



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme



EDUCATION AND TRAINING for social inclusion

EUROPEAN SUCCESS STORIES



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Education and Training for Social Inclusion.

European Success Stories.

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Working together for an inclusive Europe

In Europe today, almost 80 million people live under poor living conditions. Women, children, young people, the elderly, people on precarious contracts, migrants and people from ethnic minorities are especially at risk of poverty and social exclusion. The European Union, being aware of this situation, has designated 2010 as the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion. One of the priorities of this year relates to the importance of facilitating access to education and training to all.

Member States, regional and local authorities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social partners and international organisations have all taken this year as an opportunity to exchange best practices in the eradication of social exclusion. Good examples of the “know-how” of these countries in the field of education and training are their national action plans aimed at increasing youth literacy rates, reducing the number of early school leavers and improving learning and training for migrants and other disadvantaged groups.

Education is a manifestation of the great European values of liberty, equity and cohesion. For this reason, the Spanish Presidency of the European Union in 2010 has placed an emphasis on more education and training, better quality and comprehensive inclusion. The Lifelong Learning Programme, funded by the European Union, supports the realisation of these objectives.

This publication highlights projects made by trainers, teachers, prison workers and other professionals involved in education and training activities. Their work has contributed positively to the social inclusion of migrants, students with special needs, victims of violence in schools, persons without access to information and communication technologies, prisoners and the visually and hearing impaired. They also contributed to promote gender equality.

I hope these human stories can be a source of inspiration for other successful activities in the area of education and training and I encourage other learners, trainees and professionals to take part in the Lifelong Learning Programme.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Vassiliou', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Androulla Vassiliou
Member of the European Commission
responsible for Education, Culture,
Multilingualism and Youth

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The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue stimulating learning opportunities across Europe. It consists of four sub-programmes: Comenius for schools, Erasmus for higher education, Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training and Grundtvig for adult education. A transversal programme complements these four sub-programmes in order to ensure that they achieve the best results. Four key activities focus on policy co-operation, languages, information and communication technologies, and effective dissemination and exploitation of project results. Finally, the Jean Monnet programme stimulates teaching, reflection and debate on the European integration process at higher education institutions worldwide.

One of the general aims when establishing the programme was to contribute through lifelong learning to the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge-based society with greater social cohesion. The LLP also includes specific objectives directly linked to social inclusion:

- More opportunities for lifelong learning within Member States
- More contribution of lifelong learning to social cohesion, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, gender equality and personal fulfilment
- More participation of people of all ages in lifelong learning, including those with special needs and disadvantaged groups, regardless of their socio-economic background
- More language learning and linguistic diversity
- More development of ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning

This serves to strengthen the role of lifelong learning in creating a sense of European citizenship based on respect for human rights and democracy, and encouraging tolerance and respect for other peoples and cultures. The LLP contributes to promote active citizenship and respect for human rights and democracy.

It covers horizontal issues as well, such as the elimination of all forms of discrimination based on sex, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. The programme widens access for those from disadvantaged groups through the use of higher grants to reflect the additional needs of these participants.

How each sector programme of the LLP and activities of the transversal programme address these topics is specified in the introductory pages of this brochure.

The LLP reaches all ages and all social groups, disadvantaged persons included, and contributes to fight discrimination, e.g. early school leavers, persons with low level of basic skills or not yet with key competences, migrants and those at a socio-economic disadvantage.

Taking part in cooperation and mobility activities under LLP funding is an enriching experience as it represents an opportunity for learners and professionals to get to know and respect each other, and to be aware of their linguistic and cultural diversity. It also benefits the education and training centres that exchange best practices, mainly methodologies and curricula.

Since the beginning, one of the defining features of the programme has been its transnationality. Every project has had to encompass partners from several countries across Europe. It is through this feature that the programme has had its greatest impact on education and training practices in Europe. In the course of its duration, the programme brought together thousands of partners from all over Europe to work jointly on a common project idea. Each partnership has created the potential for stable networks of transnational co-operation and exchange of best practices.

How does the Comenius programme contribute to social inclusion?

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A large majority of Europeans spend at least nine or ten years at school. It is where they gain the knowledge, skills and competences they will need throughout their lives. It is also the place where many of their fundamental values develop.

Although tensions and inequalities characterising our changing societies are also reflected in the school environment, schools also have the potential to play a key role in combating these inequalities and to lay the groundwork for a more equitable and inclusive society. The challenge is to ensure that educational systems are not only efficient but also equitable. Equitable in terms of equal opportunities to access quality education and in terms of securing equity in treatment, by taking into consideration personal needs and individuals' circumstances.

The presence of pupils from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds is a rich source of learning opportunities. However, dealing effectively with the increasing cultural diversity in classrooms often requires new teaching methodologies and makes high demands on teachers' skills. Education systems without appropriate measures to deal with this challenge can even reinforce social exclusion.

Promoting equity in education also means promoting gender equality in school. Here attitudes and values are formed which shape equal gender relations and opportunities throughout life.

Democracy in schools, tolerance and mutual understanding are effective ways for creating a climate of confidence and for preventing violence and the accumulation of frustration which can lead to early withdrawal. Achieving it requires the engagement of the entire school community and good cooperation with parents and the wider community.

Through the Comenius programme, the European Commission supports thousands of projects every year that offer pupils and teachers a chance to cross borders, to experience new forms of learning and to improve school education. It addresses all members of the education community – pupils, teachers and other education staff, and also local authorities and other organisations involved in school education.

For fifteen years, the Comenius programme has supported school cooperation, mobility of teachers and students as well as project-based pedagogy. By promoting collaborative learning,

pedagogical innovation and exchange of good practice, it helps schools to create more flexible and diversified learning and teaching paths.

