

# ROMANI-PLURILINGUAL POLICY EXPERIMENTATION (2022–2025)



FINAL REPORT

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Romani-Plurilingual Policy  
Experimentation (2022-2025)-  
Final report

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# Foreword

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It is with great pride that I present the Final Report of the Romani-Plurilingual Policy Experimentation (RPPE), a landmark initiative of the Council of Europe's Education Department that exemplifies our organisation's unwavering commitment to inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural education. For decades, the Council of Europe has advocated for the right to education as a fundamental human right, and for the rich linguistic and cultural diversity that defines our continent to be recognised as an asset—not a hurdle. Yet, as this report makes clear, Roma children and adolescents remain among the most marginalized, too often excluded from the full benefits and promise of education. The RPPE was conceived to meet this persistent challenge not with abstract policy, but with concrete, collaborative action—developing and testing innovative approaches in the lived realities of ten schools across Greece, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia.



The central position of the RPPE is the recognition of the Romani language and culture as intrinsic facets of both personal identity and educational success. The project was guided by principles that prioritise flexibility, learner-centredness, reciprocity between majority and minority communities, and the active cultivation of plurilingual repertoires for all learners. As the achievements highlighted in this report show, these principles—grounded in the Council of Europe's understanding of language as the cornerstone of autonomy, participation, and democracy—are not only possible, but transformative when put into classroom practice.

What is particularly inspiring about the RPPE is that the most powerful changes did not demand vast new resources, but rather a willingness to adapt classroom practices, recognize and value every learner's home language, and nurture creative participation among teachers, students, and families alike. The report's country-by-country accounts and school-based case studies clearly demonstrate how the inclusion of Romani and Roma culture in the daily life of schools not only boosts engagement and self-esteem among Roma students, but also fosters social cohesion, empathy and intercultural understanding among all pupils.

Equally significant is how RPPE has empowered teachers, classroom assistants and parents to act as agents of change and positioned schools as bridges between communities and cultures. These achievements underscore that inclusion is not a luxury, but a precondition for effective education and a democratic society, as so powerfully advocated by the voices of students, educators, and school leaders collected here.

While the RPPE has concluded, its legacy lives on—not merely in the participating schools, but as a scalable and adaptable model for member states. The Final Report’s call for further dissemination, for enhanced teacher education, and for sustained support at all levels echoes our strategic priorities and invites the entire educational community to action.

On behalf of the Council of Europe’s Education Department, I extend heartfelt thanks to all schools, educators, students, assistants, families, community partners and national stakeholders whose dedication was the foundation of RPPE’s success. Let us continue to work together to ensure that every Roma child—and indeed every child—is afforded the right to develop their full potential in schools that respect, celebrate, and build upon their unique linguistic and cultural heritage.



**Villano Qiriazhi**

Head of the Education Department  
Council of Europe

# Executive summary

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This report provides a narrative and descriptive account of the Council of Europe's Romani-Plurilingual Policy Experimentation (RPPE), 2022-2025, which worked with ten schools in three member states (Greece, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia) to explore possible roles for Romani language and culture in the educational inclusion of Roma children. The report is divided into three main parts.

The first part explains the background to the RPPE, sets out its aims relative to the Council of Europe's concept of plurilingual and intercultural education, details the recruitment of participating countries and schools, and describes how the project was organised and managed.

The second part is divided into three sections, one for each participating country. Each section briefly outlines the situation of Roma and Romani in the country in question and profiles the participating schools, summarising the main features of their RPPE implementation. This part of the report draws on the records I kept of my regular online meetings with the schools, the reports schools submitted on the activities they undertook, the observations I was able to make when I visited schools in person (two or three times in the case of the Slovak Republic and Slovenia; one visit each to two of the three participating schools in the case of Greece), and the presentations of their RPPE implementation that the schools made at the concluding RPPE conference in Bratislava on 3-4 June 2025. What I write is necessarily compact, partial and in places subjective; the profiles have, however, been approved by the national co-ordinators and participating schools.

The third part of the report summarises what representatives of the schools said about the RPPE at the end of the project, under four headings: evaluation, impact, sustainability and dissemination. It concludes with their messages for ministries of education, teacher educators and the Council of Europe. According to their testimony, the RPPE was an unqualified success.

The conclusion briefly recapitulates the achievements of the RPPE and considers what future actions the Council of Europe might take in this area.

**David Little**

Academic Co-ordinator, RPPE

October 2025

# 1. The Romani-Plurilingual Policy Experimentation: background, aims, organisation and administration

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## 1.1. The role of the Romani language in the educational inclusion of Romani children and adolescents: some policy guidelines

The Council of Europe has been committed to the social and educational inclusion of Roma for more than 50 years. In 1969, Recommendation 563 of the Consultative Assembly (forerunner of the Parliamentary Assembly) urged governments to take measures to eradicate discrimination against “Gypsies and other travellers” and included education for Gypsy and traveller children and adults among its many other provisions. Thirty years later, Recommendation R(2000)4 of the Committee of Ministers recognised “an urgent need to build new foundations for future educational strategies towards the Roma/Gypsy people in Europe, particularly in view of the high rates of illiteracy or semi-literacy among them, their high drop-out rate, the low percentage of students completing primary education and the persistence of features such as low school attendance”. The Recommendation noted that “the problems faced by Roma/Gypsies in the field of schooling are largely the result of long-standing educational policies of the past”. This point was repeated nine years later, in Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)4, which noted that such policies “can lead either to assimilation or to segregation of Roma and Traveller children at school on the grounds that they were ‘socially and culturally handicapped’”. Most recently, Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)4, on Roma youth participation, has drawn attention to “the structural racism, inequities and policy gaps that member states need to address in order to ensure substantive participation, representation and inclusion of young Roma people in public and political life” and called on governments of member states to “ensure substantive, fair and systematic participation, representation and inclusion of young Roma people in all spheres of society and decision-making processes and structures that impact their lives at the local, national and international levels”. Although education is just one of the “spheres of society” referred to, the successful educational inclusion of Roma is an inescapable precondition for the effective implementation of the measures set out in the appendix to the Recommendation.

More general Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers also have clear implications for the educational inclusion of Roma. For example, Recommendation (2008)4, on strengthening the integration of children of migrants and of immigrant background, urges that member states should support the development of their proficiency in the language of schooling, which might also include “the acquisition and maintenance of their mother tongue”. Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13, on ensuring quality education, is similarly applicable to Roma: quality education “gives access to learning to all students and students, particularly those in vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, adapted to their needs as appropriate”. Recommendation CM/Rec(2014)5, on the importance of competences in the language(s) of schooling for equity and quality in education and for educational success, is similarly relevant: “The right to education can be fully exercised only if learners are proficient in the language of schooling.”

Despite these and other Recommendations, the educational inclusion of Roma children and adolescents continues to pose serious challenges to Council of Europe member states. Accordingly, in 2018 an ad hoc expert group<sup>1</sup> was set up to develop a new set of policy guidelines that would address the educational inclusion of Roma as a matter for practical action at institutional and classroom levels. Developed as part of the organisation’s work on plurilingual and intercultural education, the guidelines would focus in particular on possible roles for Romani language and culture. They were based on five principles:

1. The educational inclusion of Roma children is a fundamental human right.
2. The educational inclusion of Roma children should also benefit non-Roma pupils.
3. The highly variable linguistic profiles of Roma communities mean that there can be no single approach to the inclusion of Roma children: flexibility is essential.
4. Flexibility is more likely to be achieved when the primary focus is on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching.
5. Flexibility is also more likely to be achieved when language education focuses on the development of plurilingual repertoires.

Principle one grounds the guidelines in the Council of Europe’s human rights agenda, from which the remaining four principles flow.

Principle two reflects the Council of Europe’s view of inclusion (or integration) as a reciprocal process that should benefit majority populations as well as minorities.<sup>2</sup>

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1. The expert group comprised: David Little (co-ordinator of the ECML’s QualiRom Training & Consultancy), Dieter Halwachs (member of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages), Ján Hero (vice chair of the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues), Helena Sadílková (head of Romani Studies Seminar, Charles University Prague), Diana Sima (educational adviser and teacher of Romani), Zuzana Bodnárová (Romani Project, University of Graz).
  2. See, for example, the [White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, \*Living Together as Equals in Dignity\*](#), Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2008, available at [go.coe.int/RRSdx](http://go.coe.int/RRSdx), accessed 30 April 2026.

