KNOW-
LEDGE.

BE OPEN

TOOLKIT

PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION TO OVERCOME DISCRIMINATION AGAINST YOUNG ROMA

DISCRI-
MINATION.

dream
BE OPEN

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INTRODUCTION

This Toolkit has been developed within the project **"DREAM - an approach to participation in the educational environment to overcome discrimination against young Roma in the new media"** with the economic support of the Erasmus+ Programme and the coordination of the Spanish National Agency. The objective of the project is to empower mothers, teachers and young people to identify and react to stereotypes and discrimination online and offline against Roma.

The information we present in this Toolkit will help teachers, educators and youth workers conduct training, exe   rcises, discussions, role-plays, and other activities to counteract hate speech among youngsters, convinced that the most effective and efficient tool against intolerance and the rejection of diversity is education.

By participating in the activities presented in this Toolkit, youngsters will increase their understanding of what is and what is not discrimination, identify and analyse stereotypes used in communication via digital media to discriminate Roma and to know what to do when we testimony hate speech online.

OBJECTIVES

- To raise student's awareness on discrimination against Roma
- To provide tools, suggestions, examples useful to prevent and tackle discrimination against Roma
- To promote the participation of Roma children in schools
- To foster the exchange of best practices at European level and favour the creation of a European network
- To favour the dissemination of tools of analysis, identification and prevention of the phenomenon

PARTNERS

The Project is implemented by a consortium of 5 organizations and 3 schools.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Fundació Privada Pere Closa[1] | Spain
Arci Solidarietà Onlus | Italy
Ares 2.0 | Italy
Center Amalipe | Bulgaria
Gipsy Eye | Romania

SCHOOLS

Obedineno uchilishte P.R.Slaveykov | Bulgaria
Colegiul National Mihail Sadoveanu | Romania
Istituto Comprensivo Antonio Gramsci | Italy

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[1] leading partner

ACTIVITY SHEETS

Premise

The following activities were tested during a series of workshops in Spain, Italy, Bulgaria and Romania with children between 11 and 14 years old in 2021 and 2022 in the framework of DREAM project reaching out around 400 children. The positive feedback we received from teachers and students confirms that such non-formal activities strongly contribute to impact on discrimination processes and are essential to empower children and the educational community in tackling these phenomena.

Recommendations for the trainers

Trainers and methods

- The training sessions are conducted by one or two trainers - teachers, school advisors, psychologists, social workers, etc. No special professional qualification is required, but experience of working with children at this age will help. The trainer sets the tasks, guidelines, summarizes the discussions and monitors how the processes in the group are being developed (activity, motivation, conflicts).
- To increase the activity, motivation and communication of the participants, it is good to emphasize that the opinion and ideas of everyone in the group are equally valuable for the work.
- Size of the group should be around 18-20 participants. All participants and the trainer sit in a circle except when working in small groups or an exercise requires a different arrangement. Sitting in a circle makes all participants equal.

- Each proposed activity was preceded by circle time during which the themes of the day were shared together. The boys and girls were given space to express their thoughts and to share new reflections as a starting point for creative work. Circle time moments were held regularly at the opening and closing of the activities and allowed the workshop to be structured by defining a different kind of space from the traditional frontal lessons clearly articulating the activities together with children.

Objectives of the Methodology

The methodology aims to prepare specialists (teachers, psychologists, social workers, youth workers) to train young people in the following skills:

- To identify Roma discrimination and anti-gypsyism also through digital media
- To empower mothers, teachers and children in order to be actively involved in fighting discrimination
- To know what we can do when we experience discrimination

WORKSHOPS* EXPERIENCES

*1 workshop = 6, 8 or 10 activities of 2 hours each

1	THE MAP OF MY CLASS	
OBJECTIVES	Reflect on discrimination, bullying and cyberbullying and build a map of the class group to connect all personalities	
DURATION	6, 8 or 10 meetings – 2 hours each	
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT	Sheets, paper, paints, glue, pencils, sharpeners, coloured ribbons, collage paper, magazines	
KEYWORDS	Discrimination, bullying, cyberbullying, hate speech	

Context

(where we realized it: class, context of the school, difficulties encountered, success stories)

This workshop was carried out in the second class of an Italian "middle school" (12-13 years old). It was important to adapt the activities to the context of the class to enable a successful outcome and to optimise the space to comply with Covid regulations.

