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The final Conference of the SMILE Project: How to develop a wider sense of community around the school based on the concept of prosociality for the integration of Roma children and families

The final conference of the project took place in Catanzaro on October 28 and 29, with about 100 people attending and with the presence of members of the Roma communities.

After the introduction of the concept of prosociality and of the main aims and outputs of the project made by the coordinator, all the other partners explained the impact of the project in their own countries.

Great interest was shown in the application of the SMILE approach in several European towns and in the fact that in all the different realities the prosociality based model has greatly strengthened the educational and social links with the Roma community facilitating the inclusion of Roma children and parents both at educational and social level. Also the public authorities showed their deep interest in the SMILE results.



Some added values generated by the project were described: the increasing of the mutual awareness between the local non-Roma and Roma communities which built cooperation and mutual understanding, the raising of the self-esteem of Roma students through the expanded inclusion of Roma topics at school, the facilitation of the understanding between school administrations and Roma parents and, of course, the validity of the Prosocial approach in order to enhance community relations between Roma and non-Roma people.

During the conference some experts (pedagogues, social professionals, University teachers...) gave their contribution about how to foster holistic measures for the Roma inclusion and Ms Karin de Kever, representative of the Educational, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) of the European Commission gave some feedback, underlying the lesson learnt through the SMILE project.

The documentary “Rooms” (produced within the project) was also presented. Its aim is to let the life and culture of the Roma be known through concrete situations and relations. By enacting the dialogue, the meeting and the exchange of points of view between Roma and non-Roma, the documentary allows the viewer to deepen their knowledge about the life of Roma people, promoting and strengthening possible forms of cohabitation.

The conclusion of the conference has given new hopes: SMILE has found a way to foster the education of Roma children and the inclusion of their parentslet’s go ahead and let’s continue to work together!!!

Rooms is a documentary that aims to let the life and culture of the Roma be known through concrete situations and relations. By enacting the dialogue, the meeting and the exchange of points of view between Roma and non-Roma, the documentary will allow all viewers to deepen their knowledge about a reality complex as it is the one of the Roma world: not essential for starting prejudices by the Western society, to promote and strengthen the possible forms of cohabitation.





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