation and trust

- ▶ Engage NGOs in EU-wide coordinated Roma civil society monitoring
- ▶ Ensure participation of Roma NGOs as full members in national monitoring committees
- ▶ Double the proportion of Roma who file a report when they experience discrimination
- ▶ Encourage the participation of Roma in local, regional, national and European politics

Education

- ▶ Cut the gap in participation in early childhood education and care by at least half
- ▶ Reduce the gap in upper secondary completion by at least one third
- ▶ Work towards eliminating segregation by halving (at least) the proportion of Roma children attending segregated primary schools

Housing

- ▶ Reduce the gap in housing deprivation by at least one third
- ▶ Cut the gap in overcrowding by at least half
- ▶ Ensure that at least 95% of Roma have access to tap water

Employment

- ▶ Cut the employment gap by at least half
- ▶ Cut the gender employment gap for Roma by at least half
- ▶ Cut the gap in the rate of young people not in education, employment or training by at least half

European Commission

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/factsheet_-_a_new_eu_roma_strategic_framework_en.pdf

GREECE

Education

Policy incentives implemented to increase school attendance via two programmes – 'Education of Roma Children' and 'Roma Children in Macedonia and Thrace'

Employment

Implementation of Local Integrated Programmes for Vulnerable Social Groups (TOPEKO).
Continuation of 29 Support Centres for vulnerable groups, including Roma

Health

Focus on preventive healthcare, mainly on vaccination

Housing

Three regional integrated pilot programmes with an infrastructure component.

Anti-discrimination

The Greek Ombudsman has created a separate office for Roma issues.

ITALY

Education

Measures planned to reduce early school leaving rate in Campania, Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily.
National project launched in 2013 involving 13 large municipalities, aimed at increasing school attendance of Roma children in primary and secondary schools

Employment

Promoting vocational training and job orientation.

The national working group on labour has been developing projects targeting Roma people and aiming to prevent early school leaving, integrating migrants, fighting undeclared work, promoting access to services, promoting self-employment.

Creation of a national integration website to improve access for foreign nationals to services such as education, work, housing and childcare.

Health

The national health system provides universal access to healthcare (including Roma people), prevention and uniform criteria for quality services throughout the country.

Additional financial allocations in 2012 and 2013 to a national health institute, created to improve migrants' health and to fight poverty-related diseases.

Project "TroVARSI" – Vaccinations for Roma and Sinti – started in 2013, and aims at better protecting Roma children from diseases that can be prevented by ordinary vaccination.

Housing

Efforts to overcome the "camps-system" were made in various areas of the country.

Anti-discrimination

The 'Campaign Dosta! 2012-2013' aims at raising awareness and combating anti-Roma prejudice.

Source European Commission

https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/factsheet-greece-2014_en

13. School environment

A multi-sector and cross-departmental approach to promoting inclusive education would involve:

Sensitization to the rights of all children to education. National campaigns and information dissemination are necessary to challenge many of the cultural barriers and discriminatory attitudes and beliefs that impede access to education for Roma children.

Parental and family support. Roma parents need to be supported to promote both their willingness and capacity to ensure their children's attendance at school.

An inclusive ethos and environment. Schools need to be provided with policies and guidance on how to create learning environments that respond to and value the needs of Roma children. Schools should promote a culture of respect for differences and introduce approaches to support all children, irrespective of gender, language, ethnicity or disability.

A flexible structure and timetable. Schools should adapt to children rather than requiring them to adjust to a pre-defined and rigid system, especially during early years and through the first grades of primary school. If Roma children, particularly those who may be required to work, are to realize their right to education, it is necessary to explore options for a more flexible and inclusive approach to the organization of schools. However, flexibility should not extend to the exclusion of Roma children from mainstream classes. Offering alternative curricula for Roma children can serve to discriminate and limit their future opportunities. Of course, children are entitled to protection from economic exploitation and from any work that interferes with their health, education or development. The first priority must be to ensure that children are not forced into work that limits their access and opportunity to benefit from education. However, until this goal is realized, such children are entitled to an education that accommodates the competing demands on their time.

OECD recommendations for well-being of Roma students

Well-being is an element increasingly incorporated in OECD's work on children, young people and education. It is defined here as a dynamic state characterised by students experiencing the ability and opportunity to fulfil their personal and social goals. According to OECD's work on child well-being (OECD, 2015), the latter is multidimensional and covers:

1. Cognitive well-being;
2. Psychological well-being;
3. Physical well-being;
4. Social well-being;
5. Material well-being.

As observed in recent OECD works, embracing cultural diversity in the classroom has positive effects on students' outcomes and enhances all aspects of well-being. In fact, some of the most successful schools are the ones that provide an inclusive and intercultural environment where students feel connected and valued (OECD, 2017). This suggestion comes to explore the possibility of implementing **intercultural education to foster Roma students' well-being**.

Source

OECD

DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS Inclusion of Roma Students in Europe: A literature review and examples of policy initiatives OECD Education Working Paper No. 228

<https://www.oecd.org/wise/Measuring-What-Matters-for-Child-Wellbeing-and-Policies-Policy-brief-July-2021.pdf>

<https://www.oecd.org/wise/measuring-what-matters-for-child-well-being-and-policies-e82fded1-en.htm>

A UK example

Good practices for the inclusion of Roma children in schools in the United Kingdom

The Traveller Movement, a charity based in the United Kingdom that works with Gypsies, Roma and Travellers (GRT), released a report in 2019 aimed as a guide for schools to create an environment likely to enhance outcomes and a sense of belonging for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children in education.

Through empirical research with teachers and Roma families, and some quantitative analysis, they identified the most efficient practices implemented in UK schools. These schools are the ones responding to the most significant issues that are exclusion, admission and transport, bullying, discrimination,

attendance, special educational needs and elective home education.

Overall, the schools having both a high GTR population and good attainment are those consistently characterised by the following elements:

- They create an environment of safety and trust;
- They cultivate an ethos of respect;
- They are committed to access and inclusion;
- They have high expectations of their pupils;
- They work in partnership with families, pupils and local communities;
- They communicate openly and respectfully with children and create good working relationships with parents.

This type of studies shows that schools with directors and teachers committed to inclusion practices that consider the various dimensions of diversity, including Roma students, have a strong impact on both students' performance and well-being.

Source: The Traveller Movement, 2019.

<https://travellermovement.org.uk/>

14. Diversity management models and practices

Diversity management models

Assimilation: total rejection of otherness

Integration: partial acceptance of otherness

Multiculturalism: acceptance without interaction

Interculturalism: acceptance and interaction

Assimilation

- The first social, therefore, educational policy for the management of ethnocultural diversity was that of assimilation, which was based essentially on the prohibition in public space of the promotion of any cultural, linguistic, religious and other diversity.
- It aimed to lead students with a different ethnocultural identity to abandon their 'own' ethnocultural characteristics and adopt those of the dominant group.
- Traditional pedagogy
- On the other hand, according to the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (2007), in many European countries a number of Roma students, mainly those from relatively well-off families, desire and choose assimilation as a means of avoid stigma and negative perceptions and attitudes towards them.

Integration

- This approach acknowledged cultural diversity, but only to the extent that it did not, at least obviously, challenge the cultural assumptions of the dominant social group
- Linguistic and religious diversity of class teaching is the predominant one, while only the official religion of the country is taught in the school.
- In general, both the assimilation and integration approaches are dominated by the views of the 'cultural deficit'.

Multiculturalism

- According to this approach, the characteristics of ethnoculturally diverse students need to be considered and treated on an equal footing with the characteristics of students belonging to the dominant ethnocultural group.

- The positive self-image of ethnoculturally different students works correspondingly positively for their school performance, as well as their general educational development. simple coexistence did not necessarily create conditions for the development of communication and interaction

Interculturalism

In theoretical terms, but also in the practical applications of intercultural education, one can distinguish three different ideological approaches:

- **cultural ecumenism**, which focuses on the emergence of common cultural references,
- **cultural relativism**, which identifies cultural differences between groups. in common social spaces and, finally,
- **an approach that goes beyond the 'similarities or differences' dipole** and focuses on equal social participation and equal opportunities for all social groups, regardless of their cultural identity.

15. Intercultural approach to education

Critical and transformative teaching

Intercultural education adopts common values with those of critical education ie education that promotes the cultivation of **critical thinking** and reflection, as well as **transformative learning**, ie learning aimed at the development of young people's mental habits, that is, finally a different view of 'others'.

The current situation

- A large part of the ethnoculturally dominant population group if not embraced the 'cultural deficit' of the Roma is in favor of an **assimilative** social and educational approach.
- The language of the Roma, Romani, is virtually forbidden in the school environment, while references to Romani culture are usually superficial and **folkloric** and do not help to include Roma students in the classroom.
- Similarly, a **charitable approach** to Roma students is common, which is outside the framework of the intercultural approach and does not contribute to the development of an equal relationship between students.
- In most countries by the dominant ethnocultural majority, Roma continue to be treated as a '**problematic**' population group, to be found or at risk of social exclusion, to be frequent victims of discrimination and racist attitudes

Creating a frame

School-family cooperation, as well as school-community cooperation, is strongly encouraged, as intercultural cooperation and exchange can be effectively promoted through them. The school is the one that needs to take care of building the above cooperation, creating an appropriate supportive environment where parents can feel comfortable and communicate with the school on a substantial rather than formal level.

Principles of intercultural education

- Empathy
- solidarity
- respect for cultural diversity
- elimination of nationalist way of thinking, national stereotypes and prejudices

Intercultural education is connected to

- Pedagogical criticism

- Human rights education
- Education for social justice
- Transformational learning
- Experiential learning
- Collaborative learning

Intercultural skill

It includes all those social skills that contribute to the recognition, acceptance and creative management of diversity.

It is linked to the social skills that enable the acceptance of new cultural codes, the adaptation of previous perceptions and attitudes and the development of new functional strategies in the management of diversity, both ethnocultural and other forms.

Intercultural competent teacher

- The intercultural competent teacher is characterized by intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, as well as intercultural dexterity.
- He/she respects people from other cultures, has empathy, is open to new learning, is flexible and can discern his own prejudices.
- Condemns theories of 'cultural deficit'
- Condemns assimilation strategies
- Recognizes the dynamic process of cultural formation identity through interaction
- Understands the specifics of people in cultural 'intermediate zones'.
- Looks for possible stereotypes in his / her perceptions and attitudes

Appropriate teaching approaches

- Work groups
- Case studies
- Autobiographical narratives
- Project plan method

Looking for responsibilities

- ▶ The responsibilities of the Roma
- ▶ The responsibilities of the dominant team
- ▶ The responsibilities of the education system
- ▶ The responsibilities of the teacher

Common traps

The trap of 'targeting'

- Often the teachers, wanting to enhance the self-image and self-confidence of the Roma students, refer to their identity or organize activities for the promotion of the Roma identity, taking it for granted that this is something desired by the Roma students themselves. Without being the rule, many cases of Roma students prefer not to mention their origin, an element that they feel distinguishes them from the ethnocultural majority of the class.

The trap of assimilation

- The opposite of the trap mentioned earlier is that of assimilation. Refers to teachers who want the cultural assimilation of Roma students by the dominant ethnocultural identity. They consider that the Roman identity is a 'stigma' for the students and therefore the purpose of the education is to assimilate them or, in other words, to hide their cultural identity, at least in the school environment.

The trap of the cultural deficit

- Related to the above traps is the trap of the cultural deficit. This trap represents the view that Roma students are culturally 'deficient' in relation to students in the dominant ethnocultural group. The school and the teacher undertake to cover the above 'deficit'. It is obvious that such views promote stereotypical and prejudiced views of the 'other' and ultimately racist perceptions of superior and inferior civilizations.

The trap of ethnocentrism

The trap of cultural color blindness

- The teacher in the name of parity and equity they treat Roma students as if they are equally competent with the rest, ignoring their discrepancies and their shortcomings. They claim that this way they urge them to make their best effort and overcome their problems.

