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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Study visit for Kosovo* teachers on integration and social inclusion practices in German schools

On the 24-27 March, 22 Kosovo teachers will take part in a study visit in Berlin to learn and discuss best practices on how to increase access to education for migrant children and children coming from Roma communities.

The Study visit is part of a larger Social Inclusion Programme running in 11 pilot schools in Kosovo since August 2014. In the framework of this programme, teams of teachers from each school have been trained on different methodologies to structure everyday lessons in a more inclusive way. As a result, the aim of the study visit is twofold. On one side, teachers will be exposed to the work of their peers in Germany dealing with project to integrate Roma and migrant children in the education. On the other side, teachers from Kosovo will meet their German counterparts with whom they will establish the online partnerships programme that will connect Kosovo and German students on common topics.

The visit is coordinated by the RAA's project "Quadratkilometer Bildung in Moabit" and it will involve several visits to schools and relevant organizations.

The Study visit is organized within the framework of the European Union and Council of Europe Joint Programme "Supporting Access to Education and Intercultural Understanding".

When: 24-27 March 2015

Where: "Quadratkilometer Bildung in Moabit", Berlin

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

NOTE TO EDITORS

The last two decades have witnessed a strong migration of individual and families from Kosovo to western European countries including members of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities. In the past years many of them were returned, both voluntarily and by force, and many more are expected to be repatriated in the coming years. With the progressive normalization of the situation in Kosovo, and due to recent changes in the policies of western European countries, several thousand Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are now at risk of being forcibly returned.

Returnees are among the most vulnerable groups of the population because they have to reintegrate into the social system in Kosovo after many years of absence. In particular, the ongoing readmission of children and their families to Kosovo has caused particular concern regarding the best interests of these children in the repatriation process.

The EU/CoE joint programme “Supporting Access to Education and Intercultural Understanding” aims to directly involve Kosovo authorities in the project activities and to build local institutional capacity, so that schools, local authorities and civil society are able to take over the support and education services to integrate returnee children and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children into schools.

The project is structured in five components that intend to:

- Foster enrolment in schools and regular attendance of school-age returnee children and of disadvantaged minority children in general, with special attention on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians;
- Increase capacity of the education system to ensure higher chances for school achievement of returnee children and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children;
- Improve status of Romani language as a subject in Kosovo schools;
- Integration of returnee children among peers in school and in local community;
- Review and improvement of policies concerning the education of repatriated children.

This project builds on the experiences and outcomes of the component on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities of the EU-funded education project entitled ‘Interculturalism and Bologna Process’, implemented by the Council of Europe between 2008 and 2011 in which it was highlighted how Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian children need special support, mainly in overcoming the effects of social exclusion, preventing prejudice and discrimination as well as building their self-esteem and their trust in the school, community and society.

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