The education of majority populations includes the language and history of the societies to which they belong. Inclusion on the basis of equality of esteem and treatment thus requires that Romani language and culture play a central role in the education of Roma; in schools where Roma and non-Roma children are educated together, the principle of reciprocity requires that non-Roma children also learn about Romani language and culture.

Principle three acknowledges the need for policy and its implementation to be context-sensitive and needs-based. Broadly speaking, Roma communities fall into three categories: (i) those that have lost the Romani variety spoken by earlier generations; (ii) those in which older members of the community still use Romani on a daily basis, whereas younger members hear and understand Romani but choose not to use it in their daily lives; and (iii) those that have retained a variety of Romani as their domestic and community language. Whatever their relation to the Romani language, Roma children fall into three broad categories as regards the language of schooling: (i) those for whom the language of schooling presents few fundamental difficulties – they face the same challenges as their non-Roma peers when it comes to the development of academic language proficiency; (ii) those who speak a non-standard variety of the dominant language and thus need help to become proficient in the (standard) language of schooling; and (iii) those who lack proficiency in the language of schooling, either because they speak Romani at home or because they are recent immigrants.

Principles four and five reflect two key features of the Council of Europe’s approach to education in general and language education in particular. The first is learner-centredness, which reflects the organisation’s concern with the autonomy of the individual learner, which in turn is a matter of human rights (a central purpose of the European Convention on Human Rights is to protect individual autonomy). Learner autonomy was a defining feature of the Council of Europe’s adult education project of the 1970s;<sup>3</sup> and autonomy is one of the principles that underpin the organisation’s current education strategy, which calls for flexible learning environments that promote learner autonomy.<sup>4</sup> The second key feature is the concept of plurilingualism, defined as “a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact”<sup>5</sup>. The plurilingual approach entails that the language of schooling and curriculum languages are taught not only in relation to one another but also in ways that take account of the linguistic repertoires that learners bring with them. The approach acknowledges that the individual’s home language is the default medium of their consciousness, their primary cognitive tool and central to their identity.

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3. The key document is Henri Holec’s report *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1979) which first introduced the concept of learner autonomy to the world of language education.
  4. “*Learners First: Education for Today’s and Tomorrow’s Democratic Societies*”, p. 11, available at [go.coe.int/LKZw5](http://go.coe.int/LKZw5), accessed 30 April 2026.
  5. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*, p. 4, available at [go.coe.int/xx75x](http://go.coe.int/xx75x), accessed 30 April 2026.

## 1.2. The decision to launch a four-year policy experimentation and the recruitment of participating countries and schools

The policy guidelines concluded by proposing a four-year policy experimentation that would test the recommended measures in practice, working with 2-4 schools in 3-6 member states of the Council of Europe. Allowing nine months for preparation and six months for the compilation of final reports, implementation in the participating schools would take place over three school years. The proposal was approved by the Steering Committee for Education, but its implementation was delayed until 2022 by the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused the widespread closure of schools. The Romani-Plurilingual Policy Experimentation (RPPE) was part of the Council of Europe's work in language education, which focuses on plurilingual approaches and is framed by [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2022\)1<sup>6</sup>](#), on the importance of plurilingual and intercultural education for democratic culture.

Three countries offered to participate in the RPPE: Greece, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia; the ministry of education in each country appointed a national co-ordinator. For reasons of focus and manageability, the experimentation was limited to the early years of compulsory schooling,<sup>7</sup> and with this in mind, each country recruited four schools to join the project:

### Greece

7<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Chania  
4<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Amaliada  
10<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Nea Ionia, Volos  
12<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Komotini

### The Slovak Republic

Kružlová Primary School  
Ľudmila Podjavorinská Primary School, Košice  
Vilka Šuleka Primary School, Hlohovec Šulekovo  
Záhorská Ves Primary School

### Slovenia

Frana Matelka Basic School, Škocjan  
France Prešeren Basic School, Črenšovci  
Janko Padežnik Basic School, Maribor  
Bilingual Basic School, Dobrovnik

6. Available at [go.coe.int/epcfk](https://go.coe.int/epcfk), accessed 30 April 2026

7. Note on terminology: in Greece, primary education lasts six years, whereas in Slovakia and Slovenia primary and lower secondary education are combined in a single nine-year structure. This report follows the terminological conventions adopted in Eurydice reports, referring to the Greek and Slovak schools as “primary schools” and the Slovenian schools as “basic schools”.

The RPPE was officially launched at an online conference on 23 March 2022, at which the twelve schools presented themselves.<sup>8</sup> Early in the school year 2022/2023, Bilingual Basic School Dobrovnik withdrew from the project because it had no Roma students; it was replaced by Leskovec pri Krškem Basic School. Towards the end of the same school year, two Slovak schools, in Kružlová and Záhorská Ves, also withdrew and Vyškovce nad Iplom Basic School joined the project. As a result of the re-organisation of Greek schools that followed the general election of June 2023, 7th Primary School of Chania lost its Roma students<sup>9</sup> and withdrew from the project. The following ten schools participated in the RPPE from the time of their joining until the end of the project and are thus the focus of this report:

### Greece

4<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Amaliada  
10<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Nea Ionia, Volos  
12<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Komotini

### Slovakia

Ľudmila Podjavorinská Primary School, Košice  
Vilka Šuleka Primary School, Hlohovec Šulekovo  
Vyškovce nad Iplom Primary School

### Slovenia

Frana Matelka Basic School, Škocjan  
France Prešeren Basic School, Črenšovci  
Janko Padežnik Basic School, Maribor  
Leskovec pri Krškem Basic School

National co-ordination of the RPPE was provided by the Institute of Educational Policy in Greece, the Ministry of Education in the Slovak Republic, and the National Institute of Education in Slovenia. Each participating country had more than one co-ordinator over the course of the project. In Greece, Theodora Asteri was succeeded in 2024 by Maria Gelastopoulou. In the Slovak Republic, Ján Hero was succeeded in 2022 first by Gabriel Kriško and then by Silvia Ďurková. In Slovenia Natalija Komljanc was succeeded by Marta Novak in 2023, and Marta Novak was succeeded by Susanne Volčanšek in 2025; Bronka Straus of the Ministry of Education accompanied the project throughout. As is usual in school-based education projects, not all participating teachers contributed to all three years of the imple-

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8. The report on the conference is available at [rm.coe.int/report-on-romani-plurilingual-policy-experimentation/1680ae4b04](https://rm.coe.int/report-on-romani-plurilingual-policy-experimentation/1680ae4b04).

9. Note on terminology: it is usual practice in Council of Europe documents to refer to pupils at primary level and students at secondary and tertiary levels. But because compulsory education in Slovakia and Slovenia has a single structure and to avoid confusion, this report refers to learners of all ages as students.

mentation, either because their role in the school changed or because they moved to another school. The profiles of participating schools presented in part 2 of this report list the participating teachers for each year of implementation.

In the preparatory phase and the first implementation year of the RPPE, administrative support from the Council of Europe was provided by Ahmed Murat Kiliç assisted by Gülden Serbest, in the second implementation year by Marta Medlinska assisted by Corinne Colin, and in 2024 and 2025 by Arzu Burcu Tuner assisted by Korneliya Koleva.

### 1.3. The RPPE handbook

When the proposal for a four-year policy experimentation had been approved and participating countries had been recruited, David Little<sup>10</sup> was appointed academic co-ordinator of the project. His first task was to produce a project handbook<sup>11</sup> that summarised the purpose of the project; described its intended outcomes, outputs and activities; explained how the project would be managed; explored the pedagogical implications of the five principles that underpin the policy guidelines; described some activities that support second/foreign language learning at primary level and encourage the inclusion of linguistic diversity in the mainstream classroom;<sup>12</sup> and explained how the Council of Europe's *Curriculum Framework for Romani* and the associated European Language Portfolios<sup>13</sup> can support the teaching and learning of Romani and the inclusion of Roma students in the mainstream classroom. The handbook was written in English<sup>14</sup> and translated into Greek<sup>15</sup>, Slovak<sup>16</sup> and Slovenian<sup>17</sup>.