Many Comenius cooperation projects have changed the everyday life of pupils, teachers and participating schools. They have also been a source of inspiration to others tackling similar problems. You will find here several examples of Comenius projects that have worked in the areas of social inclusion and have tackled issues such as migration, integration of disadvantaged groups in the classroom, or reducing violence. We hope that they will be of inspiration to you and that they will encourage you to participate in the Comenius programme in the future.

Comenius for school education

My Very Special Wondertree

17

Across 11 countries, the self-esteem and self-reliance of disabled children was boosted by using digital photography and editing software in their school and kindergarten activities. Pupils and staff learned to go beyond disabilities and acquired a stronger sense of belonging to the wider European community.

This eTwinning project explored ICT as a support tool to the learning experience of children with special needs, with the aim of expanding their possibilities through a targeted use of ICT.

Every school took a picture of a tree in their vicinity and each child worked with digital editing software to transform the tree into a piece of art. A gallery of these “wondertrees” was presented on a common website called a wiki and seeds of the trees were mailed between partners so that the children could grow their own small European forest. The project brought Europe closer to the children. The children acquired new skills and the teachers developed innovative learning methods

through related activities (smelling spices, dancing, drawing, tasting foreign food...). Pupils’ new eagerness to learn autonomy and self-confidence was demonstrated by their continued work on the wiki and teachers have built a flourishing network. The project demonstrated the value of ICT and European projects to help children with disabilities strengthen their skills and increase the sense of their own abilities and value. The overall image of disabled children was also improved, enhancing understanding and respect.



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WEBSITE

<http://wondertree.wikispaces.com>

PROJECT DURATION

2008–2009

Comenius for school education

Indicators on inclusive education and classroom practice in Europe (SNE-EUROPE)

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To make the voice of young people with special needs heard, the project created indicators on how to integrate children and young people with disabilities into education systems more effectively.

The project explored what young people with disabilities think about inclusive education and how European policies can help integrate them into school.

A pan-European hearing called “Young Voices: Meeting Diversity in Education” was organised which resulted in a declaration of young people’s rights, such as respect and equal opportunities, and access to inclusive education. The main conclusion was: *“We are the ones to build our future. We need to remove barriers inside ourselves and inside other people without disabilities.”*

National experts from 23 countries developed a series of indicators to help pave the way for

favourable policy conditions for inclusive education in Europe. The final report “Development of a set of indicators for inclusive education in Europe” was presented to 1,400 teachers and a working group of education ministry officials. This is now available in 21 languages to all special needs education professionals.



European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education



European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

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LT, HU, MT, NL, AT, PT, SE, UK, NO, IS.

WEBSITE

www.european-agency.org/agency-projects/indicators-for-inclusive-education/indicators-for-inclusive-education

PROJECT DURATION

2007 – 2008

Comenius for school education

Social Integration: Coeducation

19

Solidarity and equal opportunities, in particular an active role for women in society, are at the heart of social inclusion. This awareness was acquired by the young children and their families who participated in the learning experience promoted by this project among schools from Spain, Italy and Poland.

Schools with pupils living in disadvantaged social conditions worked together to promote social inclusion and to eliminate gender discrimination. The creation of a framework for intercultural dialogue and a smart use of technologies for communication helped erase sexism from teaching methods and learning experience. Cooperative attitudes between the sexes were strengthened through the use of new learning materials. These ranged from traditional song-books and sports activities to video stories and online magazines. The result was cooperative learning, the development of peaceful conflict resolution, and the promotion of broad competences that will help the children become

responsible European adults. The enthusiasm of the project team has extended beyond the schools and now involves entire school communities and associations for the integration of disabled children, for the support of women and families, and for equal opportunities.



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WEBSITE

www.murciaeduca.es/cpseverochoa

PROJECT DURATION

2006–2009

Comenius for school education

Learning Migration Network – Learning about migration and intercultural relations in school and teacher training

10 |

The Learning Migration Network has had a tangible long-term impact on how European schools can best tackle the challenges posed by migration and include intercultural dialogue in learning.

The “Learning Migration Network” is the continuation of the Migration and Intercultural Relations Network. It supports students, teachers, teacher trainers, schools, research groups and educational authorities in promoting the understanding of the phenomenon of migration in daily learning. 170 partners from 19 countries collaborated face-to-face and virtually in national and transnational groups. They also met through conferences, training courses and film festivals. Seven new European projects have been set up. The Youth and Migration project, for instance, created a film festival and a website for young people on the history of European migration. It included a family exchange project that encouraged students to live for a time with a family

of different ethnic background, recording the discussions they had with the family on themes of universal interest. Local artists helped these students transform their pictures and videos into works of art, which were then displayed in an exhibition.



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80 partner institutions and 90 member institutions from 19 countries:

BG, CH, CZ, DE, IE, ES, IT, GL, HR, HU, NL, AT, NO, PT, RO, SE, SI, TR, UK

WEBSITE

www.learningmigration.com/lm

PROJECT DURATION

2005–2008

Comenius for school education

SAVANT: Schools Against Violence – Act, Not Tolerate

| 11

Five European schools showed that respect and non-violent communication can promote social inclusion and create a safe climate in schools, based on trust and the close interaction between teachers, pupils and, through their parents, their local community.

Schools from Slovenia, Latvia, Poland, Italy and Spain supported teachers and pupils who have been victims or witnessed violence at school.

A survey identified the most frequent forms of violence at school, revealed that most children favoured calm and tolerance as a solution to conflicts, and that most teachers were not trained in conflict-solving. The project organised workshops, sports activities and a violence-free school competition. Communications included booklets on “Successful strategies for dealing with violent behaviour: prevention and intervention” (one edition for pupils and parents, another for teachers).

Acts of violence decreased in all the partner schools. Awareness of violence and the forms it can take was raised amongst pupils and teachers leading to better measures for prevention and resolution. Starting from the good results achieved by the project in combating violence in school settings, participants committed themselves to work further on the key issues of respect and trust at school.