The trap of exoticization

- This is one of the most common pitfalls in the field of intercultural education. It concerns the approach of the culturally different not through an objective presentation of its cultural characteristics, the variety that characterizes them, as well as the possible otherities that coexist within the same culture, but through a stereotypical - exotic approach.
- Thus, the exotic approach for the Roma concerns the image of a people who do not like to have a permanent home, they like to travel, to live in tents, not to go to school and as their only occupation to have dancing and singing.

Evaluation

- Monitoring the individual development in the student's school performance.
- Monitoring the student's participation in school activities inside and outside the classroom.
- Monitoring the general attitude of the student towards the school duties and responsibilities
- Monitoring the student's communication with his classmates
- Monitoring the general interest of the student towards school institution

Best practices

- Intercultural Education
- Differentiated pedagogy
- Welcome classes and support classes
- Appropriate educational material.
- Teacher training
- Connecting a community school. Utilization of cultural mediators
- Strengthening pre-school education
- Promotion of good practices
- Parents' schools (Roma and non-Roma)

Conclusions

- ▶ The role of the teacher
- ▶ The climate of the classroom
- ▶ The inclusive school
- ▶ There are no 'magic recipes', but a 'magic word': EMOTIONS
- ▶ The role of differentiated pedagogy and intercultural education

Education Program for Roma Children

Our big book <http://peroma.web.auth.gr/peroma/el/node/4>

16. Differentiation

According to Tomlinson, teachers can differentiate instruction through : 1) content, 2) process, 3) product, and 4) learning environment.

Content

- What you could do is differentiate the content by designing activities for groups of students that cover various levels of Bloom's Taxonomy . The six levels are: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating.
- Students who are unfamiliar with a lesson could be required to complete tasks on the lower levels: remembering and understanding. Students with some mastery could be asked to apply and analyze the content, and students who have high levels of mastery could be asked to complete tasks in the areas of evaluating and creating.

Process

- Each student has a preferred learning style, and successful differentiation includes delivering the material to each style: visual, auditory and kinesthetic, and through words.
- Product
- The product is what the student creates at the end of the lesson to demonstrate the mastery of the content. This can be in the form of tests, projects, reports, or other activities. You could assign students to complete activities that show mastery of an educational concept in a way the student prefers, based on learning style.

Learning environment

- The conditions for optimal learning include both physical and psychological elements. A flexible classroom layout is the key, incorporating various types of furniture and arrangements to support both individual and group work. Psychologically speaking, teachers should use classroom management techniques that support a safe and supportive learning environment. Living in the R

17. The case of Roma students in Greece

The Roma children show a small percentage of enrollment in schools, lack of attendance at classes, difficulties in adapting to the school curriculum and shortages in school supplies.

Schools should not favor social discrimination against Roma students either through its official ideology, as expressed in the curricula, the organization of classes, the didactic methods and teaching materials, the treatment of their language and culture by the school and the teachers.

Ten factors that affect Roma education:

1. Greek is the second language of Roma children, who come to school with little knowledge of Greek. This is not taken into account by the school that teaches everyone in the same way.
2. The low expectations of the teachers, as a result of which they are satisfied with the acquisition of basic knowledge by the children
3. The faulty cooperation between home and school, since their relationship often involves mistrust.
4. The programs that exist in the school do not cover their needs and do not take into account their particularities.
5. Teachers are not properly trained to teach Roma children.
6. The schools that Roma children attend are often degraded and do not have the appropriate infrastructure.
7. Education is a political decision. The state must take all necessary measures to ensure good education for all groups.

8. The low educational level of the parents affects the school performance as the parents can not help their children with their homework.
9. The illiteracy and lack of degrees of the Roma excludes them from a series of social, professional and economic activities, putting them on the sidelines.
10. The programs that are sometimes carried out in Roma settlements are unsuitable and do not have continuity, as a result of which they fail.

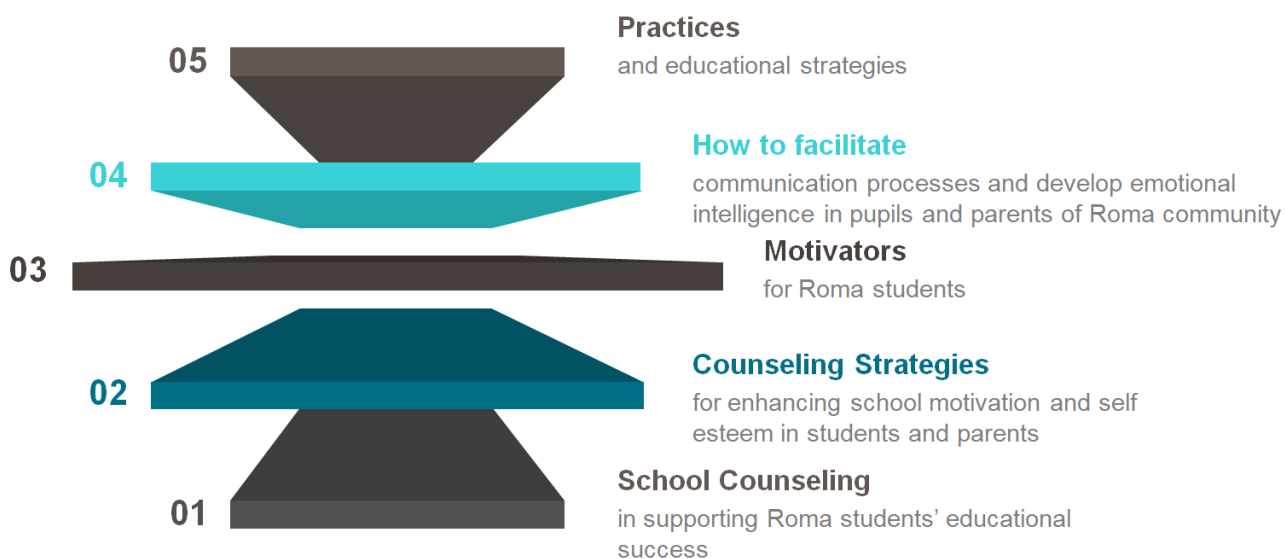
Regarding the lack of attendance and finally the school dropout, the reasons that were recorded are:

- The difficulty in moving to and from school.
- The untimely enrollment in the kindergarten and in the first grades of the Primary School
- The difficulty in the language and the inability of the school to provide them with a supportive environment
- The lack of interest on the part of Roma students
- Relationships with classmates
- Living conditions in the camp
- Marriage at a young age mainly for girls (Papadopoulou, 2015)

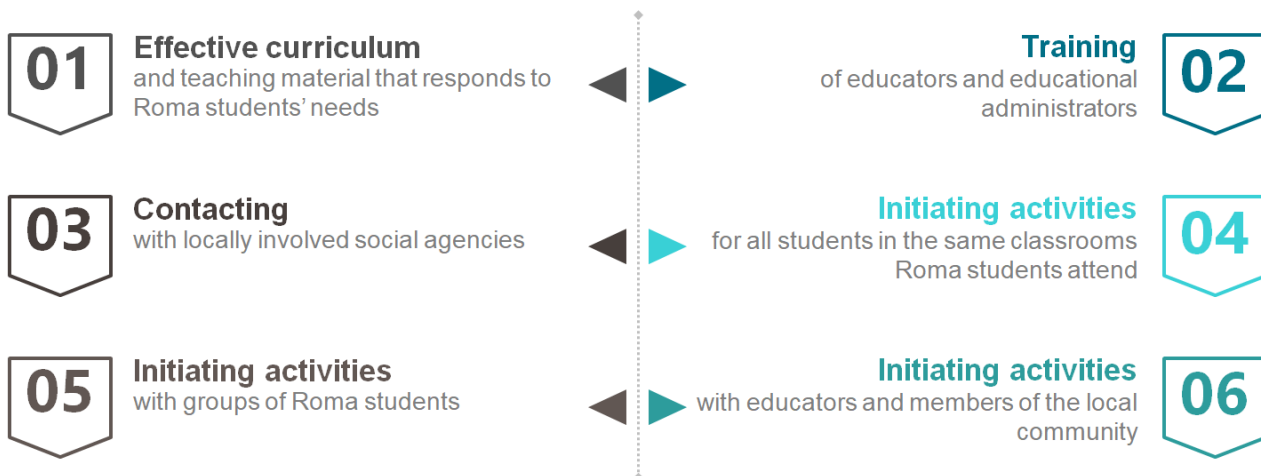
18. Effective practices from Greek context

- Creating a positive climate (security, understanding, trust)
- Cultivation of students' empathy
- Encourage their participation in discussions within in the class
- Role-playing games
- Theatrical game
- Personalized teaching
- Collaborative methods
- Appropriate class setting
- Using the Project method
- Encourage participation in extracurricular activities activities
- Organizing intercultural activities and events
- Appropriate use of the computer in teaching
- More vigilant on-call duty outdoors
- Decisive confrontation of problems due to ethnocultural diversity
- Collaboration with Parents
- Cooperation with the Municipality and other (social services etc.)