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10. A Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College Dublin, David Little has contributed to the Council of Europe's work in language education since the 1980s. He wrote one of the preliminary studies for the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, played a leading role in the Council of Europe's European Language Portfolio project (1998–2011), led the development of the *Curriculum Framework for Romani* (2006–2008), and co-ordinated the ECML's QualiRom Training & Consultancy (2014–2025).
  11. The educational inclusion of Romani children: a policy experimentation - Handbook for participating schools and teachers, Council of Europe, 2018 available at [go.coe.int/3pmT7](https://go.coe.int/3pmT7), accessed 30 April 2026.
  12. By kind permission of Post-Primary Languages Ireland, this part of the handbook was adapted from *Language and Languages in the Primary School: Some Guidelines for Teachers*, by David Little and Déirdre Kirwan. These guidelines draw extensively on *Engaging with Linguistic Diversity: A study of educational inclusion in an Irish primary school*, by David Little and Déirdre Kirwan (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019), which describes ways that one school found of including minority-language learners' home languages in their educational experience.
  13. A Curriculum Framework for Romani available at [go.coe.int/Xmjww](https://go.coe.int/Xmjww), accessed 30 April 2026.
  14. Available at [go.coe.int/3pmT7](https://go.coe.int/3pmT7), accessed 30 April 2026.
  15. Available at [go.coe.int/r3Ouy](https://go.coe.int/r3Ouy), accessed 30 April 2026.
  16. Available at [go.coe.int/69tkE](https://go.coe.int/69tkE), accessed 30 April 2026.
  17. Available at [go.coe.int/UVtSb](https://go.coe.int/UVtSb), accessed 30 April 2026.

## 1.4. Organisation and management of the RPPE, 2022-2025

### 1.4.1. *Action plans and Council of Europe grants to participating schools*

At the beginning of each school year, participating schools were required to draw up an action plan for that year, explaining what they proposed to do at the level of the school and in individual classrooms. The RPPE handbook provided them with general guidance, and to facilitate comparison between schools they were provided with an action plan template.

The Council of Europe awarded a support grant to each school in each year of implementation: €5 000 in 2022/2023, €3 500 in 2023/2024 and €3 500 in 2024/2025. The mismatch between the school year (September to June) and the calendar year (the Council of Europe's unit of financial management) meant that in practice the expenditure of the first two Council of Europe grants applied to more than one school year: the grant for 2023 applied to the second and third terms of 2022/2023 and the first term of 2023/2024, and the grant for 2024 applied to the second and third terms of 2023/2024 and the first term of 2024/2025. Because RPPE implementation ended in June 2025, the grant for 2025 applied to expenditure in the second and third terms of 2024/2025. This mismatch meant that schools had to think of action plans in relation to each school year, but also in relation to each calendar year. Two further complications arose. As is usual with European projects, schools were paid 80% of their grant in advance and the remaining 20% on acceptance of their end-of-year financial reports; some schools, however, were not able to spend money they had not yet received and so could not receive their full grant. Greek schools, moreover, do not have their own bank accounts, so their grants had to be routed through the local authority, which led to uncertainty, confusion and delay.

### 1.4.2. *Meetings of RPPE co-ordinators*

From early 2022, the RPPE was managed via online meetings of the academic co-ordinator, the national co-ordinators and a second representative from each participating country, and members of the Council of Europe secretariat. Meetings were held approximately once a month during the school year; in addition, two in-person meetings were held in Strasbourg, in June 2022 and June 2023. Altogether, the RPPE co-ordinators met on 28 occasions between February 2022 and June 2025. The academic co-ordinator prepared agendas, chaired meetings and drafted written records.

### 1.4.3. Online and in-person meetings with schools

The academic co-ordinator met online with the RPPE team in each participating school once a term, though online meetings were not held in terms when he visited schools in person. Altogether, he held 56 online meetings with participating schools. He visited Slovak schools in April and November 2023, April 2024 and March 2025, and the four Slovenian schools in June 2023 and May 2025; in May 2024 he met representatives of the Slovenian schools at a one-day workshop in Ljubljana. For budgetary and logistical reasons, in-person visits to the three Greek schools were problematic. The academic co-ordinator visited 10th Primary School of Nea Ionia, Volos in May 2024 and 12th Primary School of Komotini in May 2025; it was not possible for him to visit 4th Primary School of Amaliada.

### 1.4.4. Academic support provided to schools

The RPPE handbook was written before the participating schools had been recruited and thus without first-hand knowledge of the range of contexts in which they were working. The academic co-ordinator's tasks in the first year of implementation were to familiarise himself with the schools, monitor the implementation of their action plans, and help them to develop RPPE-related activities that were harmonious with their context and traditions. He encouraged participating teachers to consult the pedagogical sections of the handbook; he also drafted three papers for discussion with RPPE teams at online meetings. The first paper focused on reporting: schools were encouraged to adopt an Exploratory Practice approach, which emphasises the quality of life in the classroom and entails collaboration between teachers and learners.<sup>18</sup> This would help them to capture the essence of RPPE-inspired activities as they happened (they were provided with reporting templates for this purpose). The second discussion paper provided a reminder of RPPE basics, a summary of the academic co-ordinator's understanding of the context of each participating school and the challenges it faced, and proposals for RPPE-related activities that drew on the academic co-ordinator's work on learner autonomy and plurilingual pedagogy.<sup>19</sup> The third discussion paper summarised Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)4 of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, on Roma youth participation; reported on the academic co-ordinator's first visit to Slovak schools; introduced a reporting template to be used at the end of the first year of RPPE implementation; and explained how the academic co-ordinator planned to proceed in the second and third years of implementation.

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18. See, for example, Dick Allwright, Developing principles for practitioner research: The case of exploratory practice, *Modern Language Journal* 89.3 (2005), 353–366.

19. For example: David Little, Leni Dam & Lienhard Legenhausen, *Language Learner Autonomy: Theory, Practice and Research*, Multilingual Matters, 2017; David Little & Déirdre Kirwan, *Managing Linguistic Diversity: A Study of Educational Inclusion in an Irish Primary School*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.

### 1.4.5. *RPPE newsletter*

At the in-person meeting of RPPE co-ordinators held in Strasbourg in June 2023 it was decided to launch an RPPE newsletter in order to (i) facilitate the flow of information between the three participating countries and ten participating schools and (ii) publicise the aims and progress of the project more widely. The newsletter was edited by the academic co-ordinator and produced in English, Greek, Slovak and Slovenian arranged in parallel columns. Altogether five issues were published, in winter 2023/2024, spring 2024, autumn 2024, spring 2025 and summer 2025. Issue 1 introduced the participating schools, issues 2-4 reported on work in progress, and issue 5 summarised the views on the RPPE (evaluation, impact, sustainability and dissemination) expressed by representatives of participating countries and schools at the concluding RPPE conference held in Bratislava on 3 and 4 June 2025. The third part of this report comprises an edited version of this summary.

### 1.4.6. *Support provided by participating countries*

**The relevant authorities in the participating countries supported the RPPE in various ways:**

In Greece, the Institute of Educational Policy brought participating schools together at the beginning of the project via Microsoft Teams, which was used to share and store various support materials. Later in the project, online meetings enabled the schools to share experience and prepare for the Bratislava conference. The Institute regularly presented the RPPE at conferences and training events. Among these were the conference “Inclusive Education and Children’s Rights” organised by UNICEF and the IEP in April 2024; a training programme on differentiated instruction and inclusive education provided for teachers in Cyprus in June 2024; and the Panhellenic Roma Forum Conference in April 2025. As a follow-up to the RPPE, in December 2025 the Institute will organise a national conference for teachers and schools involved in the education of Roma; the schools in Volos, Komotini and Amaliada will share their experience of participating in the RPPE.

In the Slovak Republic, the RPPE was presented at the conference “Changes in Teaching in Minority Schools – Minority Languages in Education”, organised in 2023 by the National Institute for Education and Youth in co-operation with the Ministry of Education. The Ministry is currently implementing two national projects that address the issue of segregation in education. The first, “Opportunity for All”, has prepared a document that provides municipalities with guidance on the design and implementation of desegregation projects. The accompanying methodological material includes a chapter on plurilingual education which recommends that schools support the language development of pupils from marginalised Roma communities as a means of improving their educational outcomes. The second project, “Supporting Educational Opportunities”, is preparing methodological materials to support schools in helping students to transfer from special to main-

stream schools; these will include a chapter on plurilingual education that draws on the RPPE.