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WEBSITE

<http://project.savant.googlepages.com/home>

PROJECT DURATION

2006–2009

How does the Erasmus Programme contribute to social inclusion?

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Erasmus, the EU's flagship programme in education and training, provides support for around 200 000 students to study and to do work placements abroad each year, as well as facilitating cooperation among higher education institutions across Europe. It caters not only for young students, but also to staff in institutions of higher education and enterprise.

To ensure that students or staff with special needs (e.g. whose individual physical, mental or health-related situation is such that their participation would not be possible without extra financial support) can take full advantage of transnational mobility, the Erasmus Programme provides additional funding.

In the academic year 2007–08, 165 Erasmus students and 4 teachers with special needs benefited from such additional financial support. Most of these students came from Italy, Germany, Hungary and Poland and they were mainly received by Spain, Germany and France.

Moreover, certain countries give a higher Erasmus grant to their outgoing students to make sure that they are not excluded from participation due to a lack of personal financial means.

Apart from direct support to individuals, the Erasmus Programme also supports social inclusion indirectly through funding of networks and projects focussing on this important theme. Five excellent examples are given in this brochure, including an academic network, a curriculum development project and three intensive programmes.

Erasmus academic networks are designed to promote innovation in a specific academic discipline, in a set of disciplines or in a multidisciplinary area. They require the participation of at least 31 institutions from all 31 countries participating in the programme and contribute to enhancing the quality of teaching in higher education. They also define and develop a European dimension, further innovation and exchange methodologies and good practices.

Erasmus curriculum development projects are designed to support the process of innovation and upgrading in higher education teaching. They may be proposed in any academic discipline and require partners from at least three participating countries.

Erasmus intensive programmes are short study programmes of two to six weeks which bring together students and staff from

higher education institutions in at least three participating countries. They encourage multinational teaching of specialist topics which might otherwise not be taught, under special learning and teaching conditions not available in a single institution. In addition, they allow members of the teaching staff to exchange views on teaching content, new curricula approaches and to test teaching methods in an international classroom environment.



Erasmus for higher education

ATHENA II – Advanced Thematic Network of Women’s Studies in Europe

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ATHENA II, the successor to the ATHENA network launched in 1998 and continuing today as ATHENA III, is a thematic network on women’s rights, gender equality and diversity which brings together academics, students, young professionals and organisations in civil society, providing inclusion of expertise from groups without access to academic structures, addressing questions identified by groups fighting social exclusion.

Activities include comprehensive research and support to organisations addressing gender equality, integration of gender in the struggle against racial discrimination, human trafficking, and women’s groups in Belarus. Publications, teaching material and the web site provide regular information, including examples of good practice in promoting gender studies and educational mobility. Working groups deal with gender studies in a perspective of social inclusion, e.g. “Travelling Concepts” about migration, or “Postcolonial Europe” focusing on identities and multicultural perspectives of ethnicity

and gender, consistently forging links with civil society, stakeholders, students and policymakers. The activities continue in the ATGENDER network, forging links between universities and civil society.



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PARTNERSHIP

106 partners in 28 countries:
AT(6), BE(8), BG(1), CY(1), CZ(2), DK(4),
DE(7), EL(4), ES(8), EE(2), FI(6), FR
(3), HU(2), IE(2), IS(2), IT(13), LT(1),
LV(1), MT(1), NL(5), NO(4), PL(2), PT(2),
RO(2), SE(6), SI(2), TR(1) and UK(12)

WEBSITE

www.athena3.org

PROJECT DURATION

2004–2007

Erasmus for higher education

CREOLE – Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes

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CREOLE is a Joint MA research programme in Anthropology / International Relations / Humanities, with a focus movement of people and dynamics of identity formation, material culture and mass consumption, and visual and popular cultures.

This first Joint European Master Degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology specialises in transnationalism, new identities, and material and visual cultures. Students spend one year at a host university covering everyday settings to understand local cultures. Interaction with local students and youth are integral to the reflections on social processes, e.g. migration, integration, nationalities, cultural diversity and conflict resolution. Within diverse legal frameworks, the project is fully implemented in all partner curricula with efficient quality control. Websites, brochures and close links to the European Association of Social Anthropologists ensure wide dissemination of experience,

teaching material, articles and news, so that future anthropologists are confronted with the latest teaching practices within their disciplines to promote integration and social inclusion.



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Univerza v Ljubljana, Slovenia

WEBSITE

<http://creole.ned.univie.ac.at>

PROJECT DURATION

2004–2007

Erasmus for higher education

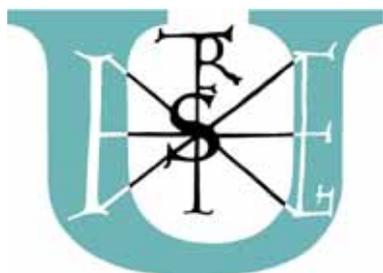
Educational contributions to building cohesion within European social and institutional life

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The project provides professional programmes for trainees in teacher education, social work and business studies concerned with the well-being of communities, promoting new understandings of indicators of social cohesion.

This inter-disciplinary, intensive programme promotes intercultural dialogue, an understanding and awareness of social cohesion, and well-being within different communities, including children, young people, and their families. It explores educational contributions to building cohesion within European social and institutional life. Fact-finding studies assess the capacities of local social institutions and enterprises to build bridges across the community. The project has influenced the curricula of the partners and has forged links with disadvantaged groups, minorities and people and institutions involved in special needs, migration, second chance education and re-introduction

to the labour market. Use of communication technologies has spread information and new teaching practices.