19. School counseling in supporting Roma students' educational success

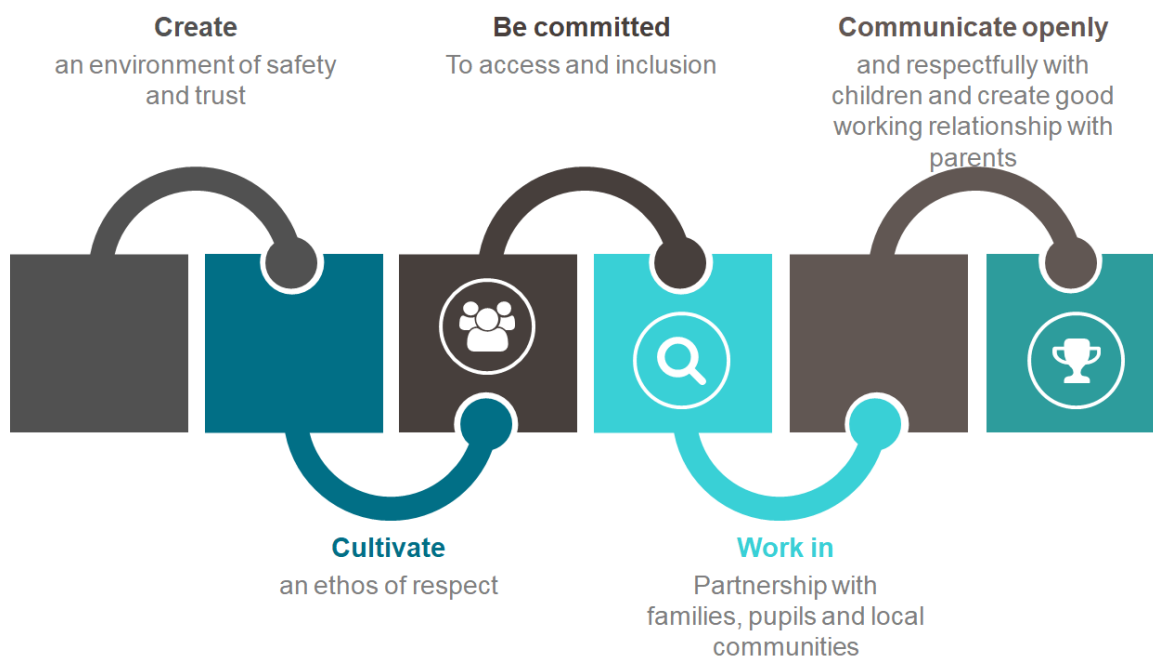


Requirements

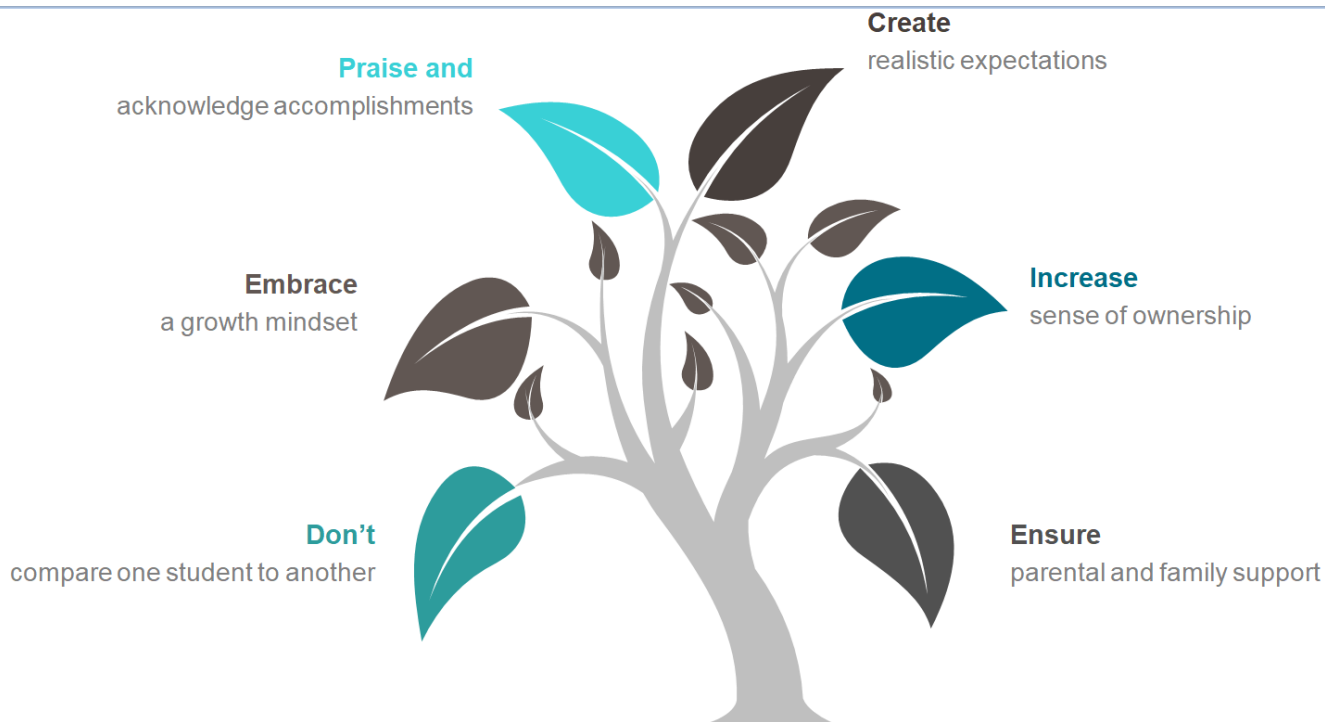


Desired outcomes

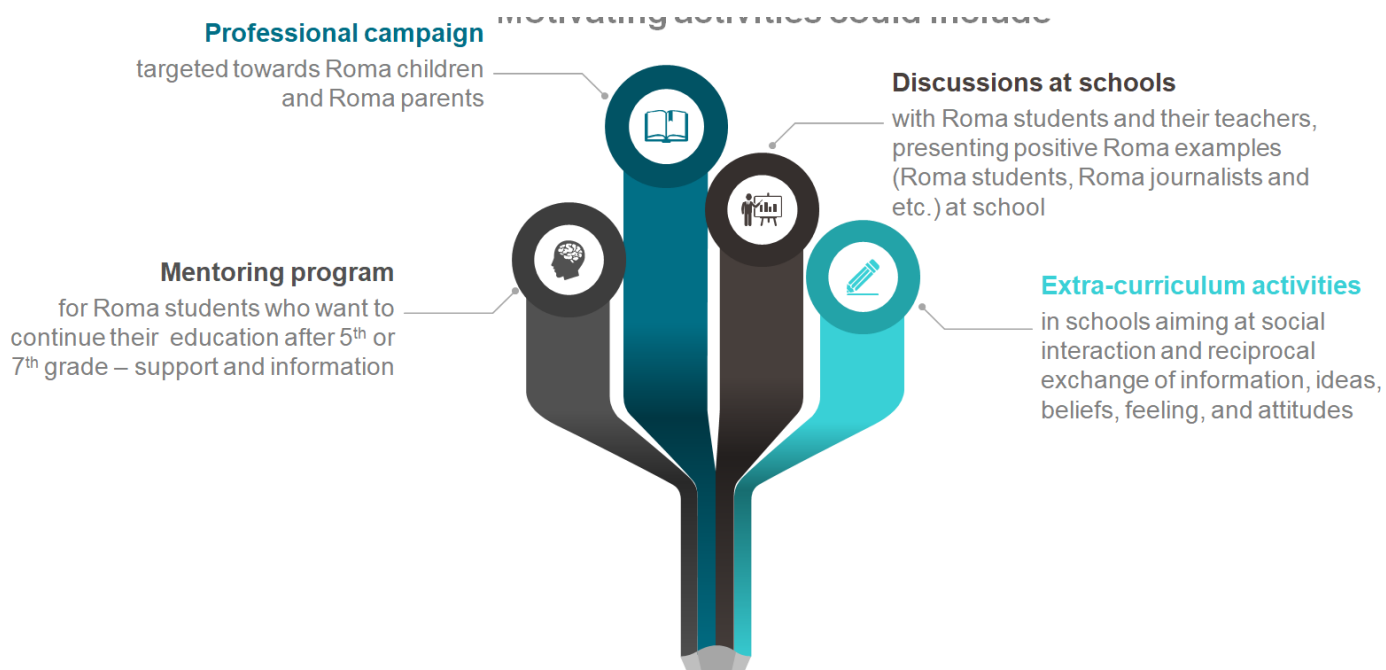
School level



Students and parents level



Society level



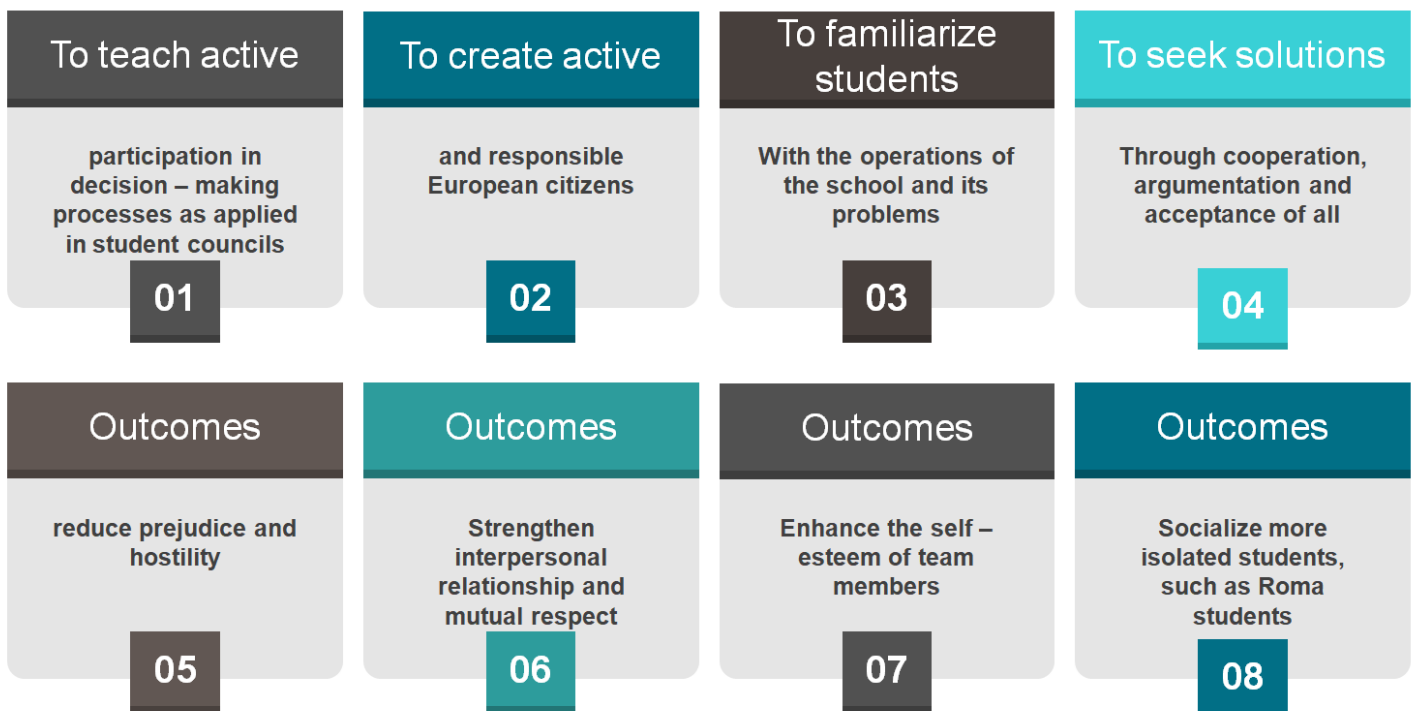
20. Motivators for Roma students / Activities

