

“My rights are your rights!”

This document is part of a larger collection of examples of current policies for young people in Europe. The collection is an outcome of a European research project called “UP2YOUTH – Youth: actor of social change?”

The basic idea of the “current practice” collection is to see how current practices and policies relate to young people as active agents in shaping their lives. Therefore, our intention is not a collection of “good” or “best” practices. Rather, it includes also practices, which are interesting because of their relation to young people’s agency but which involve problematic aspects, such as restricted financial resources, a very thin spread, or no clear evaluation criteria. We have applied a searching pattern which asked for “strengths” and “weaknesses”. This explicitly opens space for your own evaluation, because also policies are included, which definitely do have weaknesses, but are highly interesting for specific reasons. Therefore we have to stress that the researchers did not evaluate these practices themselves.

The whole collection can be found at

<http://www.up2youth.org/content/view/192/60/>

Section	Indications of contents
Title of programme/ practice	My rights are your rights!
Location	Romania – Brasov, Dambovita and Valcea counties
Main theme	1) Civic participation 2) Young parenthood 3) Transition of young people with an ethnic minority or immigrant background
Practice/Programme-related keywords	Gender, ethnicity, equality of chances, access to quality education, inclusive education, intercultural education, early marriage, early motherhood, child’s rights, local partnerships.
Summary of programme/ practice	Action implemented and problems addressed: The project addresses the themes of early marriage and early motherhood from the perspective of the fundamental rights of the child, which guarantee their equal and non-discriminatory access to quality education. The project aims to advocate for observance of these fundamental human and child rights, which are being restricted through the (Roma) tradition of early marriage, and to encourage both Roma and non-Roma parents and children to discover together the long term advantages of school attendance.

<p>Target</p>	<p>1) Target area: The project has been implemented in three Counties of Romania (Brasov, Dambovita and Valcea).</p> <p>2) Target groups/issues/problems addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 720 girls and boys from both Roma and non-Roma ethnic groups; • 720 parents from both Roma and non-Roma ethnic groups; • 21 teachers from 6 schools selected for project implementation; • local authorities and civil society representatives from concerned communities; • mass-media. <p>The project addresses the themes of early marriage and early motherhood from the perspective of the fundamental rights of the child, which guarantee their equal and non-discriminatory access to quality education.</p>
<p>Objectives of programme/ practice</p>	<p>The project aims at promoting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – equality of chances regardless ethnic, religious or gender belonging; – awareness of main stakeholders (teachers, parents, local authorities and civil society representatives) on the need to improve access to education within communities comprising large groups of Roma population, and to diminish school dropout due to early marriage and early motherhood among members of these groups; – creation and/or improvement of feedback mechanisms between school and community, in a view to underpin the common effort towards preventing the early marriage and motherhood phenomena, and ensuring access to education through „second chance” programmes for Roma girls and young women who had early abandoned the school; – awareness of the project’s target group on the limitation of fundamental child’s rights incurred by proliferation of the early marriage phenomenon among Roma communities; – awareness of decision-makers at both local and national levels on the importance of inclusive and intercultural education, in a view to stimulate development of appropriate public policies in the matter; – creation of school networks and strengthening of local partnerships, in a view to ensure effectiveness of the equal chance principle for Roma minority.
<p>Content of programme/ practice</p>	<p>Main actions/ steps:</p> <p>The main action consisted of initiation of an advocacy campaign in favour of ensuring effectiveness of the principle of non-discrimination based on ethnic or gender criteria, and for guaranteeing equal access to quality education for all children, as part of the fundamental human and child rights.</p>

Main project activities:

1. Official launching of the project at national level through a round table on the theme „Equal opportunities and intercultural education in nowadays curricula”
2. Organising of round tables at local level for facilitating debates among main stakeholders on the theme of equal access to education and prevention of early school leaving because of early motherhood within Roma communities.
3. Training of the teachers who are going to facilitate over the project duration workshops with children and parents on the theme of importance of knowledge and observance of the fundamental human and child rights, and on the role of school in alleviating social discrimination.
4. Organising in each school selected within the project of workshops with children and parents on the themes „Pay respect to your child, acknowledge his/her rights!” and „My rights are your rights!”.
5. Organising ideas and projects/campaigns contests among mixed teams of children at the level of each selected school, on a range of themes relating to equal access to education, observance of the fundamental child rights, and transforming their schools into intercultural schools and equal chances schools.
6. Organising the Equal Opportunities and Intercultural Education Fair, within which the participant children are going to present and promote their projects.
7. Organising the Project Closing Conference along with award festivity for winning projects/campaigns.