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Univerzita Mateja Bela, Slovak Republic
University of the West of England, Bristol, United Kingdom

WEBSITE

<http://edu.projects.uwe.ac.uk/ecce>

PROJECT DURATION

2008–2009

Erasmus for higher education

Migration, Diversity and Identities

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This intensive programme involved partners from the European Doctorate in Migration, Diversity and Identities network (EDMIDI). It included an interdisciplinary series of lectures and fieldtrips to examine the politics and production of ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ discourses of national and migrant identities in economic, civic and cultural arenas, and the changes and transformations in life “on the street”.

The programme addressed challenges of globalisation for higher education in both its structure and content. It gave migration studies prominence in debates about social cohesion and integration through the study of everyday life contexts, rather than the conventional, policy-based paradigm. Students included members of the same minority ethnic and immigrant populations that constituted the focus of their research, providing them with an opportunity to develop their competencies in relation to the theoretical and methodological dynamics of the study of social inclusion. The course contrib-

uted to the level of community and NGO involvement in the production of research in the area of migration through advanced training in participatory and evidence-based research practices. The programme’s impact will be felt in how the participants approach teaching and research in this field. Over the longer term, their findings and work will help those working in related fields.



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Universidad de Deusto, Spain

Université de Poitiers, France

Università degli Studi di Padova, Italy

University of Malta

Universiteit van Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Uniwersytet Warszawski, Poland

Helsingin Yliopisto, Finland

Univerza v Ljubljani, Slovenia

University of Bradford, United Kingdom

Queen’s University Belfast, United Kingdom

WEBSITE

www.ucd.ie/mcri/edmidi.html
www.humanitariannet.deusto.es/EuropeanDoctorates/migration.asp

PROJECT DURATION

2007–2008

Erasmus for higher education

Building Civil Society and Fighting Social Exclusion – Contemporary Challenges for Social Work

| 17

The course underlined the European dimension in the search for creative ways to build civil society and innovative methods to provide social inclusion.

The combination of presentations and field work, innovative use of ICT, and contacts with care institutions, all contributed to raising awareness and forging collaboration. Foreign students worked with Polish disadvantaged groups suffering different forms of social exclusion. Sharing first-hand opinions in multi-national and multidisciplinary seminars and visits to social welfare institutions impressed the future social workers and encouraged them to create a network. Project elements have been incorporated in curricula and will be further developed in a new programme on “How to become an expert in social work”. Social welfare organisations established cooperation with universities and around 600 of their clients had a unique

chance to experience international visibility of their problems. Students’ awareness of the value and necessity of participation in building civil society was raised at national and international level and they are now prepared to fight against discrimination and social exclusion in their communities.



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Vytauto Didziojo Universitetas, Lithuania
Göteborgs Universitet, Sweden

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Finland
Katolicka Univerzita v Ruzomberku,
Slovak Republic
Baskent Universitesi, Turkey
University of Ireland, Cork, Ireland

WEBSITE

www.kul.pl/11821.html

PROJECT DURATION

2007–2008

How does the Grundtvig programme contribute to social inclusion?

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This year the Grundtvig programme is celebrating its tenth anniversary. Over the past decade, the programme has proven to be of enormous value in delivering a wide range of innovative results in all areas of non-vocational adult learning – formal, non-formal and informal. Alongside many projects and partnerships in areas such as basic skills, literacy and numeracy, the Grundtvig programme has offered new learning opportunities through initiatives in inter-generational and inter-cultural learning, including increasingly important measures to promote the integration of ethnic minorities. The promotion of learning in less formal contexts such as museums, hospitals and prisons is a further area of focus.

In today's European Union, there are still estimated to be nearly 80 million low-skilled adults. Adult learning has an absolutely vital role to play in raising the knowledge, skills and competence profile of the adult population. It shows how European cooperation and

mobility can help Member States tackle the problems and exploit the rich potential of the adult learning sector.

By developing exciting new pedagogical approaches and materials, improving the profile and competences of the often 'precarious' staff in the field, creating sustainable networks for professionals, and experimenting with new forms of adult learner mobility, Grundtvig projects and Learning Partnerships have given thousands of adult education organisations, their staff and learners a first encounter with partners in other European countries – and a direct and positive experience of what 'Europe' can mean in their everyday lives and work.

Inclusion is central to Grundtvig's ethos. To this end, Grundtvig takes over where other sectoral programmes stop by providing second chance learning opportunities, reaching out to marginalised groups, engaging with older citizens, involving people with disabilities and, perhaps most importantly, by reinforcing

the sense of active citizenship among the adult population at large.

The first decade of Grundtvig has played an outstanding role in this area. We hope that the success stories which follow in this publication will give you a flavour of what has been achieved by some of our most innovative projects. We also encourage you to start exciting new ventures of your own or to join with us in other ways in improving our programmes further in the future.

Grundtvig for adult education

Sing, smooth and smile

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“Sing, Smooth and Smile” made an outstanding contribution to the promotion of social inclusion in Europe through its use of music for learning and therapy for target groups such as expectant and young mothers, the elderly and the disabled.

Simple tools such as ethnic music, heritage and local traditions were used effectively by partners from Lithuania, Austria and Greece to make music therapy part of adult education in ways which were part of everyday life and which therefore make the learners’ social inclusion continuous and natural.

In addition to the tools being immediately familiar to the target groups, the learners were included in the collection of materials. They were part of the creative processes within the project as well as the recipients of the therapeutic results. There was a two-fold benefit; the first involving the learning of musical traditions and the application of the knowledge in terms of caring for the elderly, disabled and others experiencing exclusion, and the second involving the development of skills in communication, self-confidence, self-awareness, foreign languages and inter-cultural understanding.

The results have had a significant impact and reached people initially appearing quite different, but who have a common characteristic in that they experience isolation and permanent or temporarily immobility. The strategic thinking of the project was innovative in approaching care on a community level that is relevant for Europe generally.