20.1 Children's Rights



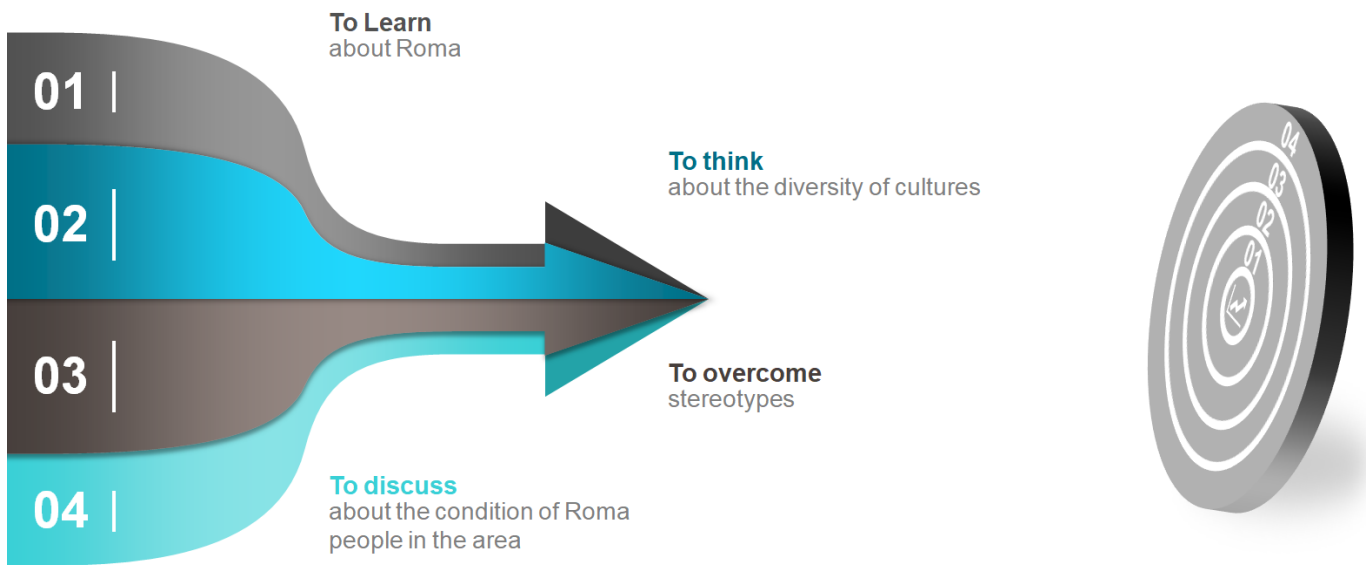
20.2 Students' council

Objectives & Outcomes



20.3 Roma people and their way of life

Objectives

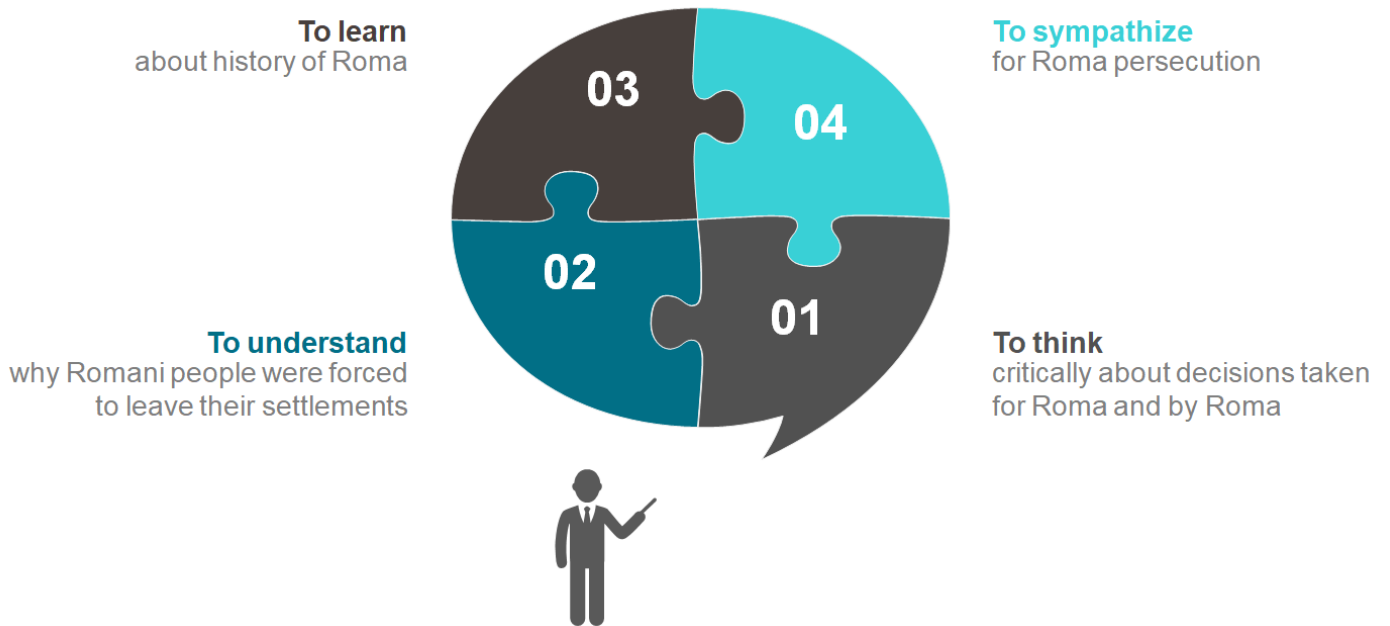


Outcomes

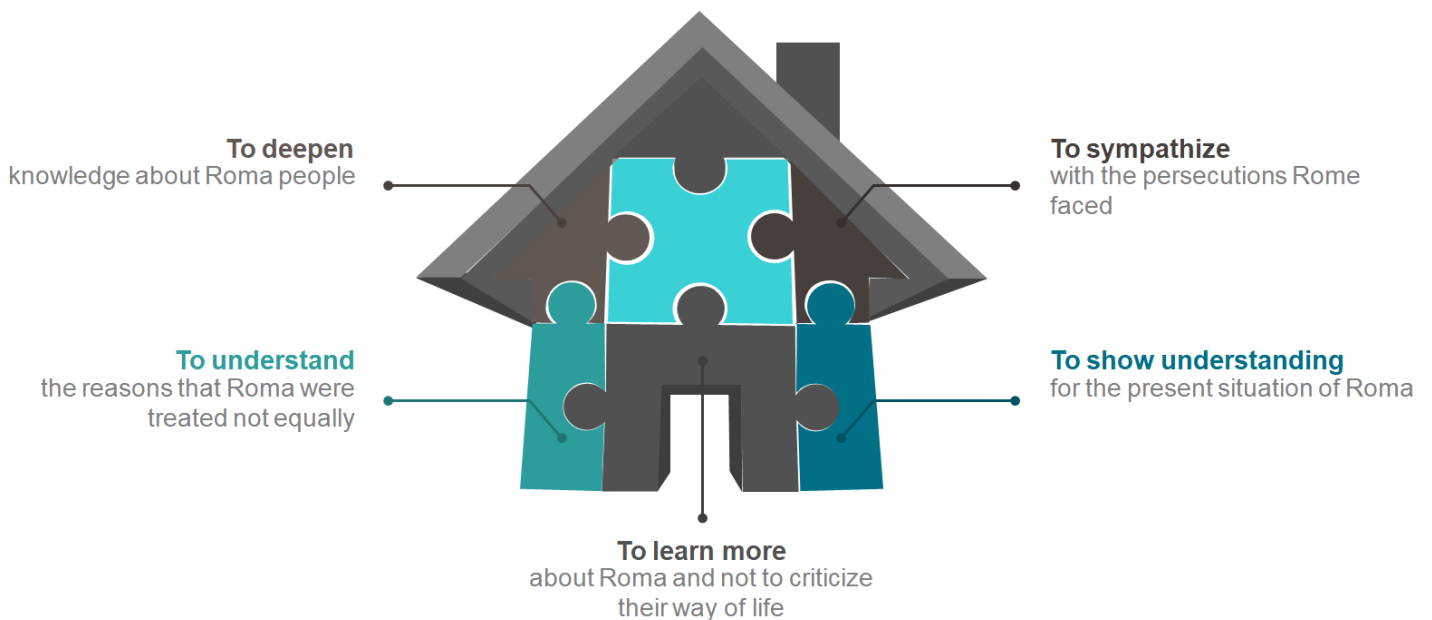


20.4 Roma History

Objectives

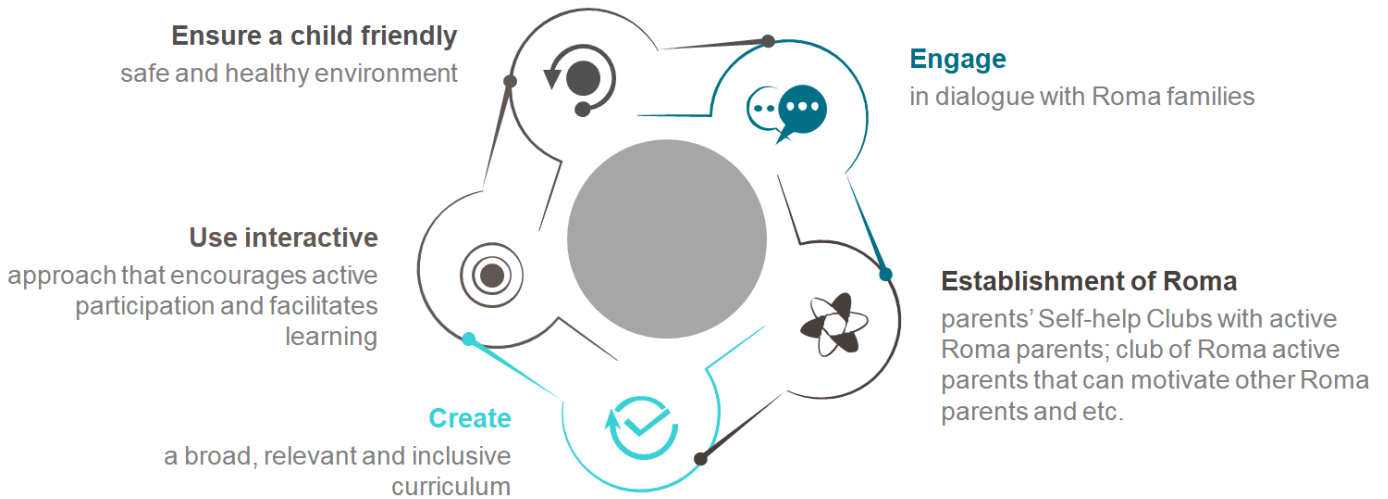


Outcomes



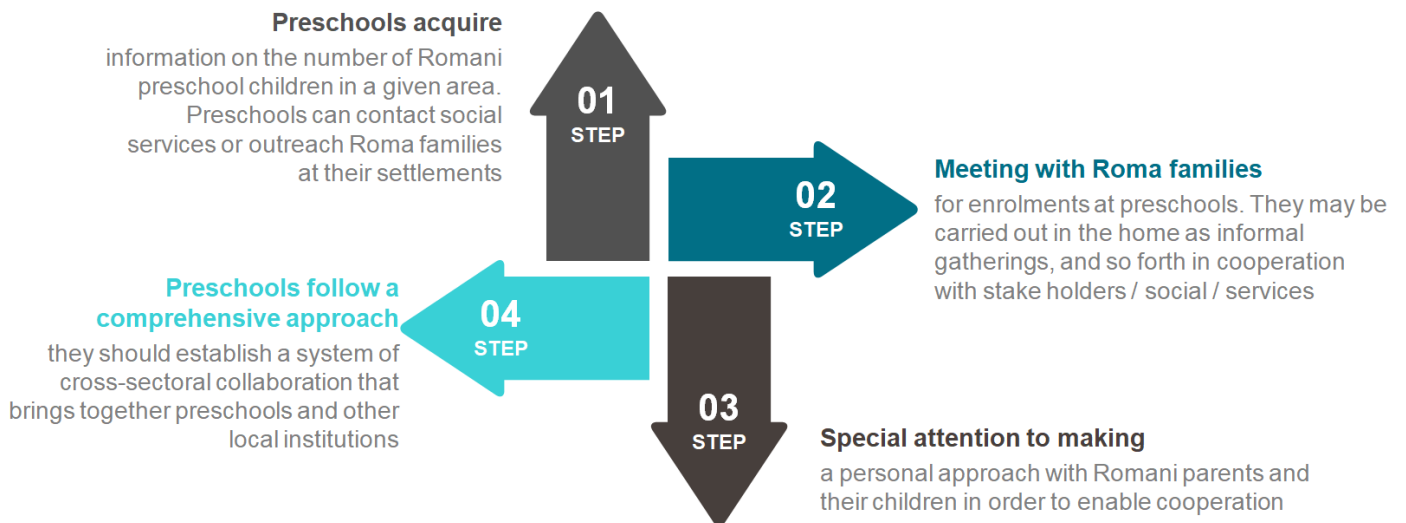
21. Motivators for Roma families

a. Communication process

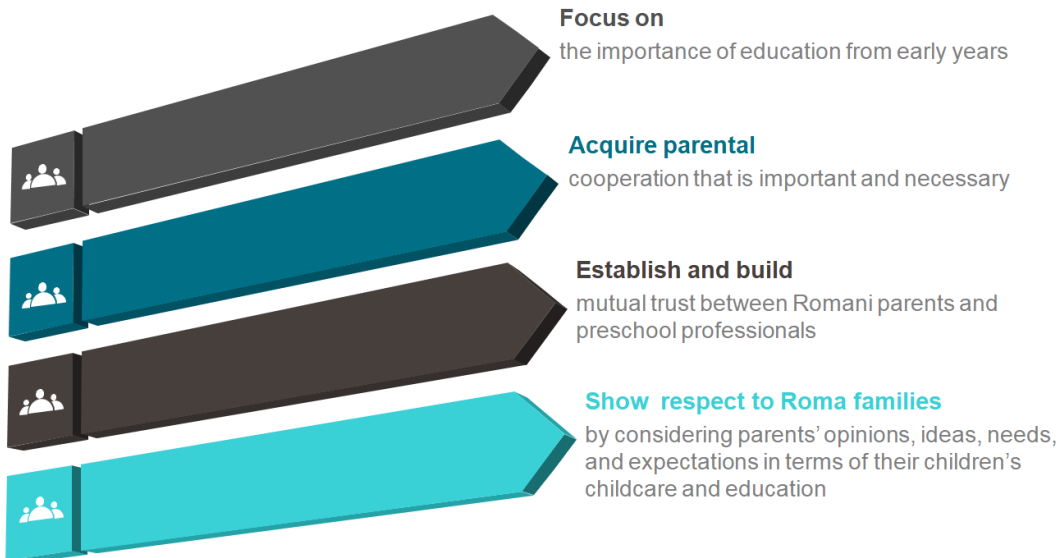


b. Preschool Education

Steps



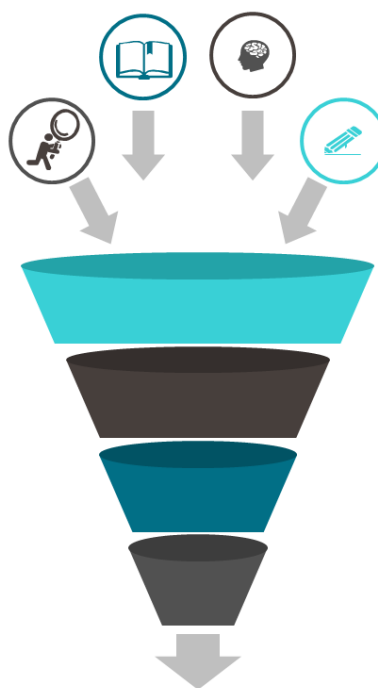
Outcomes



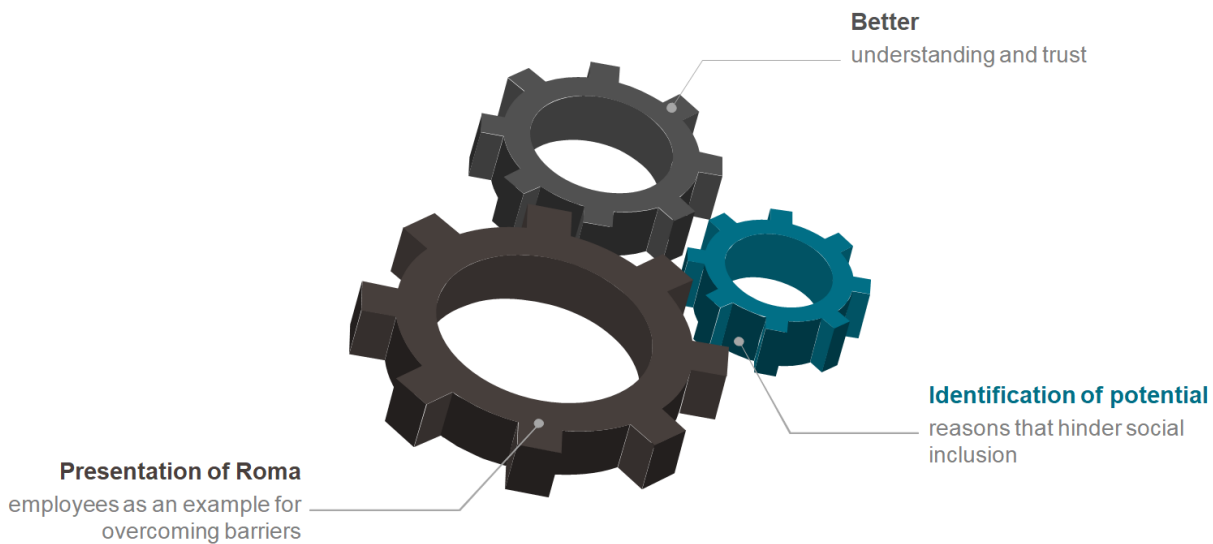
c. Employment of the members of Romani community

Steps

- Employ staff**
from Romani community
- Roma employees**
outreach municipality
- The preschools**
through Roma employees get in touch with individuals