Description

The meetings, held on a weekly basis, were characterised by both moments of reflection and sharing, and of play and graphic activities that enabled the

construction of a real map of the class. Starting with the creation of personal pictures constructed through collage, each child was able to present him/herself through a metaphor that she/he shared with the group. The personal image was later enriched with words, messages and reflections from all other group members. Through games, readings and reflections, the students were invited to share words to "donate" to their peers, even those who were perceived as more distant from them. Meeting after meeting, the group was able to construct its own image, later hung on the walls of the classroom, more complex and enriched than the initial sharing.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

I give you a word

This activity was proposed with the aim of reflecting together on how important it is to always find the most proper way to share our thoughts. Within complex groups such as the class, it is easy not to be in harmony, but it becomes indispensable, to avoid discrimination, to be able to share one's point of view in the right way.

After sharing these premises, and enriching them with the children's point of view, the entire group is given a template (an empty face) that will be hung on the back of each participant.
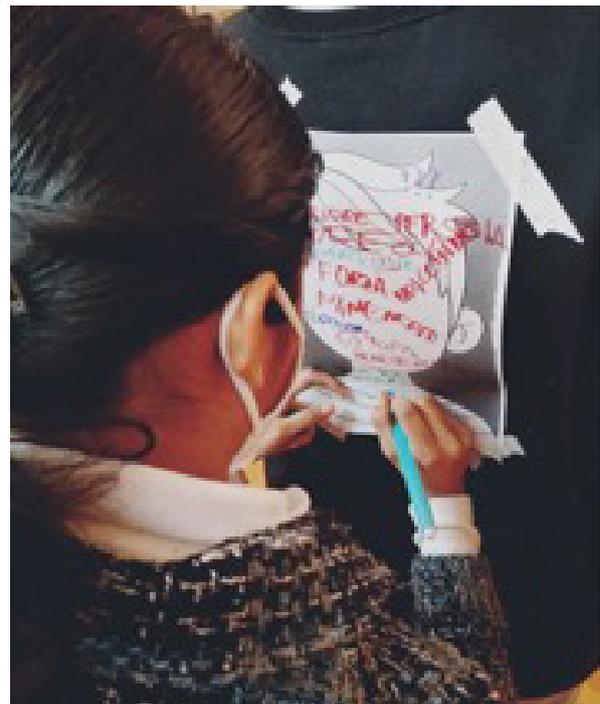
A game of movement will then begin during which boys and girls can run and dance (we took advantage of gym hours for this activity) until the trainer says 'stop'.

At that point, each participant donates a word to the children in front of him/her. The word will be written inside the template first, and then shared face-to-face. During the game, the children discovered that they did not necessarily have to make compliments or make references to their closest companions, but that they could also say something less pleasant finding the right way to do it.

Guided individual and group painting

This activity uses a game proposed by the artist Tullet and it was used in this circumstance to promote awareness of each person being a unique and special individual and, at the same time, a fundamental part within the group.

The game taken as inspiration is called "draw" and was used in the following way. Two types of cards are organised into two decks: what to draw and how to draw it (it is not essential to have the game, you can also organise it yourself independently by writing on a few sheets of paper what to draw (waves, lines, stripes, dots) and how to do it (slowly, quickly, skipping).
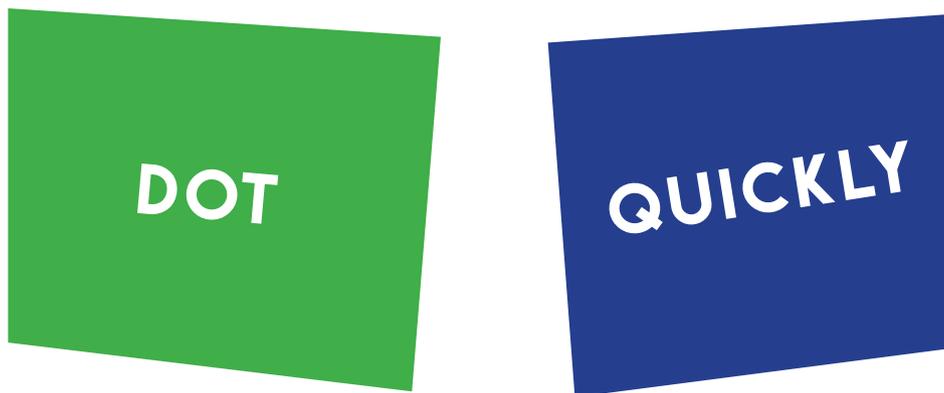
Example of cards of the two different decks

At first the experience is done individually: each person draws on their own sheet of paper what is asked in the indicated manner. Afterwards, the activity is repeated on a big poster and the experience is shared in a circle, making sure everyone has his/her own space in the group (and metaphorically also in the sheet).