Although the project has now been completed, the success of its approach can be seen in several continuation activities. Cooperation agreements have been made with outpatient clinics, hospitals, rehabilitations centres and groups representing cancer sufferers. New local initiatives have been funded by the municipalities.

SSS *sing
smooth
smile*

therapeutic impact of traditional music



Ansamblis “Senoji muzika” (Association “Old music”)

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Institute of Ethno Music Therapy (AT)

WEBSITE

www.singsmoothandsmile.blogspot.com

PROJECT DURATION

2007–2009

Grundtvig for adult education

European Women Between Tradition & Transition

20 |

Against a background of diverse cultural traditions, the project succeeded in providing women the support they needed in order to improve their chances of full social participation in a changing society. Self-understanding and self-esteem benefited from a focus on cultural heritage and female traditions.

The goal of the project was to practice forms of intercultural dialogue that include empathy, tolerance, a change of perspectives, and a reduction of prejudices and stereotypes. Women from the host country and from migrant groups worked creatively together, in a non-hierarchical way, building up respect and better understanding. They improved their intercultural communication skills through art works representing their views. These art works were part of a travelling exhibition “Grandmothers-Mothers-Daughters”, for raising public awareness. One participant stated: “the word ‘integration’ gets a different meaning. I feel less German and more European

and I became more interested in the life-stories of migrant families living in my neighbourhood.” The teaching practices in all partner institutions were improved and new creative methods and concepts were used that are able to be transferred and adapted to the needs of other organisations. Information about this excellent project is provided through flyers, brochures and a project website.



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WEBSITE

www.europeanwomen-tradition.de

PROJECT DURATION

01.08.2007–31.07.2009

Grundtvig for adult education

Act Well: Art and Creativity: Together Working and Learning at European Level

| 21

“Act Well” successfully promoted positive attitudes towards the inclusion of young adults with learning difficulties and provided new innovative learning approaches.

The four partners from Slovenia, Slovakia, Germany and Hungary worked together with disabled learners using different media, such as painting, sculpture, dance, theatre, photography and film. The project equipped the adult learners with new skills and confidence and art was used to present the daily lives of those with a disability. In this way, the learners created their own art forms rather than being provided with tools to help access the works of others.

Significant elements of the project were the art exhibitions (both the numerous national events and the main international final one in Hungary). Within two years, more than 55 learners with special educational needs and 25 teachers (with the support of professional artists) were involved in art and drama workshops. All of

these elements were innovative and effective in opening the lives of people with disabilities to the wider society in positive ways which actively and consistently involved the disabled people themselves.

The successes of the project is also reflected in the activities that have taken place since its formal completion. A new Grundtvig multilateral project began in 2009 (FOCAL – Fostering Creativity in Adult Learners with Disabilities through Arts) and the artistic works produced in Act Well will be exhibited in five European countries during 2010–2011.



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WEBSITE

www.center-db.si/index.php?page=news&item=16&id=401

PROJECT DURATION

2007–2009

Grundtvig for adult education

WARM Europe – Women as Role Models in Europe

22 |

This successful project investigated gender stereotypes and explored educational paths to diminish these stereotypes with a particular emphasis on very accessible positive role models.

The social inclusion element in this project was at two levels as it worked with women generally to encourage more positive case studies but with a specific emphasis to include immigrant women.

Cyprus, France, Greece and Finland (the four partner countries) developed a project website clearly designed for the target group to access. The activities revolved around extensive interviews with women and which were immediately accessible at the site to help create a personal atmosphere to the project outcomes that perfectly match the desire to create more effective role models.

Innovatively, the project also focused on how inequalities are often difficult to detect and

encouraged inter-gender communication, making the content valuable for all.

The project is continuing to have a very positive impact and could easily and effectively be broadened into several subsequent initiatives. The interviews at the centre of the project feature “Professional Life”, “Active Citizenship”, “Education-Learning” and “Family Life” which illustrate the ability of this project to reflect the main pillars of the Lifelong Learning Programme.



Διεθνής Οργάνωση για την Προώθηση των Γυναικών της Ευρώπης (International Association for the Promotion of Women of Europe – Council of Cyprus)

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www.warmeurope.eu

PROJECT DURATION

2007 – 2009

Grundtvig for adult education

HAND-IN-HAND: The Integration into Community and into the Education System of Parents of Immigrant Students through a Social Cohesion Perspective.

| 23

The project makes an outstanding contribution to social inclusion through its work with the Roma community. It addressed integration problems experienced by Roma and also sought to improve parental knowledge of their children's learning performance and progress.

One of the key strengths of the project was its very “hands-on” approach. Many home visits took place, weekly communication meetings and seminars were organised especially with female parents and social activities such as picnics and charity sales were all featured to engage very openly with the target groups. As the main delivery of the project took place in a small village in the coordinating country, the impact at that level was immense; “taking over village life” in the words of the participants.

The project attracted considerable attention at local, regional, national and even international level, and both local authorities and other organisations (for example, the Izzet Baysal

University) gave support by supplying lecturers and teachers for project activities. One of the most innovative elements of the project was the establishment of a musical band to promote the project's activities.

The way in which initial reluctance and suspicion from the target groups about the project's intentions were eventually replaced by the entire village embracing the programme, is a very good example of what a Grundtvig project can achieve.



Doğancı Ayşe-Yılmaz Becikoğlu Primary School

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PROJECT DURATION

2007 – 2009

How does the Leonardo da Vinci Programme support social inclusion?

24 |

The Leonardo da Vinci Programme celebrates its 15th anniversary this year.

In Europe, at least half of our young people choose the vocational training pathways to start their professional education. Later in their careers, continuous vocational training is important to adapt the skills and competences to new technological and social developments. Also, unemployed, ethnic minorities or disadvantaged people have a particular need to remain updated, gain new skills or to redirect their career in order to match the requirements of the labour market.

