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Център за образователна интеграция  
на децата и учениците  
от етническите малцинства



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*Project „Ethnic minority integration school hub“*

# Newsletter

September-October 2019

From 18 to 23 September 2019, in Madrid, the Kingdom of Spain, the third cross-border mobility under the Ethnic minority integration school hub project was carried out by CEICSEM, Bulgaria.

The theme of mobility was "From Practice to Policy". 13 representatives of the hosts from the Kingdom of Spain and 10 from Bulgaria and Northern Macedonia took part in the work of the group.

The participants again included representatives and experts from organizations, pedagogues, school psychologists, pedagogical advisors and youth workers.

The mobility program included working visits to institutions and organizations working with children from vulnerable groups, presenting activities to prevent dropping out of the educational system, targeted activities for integration and socialization of children and students from different ethnic groups, a webinar and meeting with political figures and representatives of state institutions responsible for educational integration.

All participants had the opportunity to share their experiences and expressed their satisfaction with the discussions and working visits.



At the beginning of the mobility, the participants met with Mr. Francisco Javier Arias Santos, an expert in the education department of the Madrid municipality. He analyzed the Spanish education system with a focus on ethnic minorities and students at risk of social exclusion. We were provided with data on children and students from other nationalities and ethnicities, with a total percentage of around 11% (85,000) of the total number of students in Madrid (around 800,000). Bulgarian children and students enrolled in the Spanish education system are about 2.3% (10th place). The most numerous are those from Romania - 21.6%. It was noted that there are no typical ghettos, but there are still clusters of different ethnicities - mainly Roma and those from Morocco, China and others. mainly in western Madrid. The municipality organizes further co-ordinated trainings with Spanish teachers of students from the third to the last grade who have difficulties (Liaison classroom).

These trainings last for up to 9 months, taking place over half a school day in students' schools. The groups are between 5 and 12 students. The remaining half of the school day is spent with the other students (for whom the Spanish language is native). To this end, parents agree to participate in these trainings. These additional trainings take place both in public schools and in subsidized centers. These centers prepare 3 to 5 year programs that are jointly funded - both by the municipality and by programs, private donors and more. The municipality also organizes services (SETI - Translators and Interpreters Service) to assist the integration of immigrant students and their families, translate documents, help fill in various forms, and more. These centers are organized by regions in Madrid.



The participants attended the Ciudad Escuela de los Muchachos - CEMU School for Children and Students, who are socially disadvantaged, without families or with disabilities. The school was created by arch. Alberto Sanchez in 1970, the land was purchased by the municipality for a small amount, was built by the municipality and it pays the utilities and salaries of teachers and educators. There is also a dormitory for the most needy. Public-private partnership is the management entrusted to the Foundation. It maintains, reconstructs infrastructure, executes projects, and maintains a low-income supermarket. The school's infrastructure is impressive - in addition to the dormitory, it also has gymnasiums, swimming pools, a small church, streets, a small farm for growing fruits, vegetables and animals, a bank, and they have their own "currency", student self-government. Children and students, under the guidance of educators, themselves maintain hygiene in shared spaces. The gardens are cared for by young people who are employed under greening employment programs. The Spanish language training program up to 9 months is also implemented at this school.



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There was also a meeting with representatives of the Vilaverde municipality of Madrid, responsible for families and minorities. The program for reaching and retaining children and students in compulsory school age, from 6 to 18, was presented. The municipality appoints special mediators who liaise with families and prepare an action plan for solving certain problems. They are not teachers, but they work with them, visit homes and manage to return up to 20% of dropouts. The re-dropouts in this municipality are about 5%. They are financed by the municipality, respectively. the state, the activity being entrusted to a private organization. There are also penalties against parents: administrative - a fine of 300 to 3000 euros, with district mayors simplifying the fine. There is no collection of these fines so far. 60% of these families are Roma (Spanish Roma), the rest are immigrants. Another type of sanction is referring the problem to the child protection service, removing children from the family, bearing criminal responsibility, even going to jail, but no data on the implementation of these sanctions have been provided.



The use of various measures from the social programs of the state and the respective municipality was shared as an incentive measure.

It is important to note that municipalities have great autonomy. The content of the curricula in Spain depends on whether or not the autonomous community (or region) has an official language other than Spanish. Madrid has no other language than Spanish and regulates 35% of the contents while Catalonia, Galicia, Valencia, etc., as they have another official language, regulate 45% of the contents of the curriculum (the central state regulates the rest 65% in Madrid and 55% in Catalonia).

The funding of the schools is from the municipality and is not per pupil, but according to the calculated



The attendance at the CEIP San Carlos project partner school was extremely practical and emotional. The teaching staff and psychologists introduced the participants to their work organization and the specific activities that are being implemented to socialize children and students of different ethnic backgrounds.

The hosts presented good practices for working with parents to engage in intercultural dialogue, mutual recognition, rapprochement and integration. Rituals from Nigeria and Morocco were presented.



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Within the framework of the mobility, a fully segregated school in the Valécas district - Public School Núñez de Arenas, attended mainly by Roma children and students. The specificity of this school is that children learn through fun, there is a lot of emphasis on the arts (music, dance, drawing), and textbooks are used only as a resource, but not in class. The so-called angular methodology - the class is divided into interactive groups, with each group having one adult, who in addition to a teacher may be from the family (for younger children mainly). Groups can be diverse, thus learning from each other. Students also provide discussion topics. Shared maths classes, Spanish and other languages are also organized. The first class is flexible and they usually have physical education so that any delays will not affect the work of the groups / classes. This school has 220 children and students, is open to parents and has mediation in conflicts. This organization of work has sharply reduced absenteeism.



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The four main districts of Madrid with the highest concentration of Roma students, have a secretariat for Roma issues- education, work, rights, inclusion, health, housing policy and more. A meeting was held with the Foundation FSG (Fundacion Secretariado Gitano), which mainly deals with social and intercultural issues, including education. Provides extracurricular Spanish language training for the needy, provides guidance and counseling for the completion of secondary education, and provides guidance for vocational guidance in coordination with teachers.

It also works with parents to reduce dropouts. The highest dropout rate among Roma students is the age of 14, when they move to upper education. The students pay nothing and receive textbooks, notebooks and materials. This organization plays the role of a secretariat in the municipalities and is nationally covered. Funding on the basis of 3-5 year proposals is from the state, the municipality, private donors and programs.



The Treasures of the Kingdom of Spain - participants from the Republic of Northern Macedonia and Bulgaria were tasked with finding objects that symbolize Spain's historical development and culture. In addition to the sights of Madrid, the hosts presented the history and culture of the cities of Avila and Segovia.





Spain is also historically linked to two other unique things - sails and flamenco.

Mobility participants had the opportunity to learn more about them and to participate in a hands-on sail drawing workshop organized by the host organization.



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