- Employees develop**
various approaches

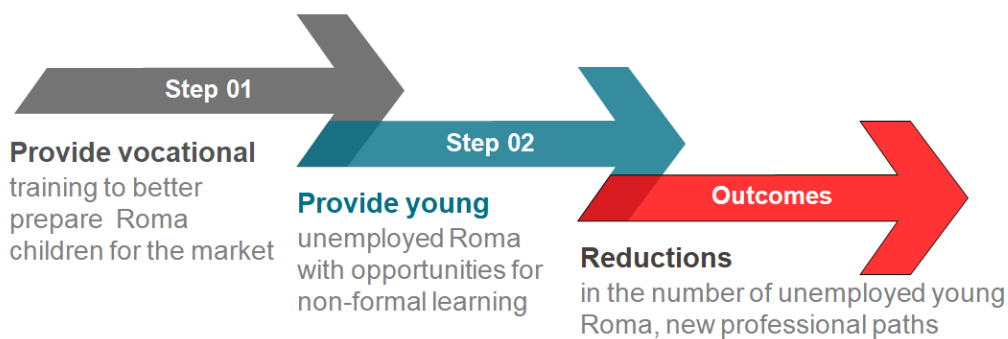


Outcomes



d. Non formal training for qualification

Steps & Outcomes



e. Education for adult Roma

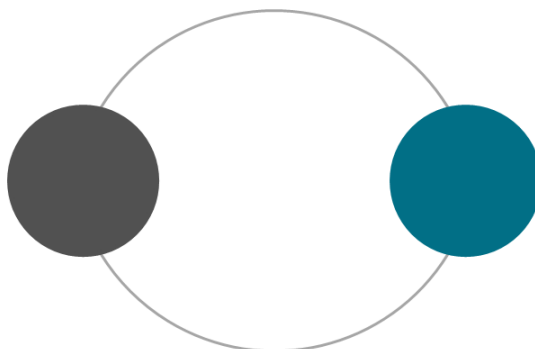
Steps & Outcomes



f. Connecting Roma and non Roma

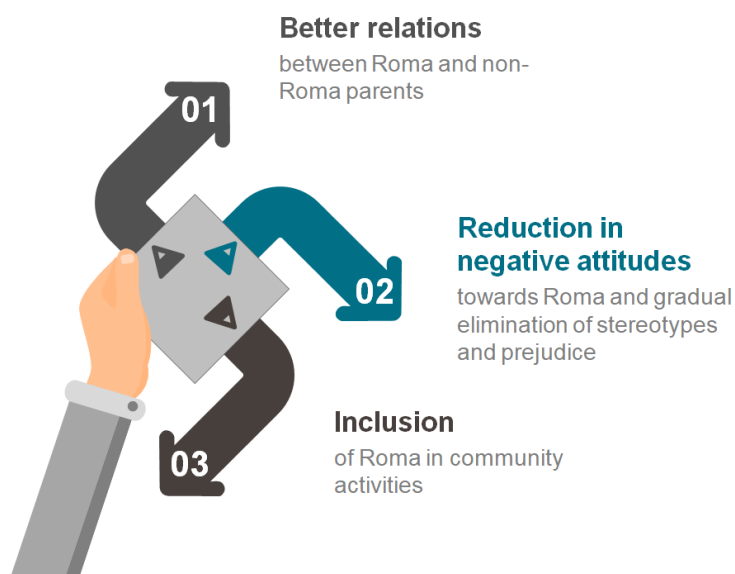
Steps

Encourage dialogue between Roma and non-Roma through local activities. Organize voluntary activities involving Roma and non-Roma parents



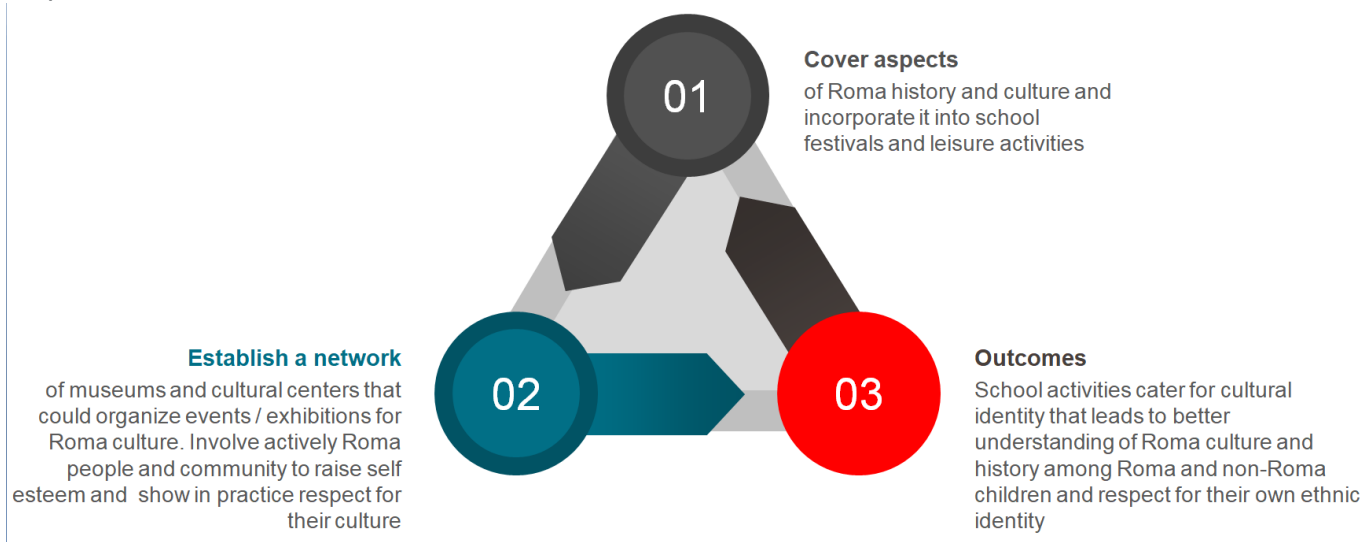
Establish a partnership between Roma communities and local media with a view to promoting a more accurate image of Roma. Conduct awareness-raising campaigns to counter racism

Outcomes



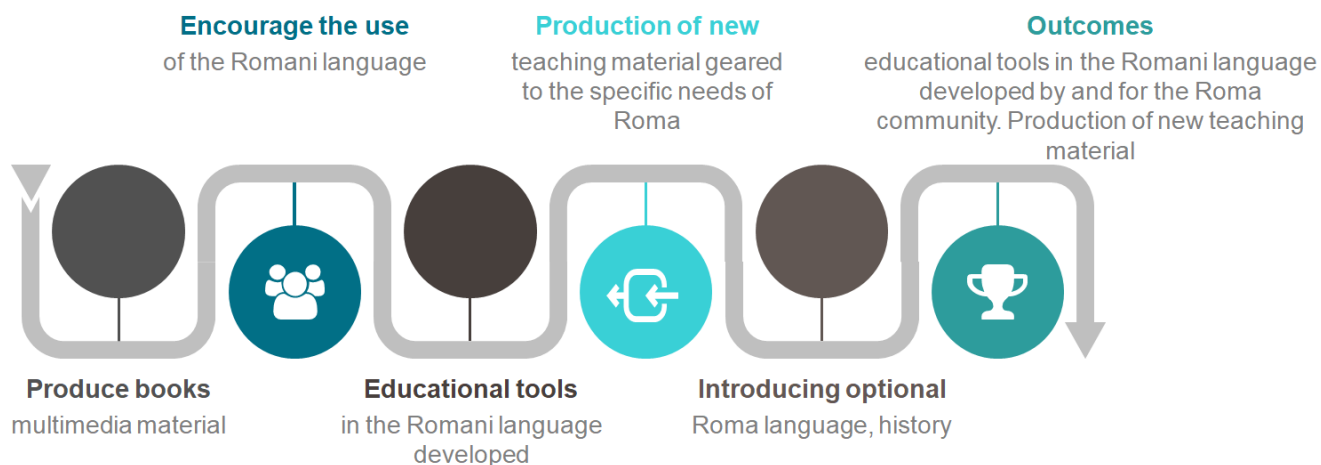
g. Promoting Roma culture and history through formal and non formal education