In Slovenia, the Ministry of Education allocated additional funding to enable the National Institute of Education to support the RPPE. Successive national co-ordinators and Bronka Straus (Ministry of Education) organised regular online meetings with the RPPE co-ordinators in the four participating schools and in-person meetings of the four project teams together; the academic co-ordinator contributed online to some of these meetings. In addition, the national co-ordinator regularly visited the four schools and observed classroom practice. During the implementation of the RPPE, the National Institute of Education undertook a thoroughgoing reform of language curricula with a focus on plurilingualism, so there was a powerful synergy between the RPPE and developments in language education at national level. The RPPE featured in an online conference on the educational inclusion of Roma organised by the Ministry of Education in February 2024 and in four presentations at the 5th National Conference on Languages in Education in June 2025. A 20-minute interview with the principal and the RPPE co-ordinator of Frana Metelka Basic School, Škocjan was broadcast on national radio in November 2024.

## 1.5. The concluding RPPE conference in Bratislava

On 3 and 4 June 2025, the Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic hosted the RPPE's concluding conference, which for the first time brought together representatives of the ten participating schools, the three national co-ordinators, other representatives of the educational authorities in their country, the academic co-ordinator, and members of the Council of Europe secretariat. The conference began with a two-hour webinar that situated the RPPE within the framework of the Council of Europe's plurilingual and intercultural approach to education in general and language education in particular and described how the project had been implemented in Greece, Slovenia and the Slovak Republic. The remainder of the first day was devoted to an exchange of experience between the participating countries and schools. On the second day, participants worked in groups to review the RPPE under four headings: evaluation, impact, sustainability and dissemination. The third part of this report is based on their conclusions.

## 2. RPPE implementation

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### 2.1. Greece

#### 2.1.1. *The Roma population*

Roma are Greek citizens and comprise 1.13% of the population (approximately 120 000 persons). Several Romani varieties are spoken in Greece, Vlax and Balkan varieties being the most widespread. Travelling and settled Roma live in all 13 regions of the country. The three regions in which the RPPE schools are located are among those with the highest percentages of Roma: East Macedonia and Thrace (17%), represented by 12th Primary School, Komotini; Thessaly (14%), represented by 10th Primary School of Nea Ionia, Volos; and West Greece (13%), represented by 4th Experimental Primary School, Amaliada.

Greece has a long-standing commitment to the education of Roma, starting with the establishment of reception classrooms for non-native Greek speakers in the early 1980s and the implementation of intercultural teaching and learning methodologies in the 1990s. Since 2000 the Greek government has co-funded projects on democratic and inclusive education, passed a law to combat segregation and socio-economic disadvantage, implemented Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP) for schools with more than 10 Roma students, and supported extra-curricular activities in collaboration with local authorities, civil society and European partners. The National Roma Inclusion Strategy (2021-2030) aims to work against Roma poverty and exclusion by enhancing access to basic social services, combating stereotypes and discrimination, and promoting the active participation of Roma in social, economic and political life. The RPPE has provided educational support for these aims.

#### 2.1.2. *4<sup>th</sup> Experimental Primary School, Amaliada*

##### Principal

2022/2023 : Petros Kokkosis

2023/2024 and 2024/2025 : Dimitrios Mpantounas

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##### RPPE co-ordinator

2022/2023 : Petros Kokkosis

2023/2024 and 2024/2025 : Klytaimnistra Tsikrou

### Participating teachers

2022/2023 : Anastasia Bilali, Magdalini Klapa, Maria Vgenopoulou

2023/2024 : Dimitrios Mpantounas, Eleni Dafermou, Maria-Giota Delga, Nikoletta Kapari, Panteleimon Pandis, Varvara Spanou, Klytaimnistra Tsikrou

2024/2025 : Dimitrios Mpantounas, Dimitra Dervou, Theodoros Vendras, Dimitra Kouloura, Klytaimnistra Tsikrou, Eleni Katsoula, Nikoletta Petropoulou, Nikolia Papageorgiou, Konstantinos Ziagos, Irini Koutroubi, Evangelos Tsakalis, Panteleimon Pandis, Angeliki, Antigoni Bourou, Fotini Moula

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### Classroom assistants

2023/2024 : Andreas Iliopoulos

2024/2025 : Demetra Kouloura

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### Total number of students

2022/2023 : 109

2023/2024 : 110

2024/2025 : 100

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### Number of Roma students

2022/2023 : 104

2023/2024 : 105

2024/2025 : 98

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*All students attending the school participated in the RPPE in all three years of implementation.*

Amaliada is the second largest city in Ilia and the seat of the municipality of Ilida (West Greece); it has a population of 16 000. Built in 1935, the 4th Primary School is the oldest of the city's six primary schools. It currently has 100 students, all but two of whom are Roma. The Roma students speak a variety of Romani at home but have some Greek when they start school. Most of them are settled and they usually complete their schooling at upper secondary level.

In 2022/2023, the school launched the RPPE by including written forms of Romani on posters and signs and encouraging students to talk about aspects of their life outside school and speak Romani when working in small groups. The teacher of English was strongly committed to fostering the autonomy of her students; she transformed their interest in learning English by getting them to teach her in Romani what she was teaching them in English.

After the general election of June 2023, the entire teaching staff changed and in 2024/2025 the school was given experimental status. At the beginning of the school year 2023/2024, the new principal and teachers faced the challenge of picking up the threads of a project about which they knew nothing. It is greatly to their credit that while responding to many other challenges, they nevertheless made a notable contribution to the RPPE.

When Roma children start school, they have no greater knowledge of the culture and history of their community than other children have of theirs; at the same time, their social inclusion depends in part on their acquiring some familiarity with the culture and history of the majority community. Accordingly, an important aspect of 4th Experimental Primary School's RPPE implementation has been the organisation of visits to museums and historical sites. At the same time, the school has sought to promote students' cultural and linguistic awareness and self-respect by developing their language skills in Romani as well as Greek. The activities devised in pursuit of this goal include "A day in my life", which focused on the development of everyday speech in English and Romani; "Talking about the environment", which explored environmental issues in speech and in writing; and the peer teaching of grade 5 workbook texts in Romani and Greek.

In June 2025, the school's RPPE team reported that the impact of the RPPE on the school as a whole had been positive, promoting acceptance of diversity and the integration of Roma students into the school environment. Among the most successful activities were the creation of an album showcasing customs and traditions, the translation of texts from Greek into Romani, and the creation of a Greek-Romani glossary. By affirming their Roma identity, these activities have enhanced students' self-esteem, promoted intercultural awareness and fostered active participation and collaboration between students and their teachers.

### 2.1.3. 12<sup>th</sup> Primary School, Komotini

#### Principal and RPPE co-ordinator

Dimitra Kesoudidou

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#### Participating teachers

**2022/2023** : Dimitra Kesoudidou, Dimitrios Lourmpakis, Vasiliki Avramopoulou, Anastasia Deligiannidou, Ionna Vasilakopoulou, Despoina Kourtidou, Mixalis Paskos, Aggeliki Stamou

**2023/2024** : Dimitra Kesoudidou, Dimitrios Lourmpakis, Vasiliki Avramopoulou, Despoina Kourtidou, Mixalis Paskos, Sinan Giakoup, Zoi Polkou, Emine Ismail

2024/2025 : Dimitra Kesoudidou, Dimitrios Lourmpakis, Vasiliki Avramopoulou, Gkionoul Tompa, Zisis Stergiopoulos, Iliana Gkaintatzi, Anastasia Kyrdiou, Eleutheria Tsapkinaki

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#### Total number of students

2022/2023 : 182

2023/2024 : 195

2024/2025 : 206

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#### Number of Roma students

2022/2023 : 182

2023/2024 : 195

2024/2025 : 206

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*All students attending the school participated in all three years of RPPE implementation.*

Komotini is the capital city of the prefecture of Rhodope in Thrace, north-eastern Greece. Founded in 2009, 12th Primary School has ten classrooms, one computer lab, and two rooms that serve as offices for the teaching staff. The staff comprises: the principal, eight class teachers, one reception class teacher, nine teachers of special subjects, and one social worker. All the students are Roma and come from two Roma settlements in the city. They are officially regarded as trilingual in Turkish, Romani and Greek. At home, they speak Turkish and in some cases Romani; their grandparents still use Romani, but many of their parents do not. Because the community is Turkish-speaking, the students have no knowledge of Greek when they start school and little contact with the language outside of it.

At the academic co-ordinator's first online meeting with the school's RPPE team, it was clear that they were familiar with the RPPE handbook and his discussion paper on Exploratory Practice; they had prepared answers to the questions he raised in the latter document. The general election of 2023 brought major changes in the staffing of the school, which meant that in 2023/2024 new teachers had to be introduced to the RPPE.