The Leonardo da Vinci programme is addressing these needs by promoting transnational mobility and allowing participants to gain a working or learning experience abroad. Up to today, it has supported placements for more than 600 000 people in training and exchanges of experiences between 110 000 teachers and trainers in VET. From supporting some 20 000 young people on mobility a year in 1995, we are today reaching 70 000 per year.

These experiences assisted young people in their personal development, helping them to

gain self-esteem, to improve their language skills, and to understand different cultures, work techniques and organisations. Evidence shows that their periods abroad also positively influenced their employability. Especially pupils and people from the disadvantaged environments report many benefits from the mobility experience, such as a rise in their self-confidence, gaining new skills, getting new motivation to follow their studies or look for a suitable job.

However, Leonardo da Vinci is not only about mobility. Multilateral innovative projects aim to transform vocational systems and practices, to improve their quality, make them respond better to the labour market needs, become more transparent and to provide support to the development of VET policy.

Social inclusion has been one of the main priorities of the Leonardo programme in multilateral innovative projects.

Projects under this priority focused on integrating groups with particular difficulties on the labour market, e.g. early school leavers, low-skilled workers, people with disabilities, immigrants and those

with a migrant background, and ethnic minorities by developing their work-related skills and competences. They helped to increase the interest and participation of men or women in those VET fields in which they remain under-represented (for instance women in technology). Finally there were also activities financed to address problems caused by demographic change, such as retaining older workers in employment.

Today, Leonardo finances about 330 projects every year for the transfer of innovation as well as about 45 projects for Development of Innovation and Networks.

Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training

Check and Go

| 25

The aim of the project was to give people with disabilities better access to workplaces, to help them apply successfully for a trainee post or a job.

Integrating people with disabilities into the workplace more efficiently is the outcome of the project for people with disabilities, employers, trainers, instructors and job coaches. The Check and Go tool allows disabled people to create their personal profile of accessibility and makes it easier for them to find a suitable workplace or employment. Companies that receive applications with this profile of accessibility can easily determine if they can accommodate the applicant. The tool has been developed so that people with disabilities can improve key vocational skills and abilities of value in the job application and job interview phases, as well as in other workplace situations where clarification is required. It also provides benefits for

employers, with information on social aspects of the employment of disabled people. The tools are simple and easy to use.

**check
and go →**



Atempo Betriebsgesellschaft mbH

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VW Slovakia (SL)
Swedish TelePedagogic Knowledge Centre (SE)

WEBSITE

www.checkandgo.eu

PROJECT DURATION

2006–2008

Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training

Made in Jail!

26 |

The ‘Made in Jail!’ project sought to reinsert prison detainees into society through giving the prison world a more positive image and through raising awareness of individuals’ capacity to change, and develop socially and professionally.

The project was part of a search for new ways to improve the reinsertion of ex-prisoners into society, giving them new and relevant skills. It created a range of products and launched the “Jailbird – Made in Jail” label. All products with this label are unique and handmade out of wood, felt, cloth or recycled materials. They also all bear the stamp of a prison term coming to an end. The project also raised awareness in society of the creative powers everyone has. Booklets were developed covering entrepreneurial development themes – “E-Commerce”, “Empowerment”, “Auto and Time Management”, “Communication”, “Client Communication” and “Team Building”, all freely available on the

project website and now in active use in institutions in Austria, Germany and Luxembourg. Overall, the project achieved its goal of creating the hope for new freedom and a second chance among prison detainees.



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Berufsforderungsinstitut Wien (AT)

WEBSITE

www.jailbird.lu

PROJECT DURATION

2008 – 2009

Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training

EasyICT: European Certification of ICT Skills for People with Intellectual Disabilities

| 27

The digital divide is clearly evident for people with intellectual disabilities. To reduce this particular e-skills gap, the EasyICT project developed a diagnostic tool able to assess ICT skills gained in formal or informal learning situations, with a focus on possible certification.

The project developed a framework to identify, assess and certify ICT skills – whether acquired formally or informally – for people with an intellectual disability. 120 professionals helped pilot and validate the platform, which provides support for teachers and trainers. The project also made recommendations to certification bodies, with future links planned via existing accreditation and certification frameworks such as the European Computer Driving License. The project's success in bridging the digital divide led to an invitation to present its results to the European Network of Inclusive Education.

assessment and certification process within their own institutions and to promote take-up and use of the EasyICT tool.

Even after the end of the project, partners maintain the online platform, to make use of the

Easy ICT

European Certification of ICT Skills for People with Intellectual Disabilities



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Technology (Bureau des étudiants euro-

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Université d'Edimbourg (RU)

WEBSITE

www.easyict.eu

PROJECT DURATION

2007–2009

Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training

Spread the Sign – Development of Vocational Sign Language in Europe

28 | **The project aimed at facilitating mobility in education and training for hearing-impaired persons through a web-based dictionary for sign language across six European countries.**

The partners from the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom developed and piloted an easily-accessible, web-based dictionary for sign language. For any selected word and destination language, the tool provides an image in the target language. This is a breakthrough in promoting sign language learning and will increase mobility for deaf or

hearing impaired young people across Europe. The project has attracted additional funding from the Lifelong Learning Programme to extend the dictionary to Turkey, France and Germany.



spreadthesign.com 

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PROJECT DURATION

2006–2008

Leonardo da Vinci for vocational education and training

Wider Employability Skills Training

| 29

As a European mobility opportunity for disadvantaged young learners, work placements were organised with a focus on improving skills and employability.