Steps & Outcomes



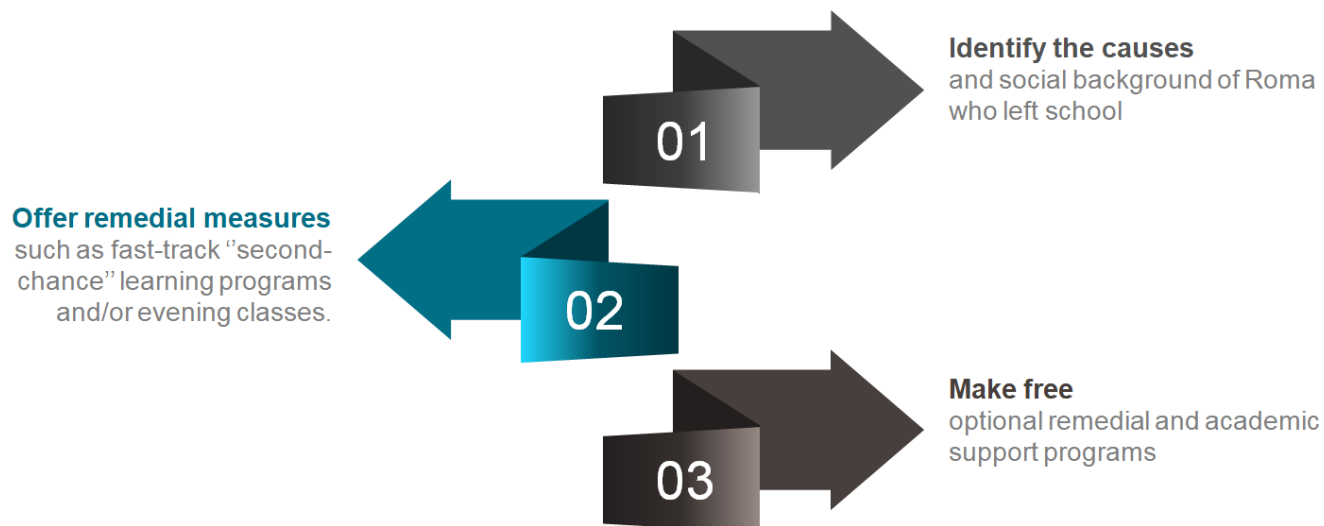
h. Developing teaching material in the Romani language

Steps & Outcomes

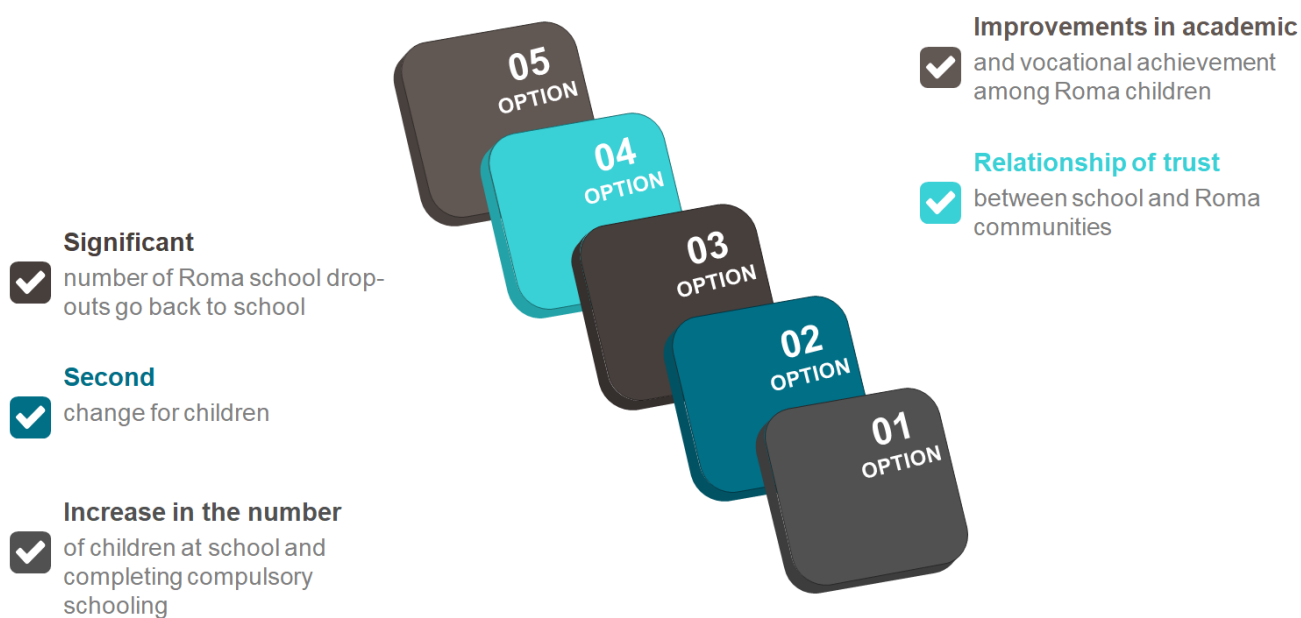


i. Measure for early school leaving

Steps

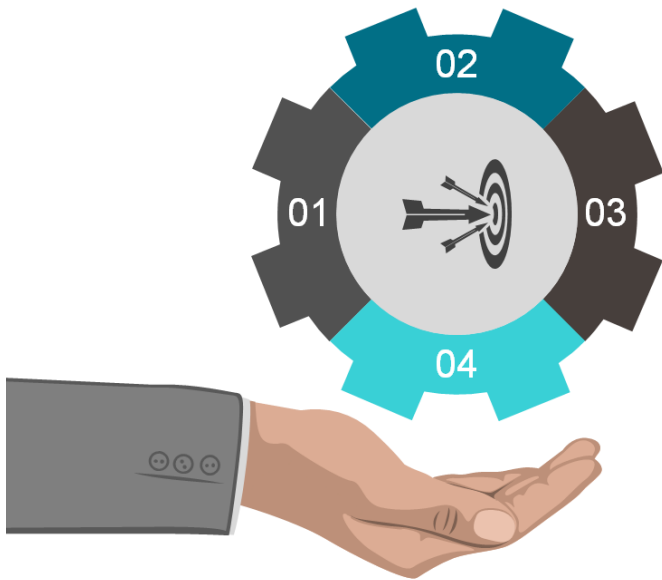


Outcomes



j. Family and school

Steps



Discussion about
their background, way of life, cooking habits, free activities. The teacher also presents his/her own habits and lifestyle



First personal meeting
with students and parents/guardians at school



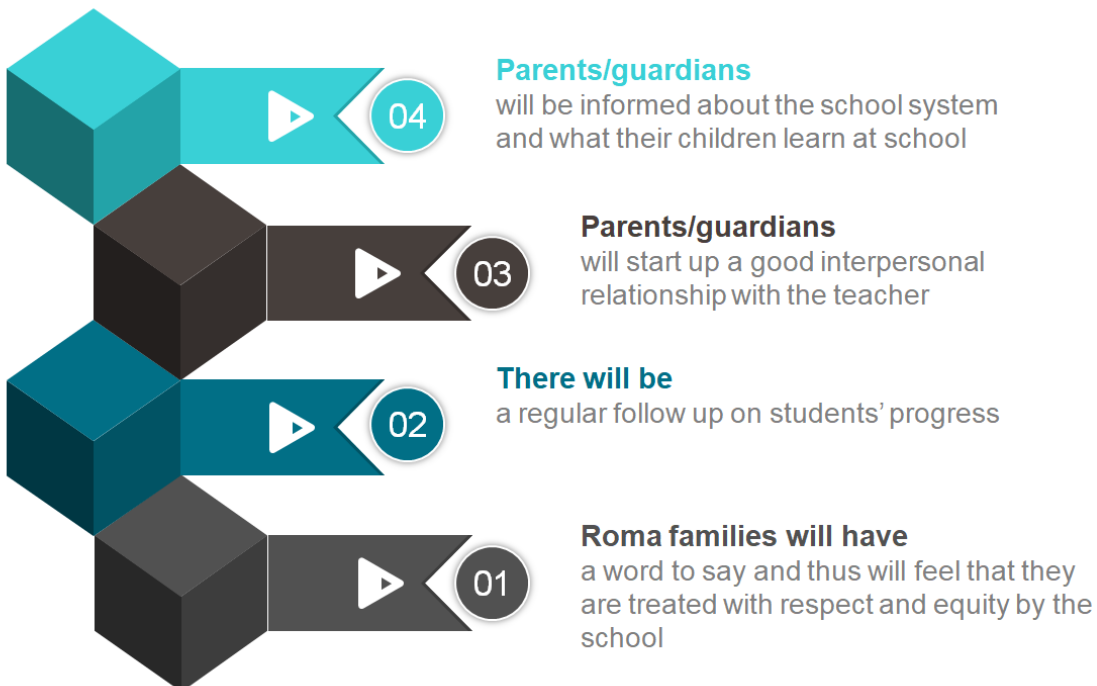
Second personal meeting
that will focus on the social/academic performance of the student between the semesters