None of the teachers are proficient in Romani, but as the academic co-ordinator discovered when he visited the school in May 2025, written forms of the language abound in displays, labels and captions around the school. The teachers use a Greek-Romani dictionary that is available online, and when their students do not know a Romani word, their grandparents can usually supply it. The students who are proficient in Romani support simple interaction in the language with their peers; in this way, students without the language learn how to conduct a basic conversation in weekly sessions devoted to its use. Drawing on the knowledge of their

families and referring when necessary to I. Alexiou's dictionary of Romani, students in grades 5 and 6 used PowerPoint to write an illustrated story of a school visit to the bazaar. Because the story focused on their everyday world, the students were strongly motivated to participate and enjoyed speaking Romani and collaborating with one another. A poster that the students made in English and Romani for World Animal Day was published on the website of a local newspaper, and teachers introduced Romani words into STEM lessons.

The school tried to find Roma role models to introduce to the students – doctors and other professionals – but without success: Roma who achieve educational success seem unwilling to renew contact with their community of origin. One notable exception was a Roma who was employed by the school as a social worker and was greatly admired by the students.

At the end of the project (June 2025), the principal reported that the RPPE has helped to create a more inclusive school environment. By encouraging the use of Romani, it has improved communication and collaboration among students and boosted their confidence and self-esteem. In her view, the RPPE was not just an educational project but an act of recognition and empowerment.

#### 2.1.4. 10<sup>th</sup> Primary School of Nea Ionia, Volos

##### Principal and RPPE co-ordinator

2022/2023 : Anastasios Goukos

2023/2024 and 2024/2025 : Dr Konstantinos Charatsis

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##### Participating teachers

2022/2023 : Anastasios Goukos, Ioannis Makantasis, Eleni Rigouli, Eleni Chatzi, Evangelos Stamoulis, Stergios Champeris, Triantafillia Valassa, Stavrina Lambadari, Vasiliki Stathakopoulou, Eleni Stathaki, Stavroula Diamantopoulou, Efthimia Thomakou, Eleni Stambouli, Apostolos Charisis, Efterpi Sotopoulou, Stamatina Koutsoutsouti, Apostolia Vaitsi, Efthalia Skamagouli, Zoe Papaioannou, Andromachi Sereti, Evaggelia Georgoula, Maria Baruti, Michaila Milioka, Konstantinos Charatsis

2023/2024 : Konstantinos Charatsis, Michaila Milioka, Stamatina Koutsoutsouti, Apostolia Vaitsi, Stavroula Diamantopoulou, Eleni Rigouli, Eleni Chatzi, Triantafillia Valassa, Vasiliki Stathakopoulou, Eleni Stathaki, Efterpi Sotopoulou, Stergios Champeris, Efthimia Thomakou, Eleni Stambouli, Apostolos Charisis, Varvara Gkrinia, Efthalkia Skamagouli, Zoe Ioannidou, Andromachi Sereti, Evaggelia Georgoula, Maria Baruti

2024/2025 : Konstantinos Charatsis, Michaila Milioka, Efthimia Thomakou, Fani Gkoutzeri, Varvara Gkrinia, Stamatina Koutsoutsouti, Apostolia Vaitsi, Eleni Chatzi, Eleni Rigouli, Eleni Stathaki, Vasiliki Stathakopoulou, Triantafillia Valassa, Stavroula Diamantopoulou, Efterpi Sotopoulou, Eleni Stambouli,

Valassa, Stavroula Diamantopoulou, Efterpi Sotopoulou, Eleni Stambouli, Apostolos Charisis, Zoe Ioannidou, Christodoulou Anastasia, Andromachi Sereti, Maria Baruti, Xenou Sophia, Zoe Kuskourida, Serleti Kalliopi

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#### Number of students

2022/2023 : 330

2023/2024 : 303

2024/2025 : 263

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#### Number of Roma students

2022/2023 : 262

2023/2024 : 283

2024/2025 : 251

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#### Number of students participating in the RPPE

2022/2023 : 208

2023/2024 : 258

2024/2025 : 223

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#### Home languages other than Greek and Romani present in school

2022/2023 : Albanian, Serbian, Afrikaans

2023/2024 : Albanian, Serbian

2024/2025 : Albanian, Serbian, Afrikaans

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Situated in south-east Thessaly, Volos is one of the largest cities and most important ports in Greece. 10th Primary School of Nea Ionia traditionally serves two Roma settlements, children from which comprise the overwhelming majority of its students. The most widely used home languages are Vlax and Balkan varieties of Romani. For the past decade, the school has had 15 classes and has provided for reception, integration and preparatory groups. The teaching staff comprises: 23 class teachers, four foreign language teachers, two psychologists/social workers, one teacher for special education, and four other teachers (ICT, music, art).

Previously, 10th Primary School had followed a Greek-only policy; when it joined the RPPE it began to include Romani in all whole-school and classroom activities. At the academic co-ordinator's first online meeting with the school's RPPE team, it was evident that they were closely familiar with the RPPE handbook (their action plan for 2022/2023 followed some of the handbook's pedagogical suggestions). They had also read and discussed his paper on Exploratory Practice, and the questions they asked about student logbooks prompted him to include practical ex-

amples in his third discussion paper. Unlike the schools in Amaliada and Komotini, 10th Primary School retained most of its teachers after the 2023 election, though the retirement of the principal brought the appointment of his successor. The value of this continuity is impossible to overestimate.

How participating schools implemented the RPPE was for them to decide, taking account of their context and (in particular) the composition of their student cohort. 10th Primary School opted for a radical and thoroughgoing implementation. In doing so, it developed an approach to the education of Roma in Roma-only contexts that is comprehensive and radical. The pedagogical guide published in tandem with this report contains an extended study of 10th Primary School's RPPE implementation. Its features include:

- ▶ using bilingual student logbooks at all levels of the school to encourage personal expression and support students' language development;
- ▶ in the 2024/2025 Integration Class, creating individual bilingual albums in Greek and Romani;
- ▶ creating a trilingual dictionary in Greek, Romani and English;
- ▶ reading Roma stories in Romani and Greek, an activity that was supported by building a book corner, for which the school received an award;
- ▶ negotiating "The rules of our classroom" and formulating them in Greek, Romani and English;
- ▶ dramatising stories using Greek, Romani and English and performing them for the whole school and students' families;
- ▶ publishing a bilingual school newspaper, which aims to strengthen students' reading, writing and speaking skills in Greek and to develop their writing skills in Romani. The newspaper won an award in the national school newspaper competition;
- ▶ writing haiku in Greek, Romani and English;
- ▶ making use of peer-tutoring in a project on learning to become active citizens.

In the report the principal submitted in June 2025, he noted that by allowing students to use their home language at school, the RPPE has enhanced their self-esteem; the inclusion of Romani in all classroom activities has had a positive impact on student motivation and engagement.

## 2.2. The Slovak Republic

### 2.2.1. *The Roma population*

The 1992 Constitution of the Slovak Republic allows citizens to declare their nationality and the national group to which they belong. According to the 2021 census, the Roma community in Slovakia comprises 67 179 people (1.23% of the population), However, expert estimates suggest that the actual number of Roma is approximately 400,000 (7.37% of the population); they mostly live in the eastern part

of the country. The constitution also recognises the right of national minorities to use their language and preserve their culture. The Education Act contains special provisions for children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, promotes inclusive education, and supports schools for national minorities. The Slovak Government Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities proposes, co-ordinates and monitors activities aimed at solving the problems of the Roma minority. With government approval, the Plenipotentiary implements systemic solutions to achieve equal status for Roma citizens. These activities comply with the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the Slovak Republic and by international human rights treaties. The Slovak Republic has two policy documents that specifically address the social and educational inclusion of the Roma community.

Various Romani dialects are spoken in the Slovak Republic; most of them belong to the central Romani group, among which the northern central and southern central dialects are the most common. Eastern Slovak, central Slovak and western Slovak varieties of Romani have their own regional variants; eastern Slovak Romani is particularly significant.

Because Roma are a recognised national minority, education and training can be provided in Romani, and Romani can be taught as a subject in schools. Due to a lack of teachers, the language is most commonly taught as an elective subject. The aim is to preserve and develop the Roma minority's language and cultural identity while promoting bilingualism in Slovak and Romani.

