



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



“Working together
for Roma Inclusive
Education”

Working together for Roma Inclusive education

Pilot implementation of selected tools, methods and practices for the promotion of Roma inclusive education.

Newsletter #5
October 2017

The pilot implementation of tools and methods for the promotion of Roma inclusive education was one of the main activities of the project aiming to provide the partner organisations with new ideas and tools for promoting Roma inclusive education and test whether tools and methods that had been used by one of the partner organisations could be applied in localities with different socioeconomic characteristics and achieve similar results.

The pilot activity in Bulgaria

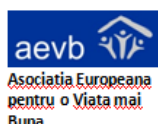
In the context of the project pilot activity, Bacho Kiro secondary school applied a practice proposed by the 2nd Gymnasio of Agia Varvara. More specifically, under the project “Local Engagement for Roma Inclusion” (LERI) in Greece, the 2nd Gymnasio of Agia Varvara participated in the implementation of an intervention which aimed at supporting desegregation measures and strengthening Roma and non-Roma community ties. In this context, the LERI team and the responsible teachers of the 2nd Gymnasio of Agia Varvara conducted a qualitative research on the co-existence of Roma and non-Roma students at school, applying the “photovoice technique.”

The school administration and teaching personnel of Bacho Kiro school decided to pilot the abovementioned practice through collaborative and creative activities that were mainly realized outside the classroom as it was considered that it could promote tolerance, mutual understanding and respect between ethnic groups; break stereotypes and overcome prejudices about Roma students; and plan specific activities and initiatives for bottom up integration.

The implementation of the pilot activity started with the announcement by the school administration and the responsible teachers of a photo competition on tolerance. The photo competition titled "Me and my friends at school" gave the opportunity to students to take and submit pictures of joint moments of school life.



2o GYMNASIO
AGIAS
VARVARAS



Asociatia Europeana
pentru o Viata mai
Buna

INSPECTORATUL
SCOLAR
JUDETEAN
IALOMITA



Amalipe Center za
mezduetnicheski
dialog i toleranost



“Bacho Kiro”
Secondary School

On the 8th of April 2017, the International Roma Day, the Tolerance Photo Competition was completed, in which more than 25 high school students participated, submitting 51 photographs. The photographs were printed and presented to experts from the “Amalipe Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance”. All photographs were posted on the Facebook profile of the Students’ Council and an exhibition was presented in the conference hall of the school.



Moreover, the teaching personnel and students also filmed short videos focusing on "What is tolerance for you and me?" The goal of this activity was to give the opportunity to students to consider what is tolerance for them, to link their own experience with best practices from school and to establish a positive model of behavior. The video clip was screened at the 3rd transnational project meeting held in Pavlikeni in May 2017.

In addition, a literary initiative for writing an essay on tolerance was also implemented as an extra component to the intervention. In particular, students, under the guidance of the teachers of English language, wrote their essays and presented them to their classmates. The winning essay was chosen to be presented by the author in the 3rd transnational project meeting.

Finally, in April and May, and following a common agreement among the partner organisations on implementing an additional activity in all 3 countries, students translated Greek and Romanian poems into the Bulgarian and Romani language.

The pilot activity in Greece

One of the main concern of the administration and the teaching personnel of the 2nd Gymnasio of Agia Varvara is to reduce absenteeism among Roma students, which is the main precursor to dropping out of school. In this context, the representatives of the school, inspired by a practice of “Bacho Kiro” Secondary School of Bulgaria, decided to implement an action in order to explore parents' attitudes and perceptions to the responsibilities that arise from the obligation of their children to attend school as well as parents' involvement in the school life on the one hand and reduce the “distance” between school and Roma parents, on the other.

The objective of the action was to sensitize parents to the fact that their cooperation and active participation in school life can have a positive impact on their children’s attendance requirements; to help both students and their parents understand that fulfilling attendance requirements can lead to a better school performance; to activate parents in participating in school life; to help both parents and students understand the importance of regular school attendance; and to help bridge the gap between school and Roma parents.



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



“Working together
for Roma Inclusive
Education”

The pilot activity in the 2nd Gymnasio of Agia Varvara started with the organisation of two preparatory meetings during which the responsible teachers explained to the students their concern about the high rate of absenteeism and emphasized that they wanted, with the help of the students, to understand the reasons they are absent so often. Following, three more meetings were organized in which the responsible teachers and a representative from Bolt International Consulting applied the focus group interview technique during which students had to answer various questions regarding their absenteeism.

Trying to figure out how parents can effectively be involved in the project on the one hand and taking into consideration children’s answers during the focus group interview process on the other hand, the teachers decided to hold one more meeting with the aim to convince students to act as mediators and hand in a questionnaire to their parents. The purpose of the questionnaire was to check parents’ interest and availability for a meeting.

The meeting with the parents was finally realized in October 2017 with the participation of a small number of parents eventually. Meanwhile two of the teachers visited a student's house after asking his parents' permission to discuss their child behavior and attendance. Moreover, the Headmistress invited the parents of the students who are mostly absent for another meeting, in which the teachers and the school administration informed the parents about their children's participation to school.

Furthermore, and in the context of the additional activity which was agreed among partners, students were asked to translate a poem written by the famous Greek poet Konstantinos Cavafis into English and Romani spoken in Agia Varvara (using the Greek Alphabet), while the English version was sent to the Bulgarian and Romanian school peers in order to be translated into Bulgarian, Romanian and Romani languages. At the same time, students had to translate the English version of the Bulgarian poem sent by the Bulgarian partners into the Greek and Romani languages.

The pilot activity in Romania

Following the discussions with the partners from Greece and Bulgaria and in the context of the pilot activity, Ialomita Country School Inspectorate selected to pilot a practice proposed and implemented by the 2nd Gymnasio of Agia Varvara, namely Δ-ROM-ΟΔΟΓΙΑ (Itineraries).

The objective of the intervention in Ialomita Country was to promote good examples of tolerance and respect among students; highlight the cultural capital of Roma students and in particular their language, religion, culture and customs; and ensure a smooth integration of Roma students in the everyday school life.



2o GYMNASIO
AGIAS
VARVARAS



Asociatia Europeana
pentru o Viata mai
Buna

INSPECTORATUL
SCOLAR
JUDETEAN
IALOMITA



Amalipe Center za
mezduetnicheski
dialog i toleranost



“Bacho Kiro”
Secondary School



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



“Working together
for Roma Inclusive
Education”

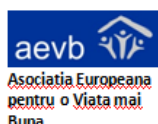
The implementation of the practice started with the organization of a meeting by the representatives of the Ialomita Country School Inspectorate with the participation of school principals and teacher personnel from the three schools involved in the pilot activity. In this meeting, the representatives of the County School Inspectorate, the school principals and the participating teaching personnel designed the implementation of the practice in the three schools and agreed on the number of students who will participate in the implementation of the practice as well as the respective timeplan.



Following, students in the three schools, guided by their teachers and in cooperation with mediators from the Roma community, translated poems and short novels written by famous Romanian writers into the Romani language with the use of the Romanian alphabet. In the end, Roma students presented the translated poems and a short novel in the Romani language to their classmates, teachers, parents, as well as to other participants from the community in a festive moment. Through this activity, the students had the opportunity to make the Roma cultural capital wider known, which allowed them to feel more secure and build relationships of trust with the school and the community.



2o GYMNASIO
AGIAS
VARVARAS



INSPECTORATUL
SCOLAR
JUDETEAN
IALOMITA



Amalipe Center za
mezduetnicheski
dialog i toleranost



“Bacho Kiro”
Secondary School