In total, 56 learners working towards a National Vocational Qualification (Level 2) in the UK undertook a three-week work placement abroad (mainly in Belgium) in the construction, retail and customer service sectors. The participants, many of which encounter barriers related to physical or learning disabilities, could develop employment-related skills, gain workplace experience and see new technologies in other European countries. Their placements abroad formed part of their formal assessment back

in the UK. They also increased their confidence and reengaged with the learning process. Subsequent similar mobility programmes have been implemented.



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PROJECT DURATION

2007–2008

How does the Languages programme contribute to social inclusion?

30 |

Today's European societies are facing rapid change due to globalisation, technological advances and ageing populations. As a result, day-to-day experiences of many Europeans are becoming more international and hence more multilingual. The European Commission approach to cope with these new challenges is rooted in the key principles of opportunities, access and solidarity. In an increasingly multilingual European Union, this means that everyone should have the opportunity to communicate appropriately in order to realise his or her potential and make the most of the opportunities offered by the modern and innovative EU. Everyone should have access to appropriate language training or to other means of facilitating communication so that there is no undue linguistic obstacle to living, working or communicating in the EU. It also means that in the spirit of solidarity, even those who may not be able to learn other languages should be provided with appropriate means of communication, allowing them access to the multilingual environment.

The harmonious co-existence of many languages in Europe is a powerful symbol of the European Union's aspiration to be united in diversity, one of the cornerstones of the European project. Languages define personal identities, but are also part of a shared inheritance. They can serve as a bridge to other people and open access to other countries and cultures, promoting mutual understanding. Mastering language skills can strengthen life chances of citizens: it may increase their employability, facilitate access to services and rights, and contribute to solidarity through enhanced intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. Language skills enable citizens to express themselves and to participate actively in society. They empower particular groups, such as migrants and ethnic minorities, to combat poverty and social exclusion. The lack of these basic competences can increase social divisions, giving the multilingual access to better living and working opportunities while excluding the monolingual.

The promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity is one of the objectives of the Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig and Leonardo sub-programmes. The Lifelong Learning programme also includes a key transversal activity, "Languages", entirely devoted to the teaching and learning of languages. Thus the programme contains a wealth of opportunities for language projects and brings fresh inspiration to transnational cooperation in the field of lifelong language learning and teaching. The European projects included in this brochure have already had a positive impact on in the daily life of thousands of European citizens and they will surely provide a source of inspiration for future project promoters. They certainly contributed in their own way to combat poverty and social exclusion.

The project showed how edutainment can help foreign language learning. An interactive computer game for children helped reach weaker students of German, Polish or Czech.

The project developed an interactive DVD language game with 4 language versions in a real “story telling” environment, oriented towards children of 8–12 years old who are curious about their neighbour countries and want to learn Polish, Czech and German. It offers a virtual trip to an unknown country, teaches simple dialogues and presents new friends. The products work well in teaching and appeal to children of this age. The materials were professionally created and tested with children and teachers.

Feedback showed the potential to reach weaker pupils and contribute to their social inclusion. Dissemination towards teachers, schools, and parents is supported by a demo version on the website as a teaser to buy the DVD and by the inclusion of publishers in the partnership.



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www.abc-linguatour.eu

PROJECT DURATION

2006–2009

Languages

Swimming the Language

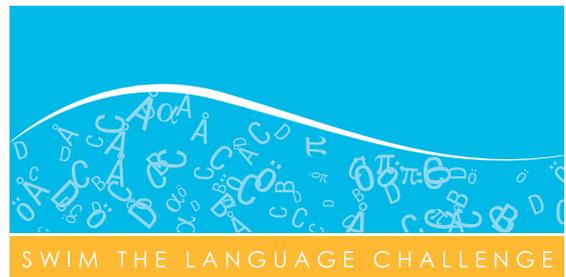
32 |

This project promoted social inclusion in Europe in an innovative way – by means of language learning through sports, especially swimming.

The project created learning modules on its website and publicised them by installing a “Swim the language Isle” (a tent or stand) at major swimming competitions. It also ran an on-line competition with prizes of travel to a European swimming contest. In addition, the coordinator sponsored the main prize for the winner, a trip to a swimming competition at the Olympics in Beijing in 2008.

The project focussed on practical phrases with audio pronunciation files rather than more formal approaches such as grammar tests. It encouraged people to participate in learning as part of other social and relaxation activities.

The combination of the world of sports with the world of languages can be extended from swimming to other sports popular across Europe. After completion of the initial project, new links have already been established with football teams, including Arsenal, Inter Milan and Herta Berlin.



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www.swimthelanguage.org

PROJECT DURATION

2006 – 2008

Languages

The Language Café

| 33

The project built on the concept of a café culture for innovative language learning. Language Cafés, in accessible public spaces, were open to everyone.

The partnership established 29 language cafés in libraries, cafés and restaurants, offering 7 languages to people of diverse age, occupation and background.

It showed how people without easy access to language learning or who lack the confidence to join a formal class (some participants were hearing-impaired) are more comfortable with small groups in an informal language learning environment. The project illustrated how learning languages can be valued by an entire local community.

The project was learner-driven and took place in different national and cultural environments. It became clear that the cafés worked because

each group evolved their own style which drew on a variety of learning preferences. The continuation of the Café idea in additional countries and contexts such as sign language and language learning for immigrants illustrates the value of the initial project.

language café



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PROJECT DURATION

2006–2008

How do Information and Communication Technologies contribute to social inclusion?

34 |

Successful education and training in our knowledge society depends increasingly on the confident, competent and innovative use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Digital competences are not only essential competences for any future job but also core life skills. Those who have little access, who rarely use ICT and who are not confident in using ICT in their life are excluded from our increasing networked and digitised society. It is up to education and training to act to close these digital gaps.