Time scale

Duration/Sustainability

December 2006 - November 2007

<p>Programme/ practice design</p>	<p>1) Development of programme/practice: The project has been initiated by the Centre Education 2000+, based on the experience and lessons learned from the previously implemented project “Let’s build together the image of Roma girls”.</p> <p>2) Decision-making actors and process: Decision making belongs to the project coordination team, but operational decisions at local level are being made by the management of the selected schools. The main actors involved school managers, local authorities in the concerned localities, community leaders, including Roma community leaders, teachers, trainers, media organizations. The process is structured along main project activities, with feedback provided by local actors and appropriate decisions made by project coordination at the Centre Education 2000+.</p> <p>3) Management and leadership of programme: Crina Mosneagu (cmosneagu@cedu.ro) – Project Coordinator Ciprian Ciucu (cciucu@cedu.ro) – PR Coordinator</p> <p>4) Implementation: The project coordinator undertakes overall management and leadership of the project. The PR coordinator is responsible for establishing partnership with actors involved and coordinating the organisation of round tables, media campaign, projects contest and fair and closing conference. The Centre’s trainers provide teacher training for workshops facilitation. Schools management ensure proper organisation of project activities at local level and, in cooperation with local authorities, establishes and supports partnerships with parents and local communities. Partner media organizations play an important role in raising awareness among concerned communities of project’s objectives and activities.</p> <p>● 5) Legal framework: The projects relates to the Government’s strategies for improving access to education of disadvantaged groups and for protection of child’s rights, which included partnerships with specialised civil society structures, and benefits from the related legal framework..</p>
<p>Resources involved</p>	<p>The project is co-financed by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Romania, through the Fund for facilitating the strategic activities in the fields of human rights and good governance, and by the Centre Education 2000+</p> <p>Budget: EUR 47,816, of which EUR 10,200 from the Centre Education 2000+.</p> <p>Social exclusion, segregation, poverty, parents’ attitude towards school, domestic works, the lack of ID papers, and ethnic group traditions influence, altogether and separately, the extent to which Roma children attend school and stay enrolled by the end of compulsory education. Gender discrimination further reduces the</p>

	<p>chances of Roma girls to benefit from quality education, these girls facing more barriers than their boy mates. Parents are more reluctant with regard to girls attending school, often preferring to keep them at home for domestic works and for taking care of younger children. The tradition of early marriage additionally hampers their school attendance, especially when followed by pregnancy.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>1) Evaluation process: Not reported in public available documents.</p>
	<p>2) Results / impact of programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better knowledge of the fundamental human and child rights among the target group and awareness of the school importance for alleviating social discrimination; • A multi-level campaign for promoting inclusive and intercultural education as a means to foster observance of the child's right to quality education; • Strengthened school networks and local partnerships towards ensuring equal access to education for Roma children, with special focus on diminishing gender discrimination in the access to education of Roma children; • 12 teachers trained in intercultural mediation, with a view to better knowledge and observance of human and child rights among Roma communities; • 720 children and parents beneficiary of the campaigns „Pay respect to your child, acknowledge his/her rights!“ and „My rights are your rights!“; • 60 children involved in designing campaigns for self promotion of their rights to inclusive education; • Collection of good practice and lessons learned; • Recommendations provided to the Ministry of Education with regard to public policy making in the matter.
	<p>3) Difficulties encountered: Not reported in documents available from public sources, but most probably they relate to mobilising and getting support from Roma communities, as reported for similar projects.</p>
	<p>4) Assessment of programme/ action/ practice in terms of sustainability: As compared to the dimension of the phenomenon, with available resources the intervention is unlikely to have discernable impact on changing Roma parents' mentalities and on improving participation of Roma girls in education. However, in the concerned communities the project should have had positive influence in alleviating discrimination and segregation, as well as in raising awareness among school mates on the importance of child's rights observance.</p>
<p>Lessons to be drawn from programme or practice implemented</p>	<p>First of all, one should notice the notable example of an NGO getting involved, not only with their expertise, but also with their financial resources in addressing a key issue of putting into the practice the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination with regard to children's access to education.</p> <p>In consideration of the available resources, the project targeted a small number of communities but this allowed making best use of money for achieving the desired social change. While it is unsure</p>

	<p>whether the project activities will have had long-lasting or only temporary effects on people's mentalities and behaviours in the target communities, one may take for sure the increased awareness and level of involvement of children themselves in dealing with intercultural aspects of putting into the practice the child's rights and the principle of equal opportunities. This is an important educational achievement, which may also have positive influence on parents' mentalities.</p> <p>The practice is easily transferable if properly acknowledged, especially among NGOs acting in fields of human/child rights and education.</p>
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