Children will realise how much they have contributed to the final work, even if they cannot recognise their signs, but they will know that they made that project unique and unrepeatable.

Debriefing and reflections

The starting point was communication: it is impossible not to communicate and it is necessary to learn to do so as correctly as possible and with respect for the people around us. From the very first meeting, the pupils reflected on what it means to discriminate against someone and how simple everyday actions can make one's companion feel discriminated against, excluded and bullied.

2 ONE AND MANY

OBJECTIVES	Becoming more aware of being unique and unrepeatable. Experience the class group as a resource. Define a functional and respectful language
DURATION	6 or 10 meetings of 2 hours
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT	Sheets, paper, newspaper, glue, scotch, pencils, eraser, sharpener
KEYWORDS	Identity, uniqueness, sharing and mutual respect

Context

(where we realized it: class, context of the school, difficulties encountered, success stories)
The workshop activities were promoted within the 1st grade classes of Italian "middle school" (11-12 years old). The teachers were welcoming and participative and enriched the promoted discussions with their ideas and opinions. The main criticality encountered was related to the limits imposed by the pandemic: measures had to be observed such as social distancing and the careful handling of materials.

Description

The workshop activities were conducted using an active methodology made up of debriefing moments, watching videos and sharing information material on the topics discussed. Starting from the sharing of what it means for each person to be unique and special. We worked using collage and

metaphor so that each person could build an image to represent their own characteristics, digging into the specificities of the skills and limits that each person recognises about themselves. The collages were a first step towards the construction of three images: how I see myself, how I think others see me and how I would like to be. Thanks to this work, the students were able to get to know their class group better and enrich the vision of each one within the group.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES

Individual collage

Starting from the inputs "I am", "I would like to be" "I believe others see me as" the children are given silhouettes of different types (gender, height, physicality, etc.) and different materials to use (magazines, coloured paper, coloured tape, pencils and markers). The children are asked to metaphorically represent the starting statements and build their own image/character that can later be used in different ways:

- construction of a personal story.
- shared narration.
- presentation of posters placed in the classroom.
- body awareness exercises and group sharing.

Self-portrait and group collage

In this activity the boys and girls worked on their own image – a photograph - printed on A4 sheet. They were asked, through suggestions of selected songs and phrases, to look at themselves trying to highlight all the elements that make them unique and unrepeatable. To do this, they were provided with various materials, from paints to collage paper, stickers and recycled materials. In a first phase each of them worked creatively and artistically on their own image, enriching it with colours, words and details.

Afterwards, using a red cotton thread that they passed between their desks, they hanged their 'new images' creating a unique work and sharing the emotions and feelings they felt working on their image reflecting on what changed when they saw their works hanged on the wall.

Debriefing and reflections

The workshop was carried out in two first classes and produced very different results. The characteristics of the participants are decisive for the contents that will emerge during the sharing. Even though the inputs are the same, it was very important to give the participants a space in which to experiment with their own ideas and to discuss the proposed activities.

OTHER POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

1	**THE POWER OF WORDS**	
OBJECTIVES		Defining negative messages and realizing their impact
DURATION		1 hour
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT		Several jars or empty boxes, sheets, markers, writing pens
KEYWORDS		Insults, compliments, messages

Context

(where we realized it: class, context of the school, difficulties encountered, success stories)
Children do not always 3understand the meaning of many words that might have discriminatory effects. At the same time, however, they hear them every day around them - from the media, from older students, from adults - and begin to use them. Young students want to imitate the older ones, but they don't realize what they are saying and even if they understand it, they don't think about how another person might feel.

In a school with different backgrounds, it is sometimes difficult to make sure a student from a minority group, who is overweight or came from another place feel included.

Children from Bulgarian, Roma and Turkish ethnic groups study at the "P.R.