Evaluation meeting
at the end of the school year

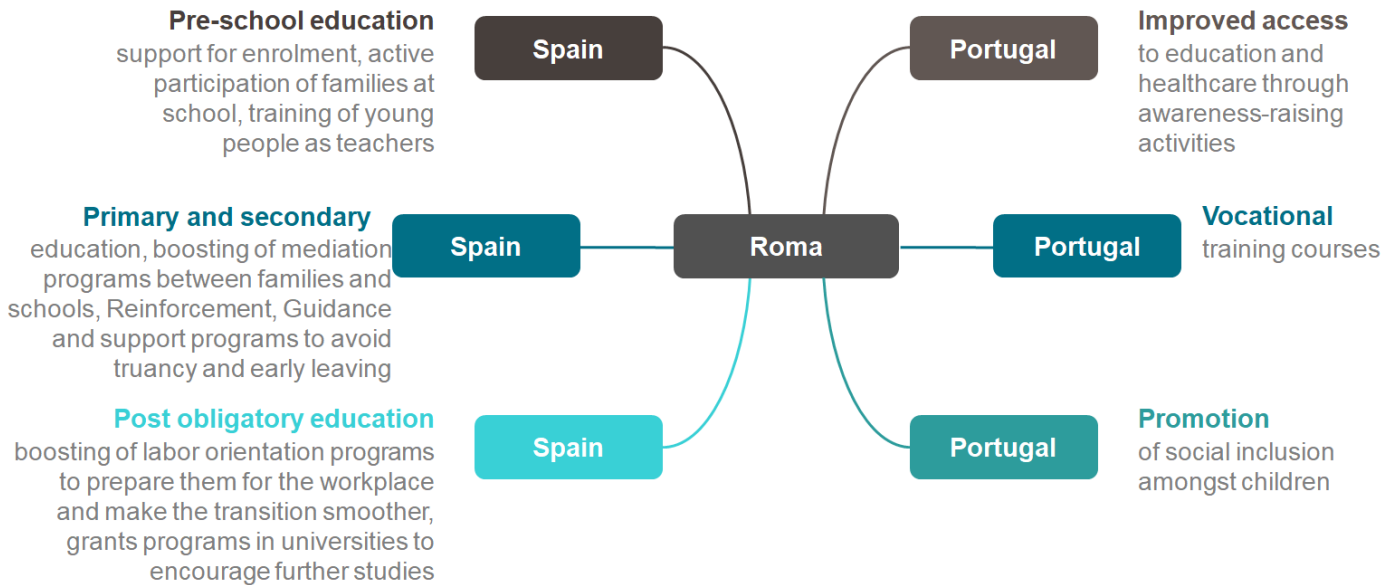


Outcomes

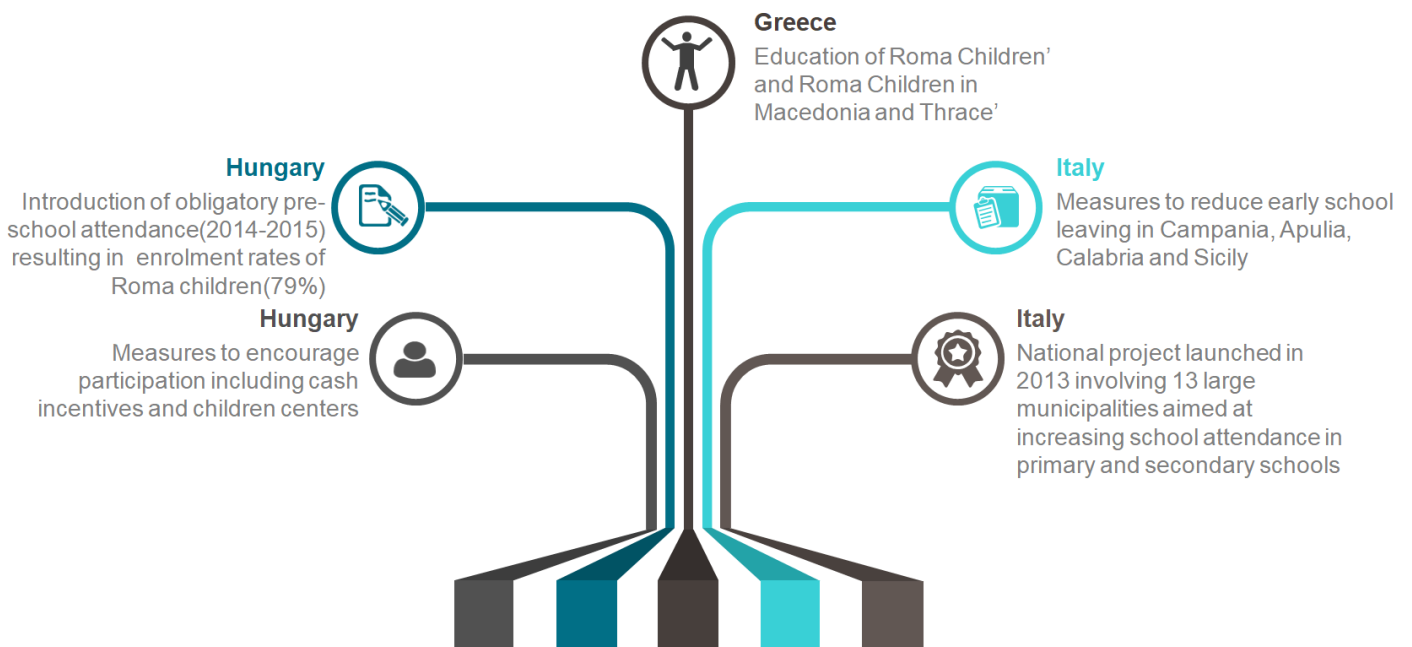


22. Practices in different countries for the Roma inclusion

Spain & Portugal



Greece, Italy & Hungary



23. Strategies

Strategy 1

TITLE

Preschool education

ABSTRACT

Preschools are the first step toward building the trust of the Romani community and overcoming language barriers. Due to high rate of unemployment in Romani communities, the need for day care is relatively small. So there should be an effort to outreach the majority of preschoolers at Roma communities in order to help the new generation integrate in education.

STEPS

Step 1

Preschools acquire information on the number of Romani preschool children in a given area, as well as try to connect with key local stakeholders who will support the Roma families. Preschools can contact social services or outreach Roma families at their settlements

Step 2

Meetings with Roma families for enrolments at preschools may be carried out in the home as informal gatherings, games, creative workshops, sports events, and so forth in cooperation with stake holders / social services.

Step 3

Special attention to making a personal approach with Romani parents and their children in order to enable cooperation

Step 4

Preschools follow a comprehensive approach. They should establish a system of cross-sectoral collaboration that brings together preschools and other local institutions (municipalities, centers for social work, healthcare centers, and so forth). They should ask for help from social services in order to provide transportation for children, clothes, school items, medical examinations or any other kind of support that will enable inclusion in education and community

OUTCOMES

- Focus on the importance of education from early years
- Acquire parental cooperation that is important and necessary
- Establish and build mutual trust between Romani parents and preschool professionals
- Show respect to Roma families by considering parents' opinions, ideas, needs, and expectations in terms of their children's childcare and education.

Strategy 2

TITLE

Employment of the members of Romani community

ABSTRACT

Inclusion of workers and mediators from Romani community enables understanding and enforces cooperation. Moreover, it helps to overcome the language barriers and works as an example for both Roma and non Roma population.

STEPS

Step 1

Employ staff from Romani community. Priority for employment should be given to Roma people

Step 2

Roma employees outreach municipality, centers for social work, healthcare centers, NGOs and other organizations who work with Romani community and the local community for the best impact in society

Step 3

The preschools through Roma employees get in touch with individuals. The preschools should not expect individuals to do so themselves. With regard to Romani parents, employees can establish a contact with the Roma families outside the school in a less formal manner.

Step 4

Employees develop various approaches, design diverse topics, and include parents in different ways – while strengthening parental competencies in cooperation with institutions in the local area. Supplementary programs by other institutions within the local community should also be provided.

OUTCOMES

- Better understanding and trust
- Presentation of Roma employees as an example for overcoming barriers
- Presentation of Roma employment as an example for future professions
- Identification of potential reasons that hinder the inclusion process of Romani parents in their children's childcare and education (i.e. language barriers, low level of trust in their own ability to actively participate, and so forth). Accordingly, educators should take into account potential reasons when planning parental inclusion.
- Supplementary measures will strengthen parental competencies and empower Romani parents with regard to literacy and education in general that could contribute to parents' inclusion in their children's education.

Strategy 3

TITLE

Family and school

ABSTRACT

The family background is considered an important factor for children development. In order to integrate Roma children in school and community, the support of their families is vital. The strategy is a pedagogical intervention that connects school, teachers and parents/ guardians for the best of Roma children. The intervention can be initiated by the teacher who teaches the children most hours and /or has developed a close relation with them.

STEPS

Step 1

At the first semester, the teacher discusses with students about their background: family, relatives, way of life, cooking habits, free time activities, social background, mobility of the family etc. The teacher tries to establish a permanent and trustworthy relationship with the student. The teacher also presents to the student his/her own life style so that the student feels trust and connection.

Step 2

The teacher suggests to the student to have a first personal meeting with their parents / guardians. The meeting is better to be held at school so that the teacher can also guide the parents / guardians at school and present the way they work at school. It is expected that the parent /guardian will have an insight at the school system and how it will help his /her child. Other members of the family can also be invited, siblings, both parents, grandparents. The teacher asks the family and the student if they wish to make adjustments so that the school includes Roma traditions in school life eg eating habits, dress code. This is very important for the cooperation between school and family but also for the attitude towards the Roma family that they can be respected at the school community. In case that the Roma families have any requests, the school and the teacher should try to respond because it will show respect and thus help the integration of the children.

Step 3

After the first semester, there is a second personal meeting with parents / guardians that will focus on the academic and social performance of the student. The teacher informs the parents / guardians and tries to showcase positive achievements of their child. The teacher emphasizes the good points in order to build further upon them. The teacher praises both the family and the students for achievements so that the family support is promoted.

Step 4

At the end of the school year, there will be an evaluation meeting. Roma student and his/her family discuss with the teacher how they felt, what helped them proceed, whether any adjustments were supportive, what are their future plans etc. The evaluation aims to figure out the best practices and ideas derived from own experiences of Romani community.

OUTCOMES

The meetings aim at fruitful cooperation between family background, student and teacher, established on a respectful basis for Roma traditions and life style. It is expected that

- Parents/ guardians will be informed about the school system and they will know what their child learns at school
- Parents /guardians will start up a good interpersonal relationship with the teacher
- Roma families will have a word to say and to request adjustments for the education of their child. Thus, they will feel that they are treated with equity and respect by school
- There will be a regular follow up on students' progress

Strategy 4

TITLE

Non formal training for qualification

ABSTRACT

Setting up education and training programmes for Roma people leading to a qualification, to motivate their participation

STEPS

Step 1

Provide vocational training, to better prepare Roma children for the market, if possible for skills connected to their traditions and traditional occupations

Step 2

Provide young unemployed Roma, those outside the education system and those having left school at a young age with opportunities for non-formal learning

OUTCOMES

A number of Roma children will be better prepared to enter the labour market

Reduction in the number of unemployed young Roma

New professional paths, if possible connected to Roma traditional occupations

Strategy 5

TITLE

Education for adult Roma

ABSTRACT

Parental involvement is crucial for the integration of children. So it is of great importance to provide basic education for uneducated adult Roma. Educating adult Roma emphasises the importance of education and in their turn parents will motivate their children to be educated

STEPS

Step 1

Offer training courses for adults (legislation, curriculum, teaching material, teacher training, budget)

Involve parents with Adult education centres, Schools, Roma communities, Non-governmental organisations and associations

Step 2

Give an active role to Roma adults for their education

OUTCOMES

Greater participation by parents of Roma children in the implementation of measures aimed at their children

Increase in the number of educated Roma adults

Increase in the number of Roma adults with a better chance of finding a job

Strategy 6

TITLE

Connecting Roma and non Roma

ABSTRACT

Events that aim to
Awareness raising and provision of information to non-Roma parents
Countering prejudice and stereotypes among the majority population

STEPS

Step 1

Encourage dialogue between Roma and non-Roma through local activities
Organise voluntary activities involving Roma and non-Roma parents

Step 2

Establish a partnership between Roma communities and local media with a view to promoting a more accurate image of Roma
Conduct awareness-raising campaigns designed to counter racism and discrimination through presentation leaflets, advertising, shows, publications
Work in a cross sectoral way involving Media, Municipal department responsible for minority affairs, Non-governmental organisations and associations, Public bodies

OUTCOMES

Better relations between Roma and non-Roma parents
Reduction in negative attitudes towards Roma
More positive attitude towards the distinctive features of Roma culture
Gradual elimination of stereotypes and prejudice against Roma
Inclusion of Roma in community activities

Strategy 7

TITLE

Promoting Roma culture and history through formal and non-formal education

ABSTRACT

Schools incorporate aspects of Roma culture in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Cooperation with cultural centres to design events or exhibitions on Roma

STEPS

Step 1

Cover aspects of Roma history and culture

Develop extracurricular programmes designed to destigmatise Roma identity and enhance the self-awareness

of Roma,

Incorporate Roma culture into school festivals and leisure centre activities

Promote artistic creation for Roma children;

Step 2

Establish a network of museums and cultural centres that could organise events / exhibitions for Roma culture

Start creation of material on Roma that can be re-used

Involve actively Roma people and community to raise self-esteem and show in practice respect for their culture

OUTCOMES

Official curricula will include specific content relating to Roma culture

School activities cater for cultural diversity, particularly that of Roma

Development of educational material for teachers

Better understanding of Roma culture and history among Roma children, and greater respect for their own ethnic identity

Understanding of Roma culture and history among non-Roma children

Strategy 8

TITLE

Developing teaching material in the Romani language

ABSTRACT

Promotion of Romani identity by creating educational material in Romani language

STEPS

Produce books, multimedia material and comics in the Romani language

Encourage the use of the Romani language in existing teaching material (translation into Romani)

Educational tools in the Romani language developed by and for the Roma community

Production of new teaching material geared to the specific needs of the Roma population

Introducing optional Roma language, history and culture classes with Roma communities and research institutes

OUTCOMES

Educational tools in the Romani language developed by and for the Roma community

Production of new teaching material that will support needs of the Roma population

Strategy 9

TITLE

Promoting translation and Romani language teaching as occupations

ABSTRACT

Development of courses for professional interpreters in Roma language

STEPS

Step 1

Develop training modules for learning the Romani languages

Introduce specialised courses in translation and interpretation from and into the Romani language

Step 2

Balance the status of the Romani language in relation to that of the majority language, both within the school system and in society in general

Use Romani language labelling at schools and public administration

OUTCOMES

Strengthened Roma cultural identity through learning of the Romani language

Establishment of a corpus of professional translators for the Romani language

More Romani language teachers available

Strategy 10

TITLE

Roma in Europe

ABSTRACT

Acknowledging Roma history as an integral part of national and European history

STEPS

Step 1

Launch a Day of Remembrance for Roma

Step 2

Produce presentations on Roma history and culture, emphasising the role of Roma in European history, including topics such as marginalisation, discrimination and the Holocaust

Step 3

Produce monographs, educational fact sheets and textbooks on Roma history, and distributing them to schools, museums and cultural centres. Establish cooperation with European and international organisations, Ministry of Education, Universities and Research institutes

OUTCOMES

Teaching aids for Roma history

Commemoration of the Roma Holocaust

Availability of educational tools for teachers in formal and non formal education

Strategy 11

TITLE

Schools welcome Roma children

ABSTRACT

Making schools more attractive for Roma children

STEPS

Step 1

School curriculum

Introduce specific content relating to Roma identity (history, lifestyle, literature, music, etc.)