### 2.2.2. *Ludmila Podjavorinská Primary School, Košice*

#### Principal

Milan Dulina

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#### RPPE co-ordinator

Michaela Cingelová

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#### Participating teachers

**2022/2023** : Stanka Dotková, Edita Fabian Hilgartová, Lucia Rešovská, Michaela Cingelová, Nikola Juskaninova, Martina Gáborová, Andrea Adamondyová, Valéria Kissová, Lucia Forgáčová, Kvetoslava Korpášová, Renáta Habčáková, Martina Begeniová

**2023/2024** : Stanka Dotková, Edita Fabian Hilgartová, Veronika Mihoková, Silvia Valenčíková, Lucia Rešovská, Martina Zátorská, Michaela Cingelová, Simona Jonášová, Nikola Juskaninová, Martina Gáborová, Andrea Adamondyová

2024/2025 : Martina Zátorská, Katarína Sekeľová, Kamila Kovaľová, Edita Fabian Hilgartová, Veronika Mihoková, Lucia Rešovská, Michaela Cingelova, Andrea Adamondyová

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#### Classroom assistant

2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025 : Silvia Medňanská

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#### Total number of students (all of them Roma)

2022/2023 : 802

2023/2024 : 826

2024/2025 : 931

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#### Number of classes participating in RPPE

2022/2023 : 12

2023/2024 : 11 (174 students)

2024/2025 : 9 (159 students)

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Founded in 1985, Ľudmila Podjavorinská Primary School is the largest of the RPPE schools: by the end of the project it had 931 students, ranging in age from 3 (the beginning of kindergarten) to 16 (the end of compulsory schooling). All the students come from the large Roma settlement adjacent to the school. There are two Roma teachers and six Romani-speaking assistants. About 40% of the students come to school with some proficiency in Slovak. In grade 1, teaching assistants work as mediators; by the end of the year students have enough Slovak to participate without special support.

Given its Roma-only student cohort, the school has a tradition of celebrating events like International Roma Day (8 April) and International Romani Language Day (5 November), and many of the activities proposed in the RPPE handbook have long been part of daily classroom practice. The size of the school and the limited amount of support that could be provided by the Council of Europe meant that it was not practicable to implement the RPPE in every classroom. The school decided instead to focus its RPPE implementation on grades 1-4, where Romani could be used to support students' acquisition of proficiency in Slovak. Over the three years of RPPE implementation, teachers developed a wide range of bilingual teaching aids. These helped to mediate between Romani as home language and Slovak as language of schooling, and the ubiquity of Romani words and phrases in classroom displays gave visual expression to the RPPE's plurilingual ethos.

When the academic co-ordinator visited the school in April 2023, he observed a grade 1 lesson in which the Roma assistant told the students a fairy tale in Roma-

ni about Marikla, a traditional Roma bread, that comes to life like the Gingerbread Man; the storytelling was a virtuoso performance. In the second part of the lesson the class teacher used the interactive whiteboard to conduct a quiz on the story in Slovak, using very simple phrases to recapitulate the main events. In this way, students' proficiency in Romani received a boost, while their engagement with the fairy tale led them into Slovak. A similar effect was achieved over time by the introduction of student diaries, or logbooks, which were written in Slovak and Romani. To begin with, teachers guided their students with questions and prompts, but gradually the students learnt how to express their own thoughts in the two languages.

Reporting in June 2025, the school's RPPE co-ordinator said that the project has introduced new ways of linking Slovak and Romani at whole-school level and in individual classrooms. Teachers have become interested in learning Romani and have sought new ways of involving parents and fostering partnership and co-operation between the school and the community.

### 2.2.3. *Vilka Šuleka Primary School, Šulekovo*

#### Principal

Alena Jurdová

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#### RPPE co-ordinator

Zuzana Kabaštová

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#### Participating teachers

2022/2023 : Zuzana Kabaštová, Mária Detková, Edita Szórádová

2023/2024 : Zuzana Kabaštová, Mária Detková, Zuzana Kráľová

2024/2025 : Zuzana Kabaštová, Mária Detková

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#### Total number of students

2022/2023 : 178

2023/2024 : 185

2024/2025 : 182

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#### Number of Roma students (and numbers of Romani speakers)

2022/2023 : 67 (11)

2023/2024 : 62 (9)

2024/2025 : 59 (9)

### Number of students who participated in the RPPE

2022/2023 : 54 (4 classes)

2023/2024 : 59 (4 classes)

2024/2025 : 62 (4 classes)

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### Home languages in the school in addition to Slovak and Romani (with number of speakers)

2022/2023 : Czech (2), Russian (1), Ukrainian (2)

2023/2024 : Russian (1), Ukrainian (2)

2024/2025 : Czech (1), Russian (1), Ukrainian (2)

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Vilka Šuleka Primary School is attended by children from the local community, 36% of whom are Roma; only 15% of the Roma students speak Romani. The school has 11 classes, four at primary level I, five at primary level II, and two classes for students with learning difficulties. English is taught from grade 1 and German from grade 7; after-school clubs offer activities in sport, computer science and art. The school aims to create a family atmosphere in which all students feel comfortable and all have equal access to education, sports and cultural activities.

In corridors and classrooms, signs and displays in Slovak, Romani, English and German announced the school's participation in the RPPE, and the Roma community was included in a number of whole-school celebrations. At classroom level, RPPE implementation was the responsibility of the teachers of English and German. On his visits to the school, the academic co-ordinator observed English lessons in which Romani equivalents were offered for new English words and multilingual lessons in which students performed simple exercises that moved backwards and forwards between Slovak, Romani, English and German. These activities introduced non-Roma students to words and phrases in Romani and reminded non-Romani-speaking Roma of their linguistic heritage. The RPPE co-ordinator also organised an information campaign on prejudice and tolerance and offered an after-school workshop on Roma culture that was attended by non-Roma as well as Roma students.

In her final report (June 2025), the principal said that the RPPE has helped to increase the confidence of Roma students, fostered greater understanding of Roma culture, and helped to bring the Roma and non-Roma communities together. The wider public has been informed of the project via the local television service, for which the academic co-ordinator gave an interview when he visited the school in April 2024.

## 2.2.4. Vyškovce nad Iplom Primary School

### Principal and RPPE co-ordinator

Mgr. Szabina Szabó Balázs

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### Participating teachers

2023/2024 : Szabina Szabó Balázs, Szilvia Zsolnay, Julianna Deák Csáky, Zoltán Mezei, Anna Molnár

2024/2025 : Szabina Szabó Balázs, Andrea Borková, Erzsébet Kiss

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### Classroom assistants

2023/2024 and 2024/2025 : Jozef Riedly

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### Total number of students

2023/2024 : 23

2024/2025 : 25

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### Number of Roma students

2023/2024 : 6

2024/2025 : 7

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### Home languages present in the school (with numbers of speakers)

2023/2024 : Hungarian (13), Slovak (1), Romani (6), Czech (3)

2024/2025 : Hungarian (15), Slovak (1), Romani (6), Czech (3)

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Vyškovce nad Iplom Primary School joined the RPPE towards the end of the first year of implementation, replacing a Slovak school that had withdrawn from the project.

The school is situated on the border with Hungary. It provides for grades 14 and originally taught only through Hungarian (the Hungarian minority has a right to Hungarian-medium education). In 2020 it opened a separate section for Slovak speakers; because student numbers are so small, all four grades are taught together in each section. The student cohort includes Roma who mostly do not speak Hungarian but must learn Slovak as the language of schooling. Slovak is taught communicatively, using games, dialogue and a variety of activities. In 2025 there were 26 students, 15 in the Hungarian and 11 in the Slovak section. The school has three teachers and two assistants, one full-time and one and part-time. The full-time assistant has learnt some Romani and uses this knowledge to support

the Roma students' learning of Slovak. After-school activities, which involve all students together, include sports, cycling and archery, and a garden provides a focus for various kinds of science teaching.

The school places a special emphasis on music and the arts; its implementation of the RPPE focused on activities that involve all students and all their languages. In school concerts, all students play a musical instrument and take turns to accompany their peers as they sing songs in five languages (Slovak, Hungarian, Romani, Czech, English). A puppet version of "Little Red Riding Hood" likewise involved all students and all five languages. The different cultures associated with those languages were reflected in a project to make carnival masks, and the five languages were also involved in projects that explored different food cultures, labelled ingredients and prepared a communal meal.

In her final report (June 2025), the principal noted that participation in the RPPE enabled the school to overcome language barriers between students in a systematic way. Students got to know one another's mother tongues, which resulted in greater mutual acceptance. They were also encouraged to participate actively in decision making and reflection.