New technologies have been proven to be a powerful support tool to foster learning and teaching of individuals at risk of exclusion, such as early school leavers, migrant children, learners with special needs, etc. Recent studies on the use and impact of ICT in education have shown how ICT not only impacts learners' digital literacy but also to their communication, language, social and cognitive skills. For example, new social computing networks illustrate the new ways of learning

among youth and in future working life. Using new technologies in learning environments lead to greater personalised learning adapted to the needs of each learner and increase substantially the motivation to learn.

The promotion of ICT for learning is an integral part of the Lifelong Learning sub-programmes Comenius, Erasmus, Grundtvig and Leonardo da Vinci and one of the four key activities of the Transversal Programme.

Specifically the aim is:

- To promote a new vision for ICT for learning embedded into long-term educational objectives and integrated in lifelong learning strategies;
- To foster the uptake of ICT in education and training systems, including open and distance learning and open educational resources;
- To empower all educational actors;
- To foster the linking up and connecting of learning communities and the building up of new partnerships;
- To consolidate evidence of the added-value and impact of ICT for learning, with a particular attention to institutional as well as pedagogical innovation and change.

This brochure describes three excellent examples of how the European Commission promotes ICT for learning, the steady progress in the use of ICT for education and training across Europe, and the supporting role ICT plays for attracting groups-at-risk to re-schooling or learning in general. Each of these projects demonstrates how ICT is a valuable tool to attracting drop-outs back to education, enabling learning outside the school environment and bridging the "digital divide" between those with access to technologies and relevant skills and those without.

Inter-generational learning in this project both promoted social inclusion and helped widen access to computer skills.

Many elderly learners lack familiarity with new technologies and are consequently deprived of methods of increasing their knowledge through ICT access. The project used young volunteers as “grandchildren” to help elderly learners bridge this “digital divide”. The youngsters supported older people in learning how to use computers in a friendly, simple, uncompetitive, motivating and no-cost way.

The young people also benefited from developing communication skills, self-awareness and empathy. The project successfully demonstrated effective communication between generations, while addressing local cultural issues and linguistic diversity. It also provided young

people with an innovative opportunity to teach adults.

The work is continuing and new projects include transferring the activities to other cities in Slovenia and a Grundtvig Learning Partnership project to develop the materials and practices in three new languages.



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PROJECT DURATION

2006–2008

ICT

MustLearnIt

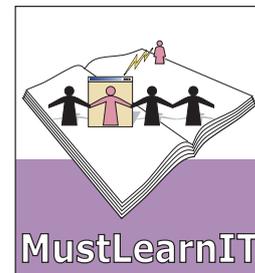
36 |

The project aimed to provide learning opportunities for children in remote rural communities in a way that included their teachers and the community as a whole.

A distance learning model was created for teaching foreign languages in small, remote, multi-grade schools lacking foreign language learning expertise. The project promoted social inclusion by connecting isolated learners via the internet to an expert teacher in a central school. This created a virtual classroom for everyone to become part of.

Teachers also benefited from becoming familiar with distance learning practices, acquiring new skills in developing new educational material. They also gained a new vision of foreign language teaching and learning.

The planned activities increased in scope and volume in response to demand. The model can be expanded and replicated for any subject in any curriculum area. A follow-on project (REVIT in the Key Activity 3 ICT action of the Lifelong Learning Programme) has also been started.



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PROJECT DURATION

2005–2007

VM-BASE – Virtual Mobility Before and After Student Exchanges

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The virtual support provided by this project to students before, during and after their exchanges has proved effective in raising the quality of student experiences. It has also opened up the prospect of wider use of “virtual mobility”.

“Virtual mobility” was mainly used as a support and complement to physical mobility, but its success suggests that it could also be used along with e-coaching methods as an alternative to physical mobility. Students who are unable to attend courses abroad, for physical, social, economic, or other reasons, can still derive the benefits of physical mobility as a result of this project. This is in line with a shift in higher education to encourage more inclusive practices, and the ideas on virtual mobility and e-coaching tested in the project can be used in other contexts to promote social inclusion. Guidelines and manuals provide information about the virtual support for “mobile students”

and support the further improvement of student mobility not only in the partner universities but also in other curriculum areas, regardless of country.



EuroPACE ivzw

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PROJECT DURATION

2006–2008

Cultural diversity in the 21st century school

Transversal programme– Study visits

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The issues of social inclusion have been widely discussed during the study visits on various topics, for example, on new pedagogical methods to improve literacy skills; on equal opportunities for disadvantaged students, migrants and minorities; measures to prevent school failure and early school leaving; on raising attractiveness of vocational training.

In Teruel, Aragon, nearly 12 % of the population comes from immigrant background. Integration of the multicultural reality is a challenge to society and to schools, in particular. The study visit was organised to share experience of the regional educational centres and to learn from colleagues from across Europe. Participants visited general schools, vocational schools, adult learning centres and a rural centre for innovation in education (CRIET) and shared useful resources, such as DVDs and books.

One of interesting practices that participants identified for further exploration and possible transfer was the work of cultural mediators in the region. Cultural mediators support the integration of immigrants in the educational context. They are native people belonging to the main cultural areas where the immigrant population is coming from. Use of cultural mediators would be useful as a starting point in countries where this kind of work is new. Recruitment of staff should reflect the composition of the population it serves. In some countries qualification systems are a barrier to recruitment professionals from other countries.

Based on their findings, the participants stressed that intercultural dialogue is a two-way process between native population and immigrants. They agreed that in-service training should prepare teachers to work in a multicultural society, to use special resources of intercultural education and

to prevent school failure and early school leaving of students from migrant background. Teachers need to have high expectations of all pupils so that the latter are able to acquire core curriculum. It is essential to encourage students and their families to use native languages to talk about origins and identities. The professionals need to avoid reinforcing cultural stereotypes through their behaviour and practice, for example, 'pedagogy of couscous'.

The group discussed a possibility of a future partnership on the theme to produce materials for intercultural education.



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PROJECT DURATION

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