Slaveykov" United School in the village of Dzhulyunitsa, Bulgaria. After numerous conversations of the teaching staff with students, all children made efforts to include their classmates. Moreover, the students and the project team visited a reception center with Ukrainian refugees to do some activities for Easter. Bulgarian children made connections with Ukrainian refugees so that they could feel less isolated.

Description

In one of the trainings on the project, an interactive exercise was conducted, through which students became aware of stereotypical ideas, words and statements. First, everyone was given the opportunity to write 5 words that he/she thought were offensive and 5 words that he/she thought were positive. All the words were gathered in one box and shuffled. Then each child took out a word from the box and said how he/she would feel if someone called it in that way. After a short discussion and a shared definition of the word, the student puts the word in one of the pre-prepared jars labelled with three different emotions indicated by the emojis (a c t). Students make turns until they have discussed all words.

Debriefing and reflections

At the end of the training, the students discussed together which of the mentioned definitions are positive and which ones can be considered hate speech, discrimination or insults hurting the other person. At the end of the meeting, they decided to collect all the bad words in one jar and close it "symbolically" away from them. Some have admitted that they sometimes use bad words to feel more fashionable or become popular but will now think twice before doing so not to hurt anyone.

2	**IN YOUR SHOES**
OBJECTIVES	Understanding the experience of people affected by discrimination
DURATION	90 minutes
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT	Enough space to present and host the role game
KEYWORDS	Empathy, discrimination, disadvantage

Context

(where we realized it: class, context of the school, difficulties encountered, success stories)
Role-playing games are a great way to connect with people with different experiences and to understand their problems more easily. Through role-playing games, students can freely express their point of view putting someone else's shoes, while at the same time thinking about the best solutions for each specific case. Through this activity, young people can think about serious topics and discriminatory situations that have happened to them or their peers.

Difficulties may be caused by the reluctance of some students to participate. However, experience shows that young people are eager to create and direct short scenes, and even want to be filmed.

Description

The young people are divided into groups of an equal number of participants. It is optimal to have 4-5 people for each group. The group receives

a case and roles are assigned. They are given time to figure out how to present the stage and prepare it. The scenes are played out. Then there is a discussion about what they felt in the respective roles.

FIRST CASE

A doctor of Roma origin has been working in a hospital for 5 years, but he hides his background. One day his mother had a seizure and was rushed to the hospital where he worked. She does not speak Bulgarian. The whole team gathers. The woman explains what is wrong with her, but no one can understand her.

Further develop the case and act it out in front of the audience. What happens next?

SECOND CASE

Assen is a student of Roma origin and hides his background. The only person who knows about his secret is his longtime friend and roommate Marin, who is Bulgarian. At the internal medicine exam, Assen could not support Marin who failed to finish the year. After the exam, they quarreled violently and fought. Assen is moving to another room. A month later, a student party was organized in the dormitory, which Assen went to with his new girlfriend. Marin is also there.

Play the case in front of the audience. What do you think is happening?

THIRD CASE

Kiril and Anastasia are students at the same university. They have had a happy relationship for 2 years and have been living together for 1 year. One day a courier arrives in their dormitory room and brings a letter to Kiril. Anastasia receives the shipment because Kiril is lecturing. She opened the let-

ter and learns that a man with her friend's name had been approved to participate in a Roma program.

Develop the story and play it in front of the audience.

Questions for discussion on each case
- Try to briefly present the main events that led to the conflict (brief history of the conflict)
- Who are the participants in the conflict
- What are their declared positions?
- What are the relations between the parties to the conflict (relations of past cooperation, hostility, etc.)?
- Do the parties want to find a solution to the problem?
- Do circumstances force them to seek a quick solution, or can they procrastinate?
- What external factors influence the resolution of the conflict situation?
- Do the parties have sufficient resources to resolve the conflict (such as time, money, experts, etc.)?
- What is the basic public opinion on the conflict?
- Can any of the parties unilaterally impose its opinion on the resolution of the conflict?

As a result of your analysis of the conflict situation, try to give the most general assessment of the chances for its resolution, the possible ways to reach a decision, the nature of this decision.

Debriefing and reflections

The students reflected on issues related to discrimination and stereotypes. In addition, by working in groups, they improved their teamwork and communication skills.