Design more flexible school curricula, with more optional courses meeting a wide range of educational needs

Promote non-formal learning

Include informal learning, traditions and heritage in formal curricula

Step 2

Teacher training

Raising teachers' awareness through intercultural education and training them to deal with prejudice, exclusion and marginalisation

Encouraging and supporting young Roma to become teachers

Step 3

School governance and management

Promote inclusive school management

Develop a school environment that prevents discrimination, bullying and segregation

Develop working relationships and communication with Roma families and communities

Include Roma parents in governing boards

Promote dialogue and exchanges among all students in a climate of respect for human rights

OUTCOMES

Reduction in truancy among Roma children

Reduction in discrimination against Roma children

Increased participation and interest in school life among Roma parents

Greater respect for cultural diversity among students

A significant number of teachers of Roma origin

Strategy 12

TITLE

Measures for early school leaving

ABSTRACT

Introducing appropriate programmes for Roma children who have dropped out of school or are failing academically

STEPS

Step 1

Identify the causes and social background of pupils from Roma communities who have dropped out of school (migration, unemployment, lack of confidence in school)

Step 2

Offer remedial measures such as fast-track "second-chance" learning programmes and vocational training
Offer evening classes and extra-curricular activities to Roma children who are failing academically

Step 3

Make free, optional remedial and academic support programmes available to Roma children outside the school curriculum

OUTCOMES

Significant number of Roma school drop-outs go back to school

Second chance for children

Increase in the number of children at school and completing compulsory schooling

Improvements in academic and vocational achievement among Roma children

Relationship of trust between school and Roma communities

Strategy 13

TITLE

Cultural heritage of Roma

ABSTRACT

Promoting Roma cultural heritage with a view to intercultural dialogue

STEPS

Step 1

Organisation of workshops at cultural centres and museums with an emphasis on interaction between Roma and non-Roma participants

Step 2

Incorporate aspects of Roma culture into cultural festivals

Celebrate key events in Roma history at local, national and European level

Cooperate with out-of-school educational facilities, Non-governmental organisations and Roma communities

OUTCOMES

Awareness of, respect for, and promotion of Roma cultural heritage

Inclusion of Roma cultural heritage in the European cultural Heritage

Strategy 14

TITLE

Roma literature

ABSTRACT

Promoting Roma literature and providing Roma with a framework for cultural expression in schools

STEPS

Step 1

Draw attention to existing Roma literature

Step 2

Encourage the writing and dissemination of stories, narratives, short stories and poetry

Provide assistance for the organisation of competitions and prizes and the dissemination of publications

Make school premises available for cultural events (exhibitions, shows, etc.)

OUTCOMES

Existence of Roma literature acknowledged and highlighted; Roma literature included in national and European literature

Roma young people and adults having self respect and a positive image of their identity

Improved attitudes towards Roma

Improved image of school within the Roma community, and greater confidence in school

24. Educational activities

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 1

TITLE:

Children's rights

TOPICS

UNICEF, children, rights, children's rights

ABSTRACT

Students watch a video about Child protection and answer a Google Forms about Children's rights according to UNICEF Convention on Children's rights.

AIM

To learn more about Children protection and UNICEF Convention on Children's rights

OBJECTIVES

- To present injustice and bad behaviour to children
- To present protective measures for children by UNICEF
- To register students' opinion on children; s rights
- To emphasize the importance of child protection

RESOURCES

- The link to UNICEF video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xGkNBerxe0>
- The link for the questionnaire <https://forms.gle/xTztyYoT1Kvt1Etu6>

STEPS

Step 1

Students are asked to watch UNICEF video and describe injustices and / or bad behaviour to children

Step 2

Students are asked to answer the Google from. At the beginning of the questionnaire there is a link to UNICEF convention of children's rights.

OUTCOMES

- Students learn about children; s rights
- Students acquire social knowledge
- Students sympathise with less privileged children

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 2

TITLE:

United Nations Convention on Children's Rights

TOPICS

Children, UNICEF, rights

ABSTRACT

Students watch a UNICEF video that emphasises differences on children's life between rich and poor countries. Then students complete an interactive exercise about children's rights at H5P platform.

AIM

To learn about Children's Rights and conditions of living in different countries

OBJECTIVES

- To learn about Children's rights
- To acquire knowledge about universal human rights
- To think about injustices between poor and rich countries

RESOURCES

Video and H5P exercise

STEPS

Step 1

Students watch a UNICEF video about daily life of children. The difference between rich and poor countries is obvious. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1xkXZs0cAQ>

Step 2

Students complete the exercise about Children's rights at at <https://h5p.org/node/1085673>.

OUTCOMES

- Students are presented about children who lead difficult lives
- Students exercise their knowledge about Children's rights
- Students are aware of the importance of UNICEF protection for children

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 3

TITLE:

Roma people and their way of life

TOPICS

Roma, life style, music

ABSTRACT

Students listen to a song and watch videos about Roma people

AIM

To learn more about Roma people and their way of life

OBJECTIVES

To learn about Roma

To think about the diversity of cultures

To overcome stereotypes

To discuss about the condition of Roma people in the area

RESOURCES

Song Rom

Film Rom by Menelaos Karamaghiolis

STEPS

Step 1

Students listen to Rom song from the film Rom by Menelaos Karamaghiolis (Greece, 1989).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPemn7YjeZc>

Students watch the video <https://youtu.be/JOYqQdPkUR8>

Step 2

Students discuss in groups

Who are these people

Are there Roma people at your school

Are there Roma people at your city

If yes, where do they live in your area

What are the names for them

Where do we meet them

What is their language

What are their special characteristics

What are their professions

Step 3

Students tell to the class one thing that they like about Roma. The teacher presents to the class

OUTCOMES

- To learn about the "other"
- To learn about Roma
- To think about the importance of cultural diversity
- To focus on positive aspects of Roma culture

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 4

TITLE:

Roma history

TOPICS

History, Roma

ABSTRACT

Students watch an animated video about Roma and a timeline about Roma history

AIM

To learn more about the history of Roma and to think critically about their persecution

OBJECTIVES

To learn about history of Roma

To understand why Romani people were forced to leave their settlements

To sympathise for Roma persecution

To think critically about decisions taken for Roma and by Roma

RESOURCES

Video and timeline

STEPS

Students watch the video Gypsies, Roma, Travellers: An Animated History by Adrian Marsh

<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/gypsies-roma-travellers-animated-history>

Students study the timeline at

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Romani_history

Students are asked to think about

- Other names for Romani people
- The orientation of Roma
- The arrival of Roma in Europe
- Their professions
- The persecution of Roma
- The effort for health, employment, education and equity

Each group presents to the class

OUTCOMES

- To deepen knowledge about Roma people
- To understand the reasons that Roma were treated not equally
- To sympathise with the persecutions Roma faced
- To show understanding for the present situation of Roma
- To learn more about Roma and not to criticize their way of life

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 5

TITLE:

International Roma day

TOPICS

Roma culture, Roma history, Roma dance

ABSTRACT

On International Roma Day, the teacher organises an event for both students and parents/guardians to celebrate Roma culture. The event includes videos, presentations, quiz, references to famous Roma people and a dance

AIM

To promote inclusion of Roma children and their families at school and local community

OBJECTIVES

For students

To strengthen the self-esteem of Roma children

To introduce the importance of all cultures

For parents/guardians

To strengthen the self-esteem of Roma parents

To involve families actively at school

To promote multiculturalism and respect for others both at school and community

To enhance parents' knowledge for other communities/ cultures

RESOURCES

Roma music, Video about Roma, presentations

STEPS

Step 1

All parents and children (Roma and non-Roma background) watch the presentation and videos of Roma culture. Roma flag, anthem and images depicting the history and culture of the Roma are included together with images of famous, well-known people of Roma origin

Step 2

A Kahoot game with questions about the Roma traditions, language and history

Step 3 Dance lesson (optional)

Roma people perform dance in traditional Roma costumes. The dancers explain how the dance is connected to their traditions

Step 4

Both parents and students learn "thank you" in Romani language

OUTCOMES

Strengthening of Roma parents' self-confidence because International Roma Day is celebrated at school

For all school community, new information and new insights about Roma are presented

Families from Roma and non Roma background meet at school and may find common traditions

Parental involvement supports children's integration

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 6

TITLE

What do you know about the history of Roma people? Let's listen!

TOPICS

History and Culture of Roma people

ABSTRACT

Students read short stories about the history and culture of Roma people

AIM

To learn about Roma people history and culture

Create a book


OBJECTIVES


To learn about Roma while reading a story

To encourage students to understand, value and enjoy a different culture and respect the differences between people, based on the knowledge of diversity.

To work collaboratively.

RESOURCES

Books:  Ossiri and the Bala Mengro

 Yokki and the Parno Gry

Marco, the Gypsy elf

<https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/gdc/dcmsiabooks/marcog/yp/sy/el/fs/ho/00/pa/tt/marcogypsyelfsho00patt/marcogypsyelfsho00patt.pdf>

or other

STEPS

Step 1 Students read aloud a short story or a passage of a book.

Step 2 They discuss about the story and what they have learnt.

Give opinions and show what they have understood

Step 3 The final task of this activity is starting to create a class book: History of Roma people.

At the end of each session students are invited to draw or write a sentence that represents what they learned that day.

OUTCOMES

- To learn about Roma
- To learn about the importance of cultural diversity
- To create a book

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY 7

TITLE

What do you know about the history of Roma people? Let's research!

TOPICS

History and Culture of Roma people

ABSTRACT

Students research about the topic and present their finding to the class.

AIM

To learn about Roma people history and culture
Create a mind map, a mural and a book

OBJECTIVES

To learn about Roma while researching
To encourage students to understand, value and enjoy a different culture and respect the differences between people, based on the knowledge of diversity.
To work collaboratively.
To learn how to look for information.
To express themselves
To be creative

RESOURCES

Texts given by the teacher
Books, magazines, computer.

STEPS

Step 1 First students are induced to outline a conceptual map about what they know and what they would like to know about the history of Roma people as a brainstorm: what is their country of origin, why have they travelled, how they lived in the past, how have they been treated in the countries where they have lived, how they live today...

Step 2 They research and present their findings

Step 3 The questions and answers will be collected on a support that can be exposed to the class

Step 4 Students are invited to write, in the class book, a sentence that represents what they learned that day.

OUTCOMES

- To learn about Roma
- To learn about the importance of cultural diversity
- To create a mind map
- To create a mural
- To create a book

A. Read the following text and answer the questions.

Mara is a gypsy girl who really likes stories. She always asks her grandmother to tell her old stories. One day she asked her grandmother what the story of the Roma people was.

Her grandmother told her that a long time ago the gypsies lived in a land north of India. One day a war started in the country. So the gypsy families decided to go on a trip to find a place to live in peace.

They travelled through many towns. They had maps so you wouldn't get lost along the way. At that time there were no cars, everyone travelled in horse-drawn carriages.

They carried their houses on their backs, like when we go camping. They liked to look at the blue sky and walk through the green fields. They worked as peasants, blacksmiths, ranchers, artists and vendors.

In some villages the people were happy when the gypsies arrived because they sang happy songs. In other countries they looked at them with fear. Sometimes they were imprisoned for being different.

Time passed and, after many trips, Roma people now live in countries from all over the world and they can speak many languages. They go to school and work in many different jobs.

Huellas Gitanas (translated)

1. Who is Mara?
2. What did she ask her grandmother?
3. Where did the Roma people live a long time ago?
4. What happened one day in the country where the Roma lived?
5. Where did the Roma travel?
6. How did everyone travel then?
7. How did people behave when the gypsies arrived in their countries?

B. Group Work

Material:

- Big World map
- Roma flags
- A card with the names of the countries through which Roma people travelled
- Colour pencils



Countries through which the Roma people travelled

1. India 2. Turkey 3. Greece
 4. Romania 5. Germany 6. France
 7. Italy 8. Spain 9. United Kingdom

Activity

In order to know the migrations that the Roma people did students have to:

- paste the Roma flag in each of the countries marked on the

card



- write on the map the names of the countries
- colour the countries, so that migrations are represented.

At the end students are invited to write, in the class book, a sentence that represents what they learned that day.