## 2.3. Slovenia

### 2.3.1. *The Roma population*

Between ten and twelve thousand Roma live in Slovenia. In the 2002 census, 3 246 persons identified themselves as Roma and 3 834 identified themselves as speakers of Romani. The main groups of Roma present in Slovenia are Prekmurje Roma in the north-east, Dolenjska Roma in the south-east, and Balkan or urban Roma in the larger cities. A survey carried out in 2020 found that the Prekmurje variety of Romani is slowly dying out in some settlements, the Dolenjska variety tends to be mixed with Slovenian and Croatian, and Balkan Romani is slowly taking over as the language of the urban Roma communities. Although Roma are a constitutionally protected minority, the Romani language does not enjoy official status.

The educational inclusion of Roma is regulated by the Resolution on National Language Policy (2021-2025), the National Strategy for the Development of Reading Literacy (2019-2030), and the National Programme of Action for Roma (2021-2030), which aims to increase the participation of Roma children in pre-school education. A process of curricular reform that was launched in 2022 has produced revised foreign language curricula that emphasise plurilingual and intercultural learning. Slovenia has thus been particularly receptive to the RPPE's ethos and aims.

### 2.3.2. France Prešeren Črenšovci Basic School

#### Principal

Mag. Stanko Čerpnjak

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#### RPPE co-ordinator

Stanka Zver

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#### Participating teachers and assistants (school and kindergarten)

2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025 : Stanka Zver, Metka Husar Černjavič, Petra Smej, Samira Horvat, Mitja Gomboc, Tajda Kokaš, Adriana Horvat, Andreja Podgorelec, Alma Novak

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#### Number of students

2022/2023 : school 202, kindergarten 111  
2023/2024 : school 204, kindergarten 104  
2024/2025 : school 201, kindergarten 113

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#### Number of Roma students

2022/2023 : school 25, kindergarten 16  
2023/2024 : school 23, kindergarten 17  
2024/2025 : school 32, kindergarten 15

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#### Home languages other than Slovenian and Romani present in the school (with student numbers)

2022/2023 : Ukrainian (4)  
2023/2024 : Lebanese (1)  
2024/2025 : Lebanese (1)

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*All students in the school (13 classes) and associated kindergarten (2 classes) participated in the RPPE.*

Črenšovci is in the Prekmurje region of north-east Slovenia. France Prešeren Basic School has 13 classes, about 200 students (14% of them Roma), 37 teachers and support staff, and two Roma employees. The associated kindergarten has some 110 students (14% of them Roma), 17 teachers and support staff, and two Roma employees. The Roma students come from the local Roma settlements.

When it joined the RPPE, the school was already participating in projects to create multi-purpose Roma centres as innovative learning environments and to develop

the cultural capital of Roma students. Teachers were contributing to the first of these projects by working as afternoon volunteers in the Roma settlements, helping students with their homework and showing parents how they too could help. The second project entailed the use of Romani vocabulary in the classroom to help Roma students to understand the content of lessons.

Participation in the RPPE prompted teachers to experiment with new activities. These included devising games in Romani and having Roma students teach Romani songs to their non-Roma classmates. Teachers have also produced small dictionaries that contain the Slovenian and Romani words for everyday objects and basic concepts. One teacher learned Romani and sourced books in Romani for the school library. A notable achievement was the creation of a trilingual version of “Little Red Riding Hood” (in Slovenian, English and Romani), illustrated by the students and commercially printed and bound. Another important initiative, though it predated the RPPE, was the installation of “book houses” in the Roma settlements: small weatherproof structures where the school deposits books donated by students and their parents.

The academic co-ordinator visited the school twice, in 2023 and 2025, and was able to observe the impact of the RPPE on non-Roma as well as Roma students. In the extended programme, non-Roma students attend classes in Roma dance, and mixed groups of students learn songs in Slovenian and Romani, which they perform at school events. At the end of the academic co-ordinator’s 2025 visit, the RPPE team said that their participation in the project had enhanced the integration of Roma children and helped to foster closer relations with the Roma community.

### 2.3.3. *Leskovec pri Krškem Basic School*

#### Principal

Jožica Repše

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#### RPPE co-ordinator

Daniela Janušić

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#### Participating teachers

**2022/2023** : Daniela Stamatović, Tamara Vardić, Maja Menič Stopar, Eva Kink Žerjav, Simona Škvarč, Nejc Plankar, Mateja Lisec, Sonja Valenčič, Zina Džamastagić

**2023/2024** : Tamara Vardić, Maja Menič Stopar, Eva Kink Žerjav, Simona Škvarč, Nejc Plankar, Mateja Lisec, Sonja Valenčič, Zina Džamastagić

**2024/2025** : Tamara Vardić, Maja Menič Stopar, Eva Kink Žerjav, Simona Škvarč, Nejc Plankar, Mateja Lisec, Sonja Valenčič, Zina Džamastagić

### Participating pre-school teachers

2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025 : Špela Fekonja Cikač, Melita Levak, Martina Arh, Tina Macur, Mirjana Marinčič

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### Total number of students

2022/223 : 719

2023/2024 : 726

2024/2025 : 727

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### Number of Roma students

2022/2023 : 101

2023/2024 : 96

2024/2025 : 96

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### Home languages in the school in addition to Slovak and Romani (with number of speakers)

2022/2023 : Albanian (32), Greek (1), Macedonian (2), Chinese (2), Bosnian (9), Moldovan (1)

2023/2024 : Albanian (31), Greek (2), Macedonian (5), Chinese (2), Bosnian (10)

2024/2025 : Albanian (34), Greek (2), Macedonians (5), Chinese (2), Bosnian (5), Serbian (1)

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### Grades/classes that participated in the RPPE

2022/2023 : grades 1-5, 23 classes, 431 students

2023/2024 : grades 1-5, 22 classes, 433 students

2024/2025 : grades 1-5, 23 classes, 450 students; also the dancing group "All for all" (10 girls)

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Krško is a small town (7 200 inhabitants) in the eastern part of Slovenia. Leskovec pri Krškem Basic School has about 700 students, 14% of them Roma. Currently the school also has students from several other countries: Republic of Moldova, Kosovo\*, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Albania and China. The associated kindergarten is located in the biggest Roma settlement in the locality, Kerinov grm, and has 16 children aged 2-5. Three Roma assistants are employed in the school and the kinder-

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\* All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

garten. The school participates in many national projects and works with Roma and other parents to inform them about the importance and benefits of plurilingualism.

As Romani is not the only home language other than Slovenian present in the school, grade 1 teachers adopted the practice of starting each day with multilingual greetings. In this way, Romani was treated as one of several “minority” languages, and students were shown that plurilingualism takes more than one form. A grade 4 teacher engaged his students in a discussion of the equal status of all languages and invited a Roma assistant to introduce the class to *kamishibai* (storytelling based on a set of picture cards) in Romani; the one Roma student in the class helped to narrate and translate the fairy tale that the Roma assistant presented. The same teacher encouraged four Roma students to create a Romani/Slovenian glossary of everyday words and phrases that was printed and distributed to other classes.

Leskovec’s unique contribution to the RPPE was the group of 10 girls who gave themselves the name “All for all”. They first came together under the tutelage of one of the Roma assistants because they all had a home language other than Slovenian – Romani, Albanian and Chinese. At first they made friendship bracelets; then, at the suggestion of the Roma assistant, they started a dance group, teaching one another dances from their respective countries. Over the three years of the RPPE, the group grew in confidence and performed at events in the school, were invited to perform outside the school, and were interviewed by the Romani radio station. Their story is one of the case studies in the pedagogical guide published in tandem with this report.

In her final report (June 2025), the school’s RPPE co-ordinator said that the project had an extremely positive impact on the school as a whole. Younger students became more tolerant and understanding towards students with a home language other than Slovenian; they realised how difficult it must be for them if they don’t understand lessons in Slovenian. For older students from grade 6 upwards, the “All for all” dance group gave the RPPE visibility and status.