To be continued

DREAM DICTIONARY

The **DREAM dictionary** is made of terms that are useful for defining the project's own semantic framework and it is meant to allow teachers, parents, and students to share a common glossary to facilitate educational work.

Antigypsyism / Antitsiganismi / Romaphobia. It is an historically constructed, persistent complex of customary racism against social groups identified under the stigma 'gypsy' or other related terms and incorporates: 1) a homogenizing and essentializing perception and description of these groups; 2) the attribution of specific characteristics to them; 3) discriminating social structures and violent practices that emerge against that background, which have a degrading and ostracizing effect and which reproduce structural disadvantages1.

Affirmative action. Action favouring those who tend to suffer from discrimination; positive discrimination.

Attitude. An attitude is an evaluation of an object, ranging from extremely negative to extremely positive. People can also be conflicted or ambivalent toward an object by simultaneously holding both positive and negative attitudes toward the same object.

Categorization. The human brain has a natural tendency to categorize everything. At any one time, our brain is bombarded with an infinite number of stimuli. Without an efficient method of making sense of this information, our brains would become overloaded. By sorting stimuli (for example, experiences, objects, people) into categories, we can process our environments more efficiently. This frees up mental resources for other tasks. Categorizing people helps us to navigate our social world more efficiently. Social categorization is the process through which we group individuals based upon social information providing a sense of order and predictability that we can rely on to guide our interactions with others. Once determined, our social categorizations of others shape downstream evaluation and behavior, often without awareness. This can occur largely through stereotypic associations, which can result in harmful biases and ostensibly trivial biases.

Civil and Political Rights. The class of rights that protect individuals' freedom from infringement by governments, social organizations, and private individuals. They ensure one's ability to participate in the civil and political life of the society and state without discrimination or repression.

Clickbait refers to a content whose main purpose is to attract attention and encourage visitors to click on a link to a particular web page.

Digital Discrimination is the representation of discriminatory content and attitude by digital means. It is a new way of expressing and disseminating discriminatory content.
Open online discrimination. Explicit discrimination that is intentional and overcomes the limits of socially accepted dialogue. Open discrimination may be easy to detect, but we need tools, new debates, and attitudes to combat it.
Hidden online discrimination. A content that has "invisible" messages which are negative about specific people or groups. These types of contents are often linked to humor (i.e. used in advertising), or common expressions such as 'I am not a racist but...', which mask the discrimination under another message. Their detection requires an empathic and conscious attitude to avoid their dissemination. We need to be reflexive, conscious, and empathic with ourselves and others, on and offline, to promote positive attitudes amongst the 'real' and digital community to avoid hidden and open discrimination.

Discrimination shall mean any differential treatment based on a ground such as "race", color, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, as well as descent, belief, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics or status, which has no objective and reasonable justification. Discrimination is generally understood as biased behaviour, which includes not only actions that directly harm or disadvantage another group, but those that unfairly favor one's own group (creating a relative disadvantage for other groups); this is called "indirect discrimination".

Disinformation: deceptive information diffuses throughout social networks (Karlova, Fisher, 2013).

Differential treatment is wide and includes any distinction, exclusion, restriction, preference, or omission, be it past, present or potential.

Direct racial discrimination shall mean any differential treatment based on a ground such as race, color, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, which has no objective and reasonable justification. Differential treatment has no objective and reasonable justification if it does not pursue a legitimate aim or if there is not a reasonable relationship of proportionality between the means employed and the aim sought to be realized.

Dominant narratives. A dominant narrative is an explanation or story that is told in service of the dominant social group's interests and ideologies. It usually achieves dominance through repetition, the apparent authority of the speaker (often accorded to speakers who represent the dominant social groups), and the silencing of alternative accounts. Because dominant narratives are so normalized through their repetition and authority, they have the illusion of being objective and apolitical, when in fact they are neither.

Environmental Racism. The placement of low-income or minority communities in the proximity of environmentally hazardous or degraded environments, such as toxic waste, pollution and urban decay.

Equality and equity. Equality means everyone or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Fascism. Extreme nationalism, the belief in strong autocratic control of the people by a single person or party.

Fake news is news with no basis in facts, but they are presented as being factually accurate, for this reason people can perceive them as probable. Digital world has brought back and increased the use of fake news because of the great number of online articles that can be shared without control.

Genocide. The deliberate killing of a large group of people, especially those of a particular nation or ethnic group.