### 2.3.4. *Janko Padežnik Basic School, Maribor*

#### Principal

Mag. Sonja Filipič

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#### RPPE co-ordinator

Koraljka Čeh

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#### Participating teachers

**2022/2023** : Janja Modrijančič, David Vrbančič, Nina Malajner, Nevenka Pušnik, Petra Damiš Lavrenčič, Urša Krajšek, Tamara Škafar Vogrin, Giovannino Raffanelli, Mateja Mohora

**2023/2024** : Janja Modrijančič, David Vrbančič, Nina Malajner, Nevenka Pušnik, Petra Damiš Lavrenčič, Urša Krajšek, Tamara Škafar Vogrin, Mateja Mohora, Petra Lebar Kac

**2024/2025** : Nina Frangež, David Vrbančič, Nina Malajner, Nevenka Pušnik, Petra Damiš Lavrenčič, Urša Krajšek, Tamara Škafar Vogrin, Petra Lebar Kac

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### Classroom assistants

**2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/2025**: Ksenija Popošek, Mojca Rojc, Andreja Simić, Lana Matjašič Filipič, Aleksandra Kunstelj, Dejan Peklar, Jasmina Mazreku

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### Total number of students

**2022/2023** : 475

**2023/2024** : 506

**2024/2025** : 516

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### Number of Roma students

**2022/2023** : 54

**2023/2024** : 64

**2024/2025** : 58

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### Home languages present in the school in addition to Slovenian and Romani

**2022/2023** : Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Albanian, Ukrainian, Russian, French (97 students)

**2023/2024** : Serbian, Croatian, Ukrainian, Farsi, Russian, Albanian, Bosnian, French (104 students)

**2024/2025** : Serbian, Croatian, Ukrainian, Farsi, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Bosnian, Albanian, French (114 students)

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### Grades/classes that participated in the RPPE

**2022/2023** : grades 1-9 (189 students)

**2023/2024** : grades 1-9 (190 students)

**2024/2025** : grades 1-9 (250 students)

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Maribor is the second-largest city of Slovenia, situated in the north-east of the country. Janko Padežnik Basic School has served the local community for almost

150 years. It is multicultural, and students learn mutual tolerance and understanding at an early age; linguistic and cultural diversity is not an obstacle to school life but an advantage, working against stereotypes and promoting acceptance of difference.

Thanks to the diversity of the school's student cohort, activities that elsewhere might focus exclusively on Romani and the language of schooling, here celebrate a wide range of plurilingual repertoires in a multicultural setting. For example, the academic co-ordinator's visit to the school in May 2025 began with a multilingual/multicultural fair that had stalls for French, Ukrainian and Russian, Albanian (from Kosovo\*), Chinese, Spanish (from Colombia), Slovenian, Croatian, Romani, Georgian, Afghan languages/Turkish, Bosnian, Serbian, Macedonian. Each stall was manned by one or more students who offered ethnic sweets and snacks and explained the significance of the books, pictures and cultural items on display.

The school has used the RPPE to add new dimensions to long-established activities and practices. For example, Janko Padežnik Basic School has a long tradition of peer tutoring, which happens not only in classrooms but in study spaces dotted around the school. When the academic co-ordinator visited the school in May 2025, he observed a grade 5 lesson in which students were working in pairs revising for a maths test. The teacher drew his attention to one pair, a Slovenian and a Kosovo\* Albanian: the Slovenian was helping the Kosovo\* Albanian with his language, while the Kosovo\* Albanian was helping the Slovenian with his maths. In one of the private study areas two grade 3 students, a Slovenian and a Roma, were engaged in a similar activity. The Slovenian explained that he helps other students with art, while the Roma boy said that he helps another Roma boy with his maths.

Some teachers have used their participation in the RPPE to add a plurilingual dimension to cross-curricular projects. For example, in one grade 5 class, 16 of the students spoke Slovenian at home, three spoke Romani, one spoke Albanian, one Bosnian and one Serbian. In a cross-curricular unit entitled "History on stage", students used their home languages to write and act plays about the life of people in a particular historical period. Despite the difficulty and breadth of the historical content, they were strongly motivated, worked with great enthusiasm and remembered what they learnt.

In her final report (June 2025), the school's RPPE co-ordinator said that the project helped teachers to integrate Romani and other mother tongues into classroom work, which benefited all students. By providing a plurilingual perspective on the curriculum, the RPPE added an important new dimension to the school's strong tradition of inclusive education.

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\* All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

### 2.3.5. Frana Metelka Basic School, Škocjan

#### Principal

Janja Lesjak

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#### RPPE co-ordinator

Anica Tramte

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#### Participating teachers

2022/2023, 2023;2024, 2024/2025: Jan Cerle, Urška Rudman, Irena Pleter-ski, Katja Ploj, Katja Žibert, Nuška Košak, Tina Gorenjc, Vesna Kukavica

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#### Total number of students (main and branch schools)

2022/2023 : 392

2023/2024 : 388

2024/2025 : 382

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#### Number of Roma students

2022/2023 : 67

2023/2024 : 71

2024/2025 : 69

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#### Home languages present in the school in addition to Slovenian and Romani (with numbers of speakers)

2022/2023 : Bosnian (2), Russian (11)

2023/2024 : Bosnian (2), Russian (12)

2024/2025 : Bosnian (2), Russian (2)

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#### Grades/classes that participated in the RPPE (with numbers of students)

2022/2023 : 1b (16), 2b (19), 3a (19), students participating in the project "Diversity enriches us" (6), students from grades 7-9 (6) – total: 66 students

2023/2024 : 119 students were directly involved in the RPPE; all students at the main school were indirectly involved

2024/2025 : 127 students were directly involved, of whom 26 were Roma; all students at the main school were indirectly involved

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Frana Metelka Basic School is in Škocjan, a town in south-east Slovenia with a diverse population. Together with its branch school in Bučka it has 380 students, 20% of whom are Roma. The two schools operate a kindergarten that is attended by 150 children. The Roma students mostly live in two settlements and speak Romani at home, so they start grade 1 with limited proficiency in Slovenian. Roma assistants and members of the local Roma community help the school to communicate with parents and support Roma children with their schoolwork. The children receive additional support from the local multi-purpose Roma centre.

The school already had a Slovenian-Romani dictionary project when it joined the RPPE. The dictionary was compiled by students who were taking two optional subjects, school journalism and Roma culture; Roma students worked on translations while non-Roma students edited the computer files. When the school joined the RPPE, the dictionary project was expanded to include other languages spoken by students – English, German, Russian and Bosnian – and pictures were added to the word definitions to make them easier to understand, especially for younger students. The dictionary project is responsible for the Word of the Week: students choose a word, which is then displayed in the school's Roma Corner in five languages: Romani, English, Slovenian, Russian and Bosnian.

A grade 2 teacher used themed colouring books to teach Romani words in her lessons; four of the 17 students were Roma. The Roma students provided the teacher with Romani words, and when they ran into difficulties the Roma assistant helped them. A discussion about the most important words to know when you first start school led to the conclusion that after greetings and various politeness expressions, it is essential to know the words for school supplies and classroom objects. The class decided that the best way to learn the words in Romani would be by making colouring books. This activity began to add a written dimension to the four Roma students' oral knowledge of Romani, while it introduced their classmates to a language of which they had no prior knowledge.

Two Roma police officers work with the school to encourage regular school attendance and improve the integration of Roma students. At workshops organised for Roma students they teach respect for rules, the importance of education, and the idea that it is better to resolve conflicts than to resort to violence. Because the workshops are given in Romani, they provide students with input in their home language that would not otherwise be available to them. In 2024/2025 successful Roma were invited to the school as a way of offering Roma students possible role models.

When the academic co-ordinator visited Škocjan in May 2025, the school's RPPE team agreed that the project impacted positively on non-Roma as well as Roma students. One teacher said that participating in the RPPE empowered her to include Romani in her lessons; another said that the RPPE encouraged the school to consider ways in which they can show Roma students that success is possible. It was agreed that the inclusion of Romani in the life of the school helped to break down the inhibitions that make Roma students reluctant to perform on stage.

# 3. Evaluation, impact, sustainability and dissemination: the views of participants in the RPPE's concluding conference

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On the second day of the RPPE's concluding conference (4 June 2025), representatives of the 10 participating schools, the three national co-ordinators and their ministry colleagues worked in three groups to review the RPPE under four headings: evaluation, impact, sustainability and dissemination. This section summarises the results of their deliberations.

## 3.1. Evaluation

### 3.1.1. *Successful whole-school activities*

All participating schools made Romani visible in multilingual signs and posters, which proved an effective way of signalling linguistic inclusion. All ten schools also celebrated International Roma Day (8 April), International Romani Language Day (5 November), and the European Day of Languages (26 September). The first two of these events acknowledge the importance of Romani language and culture, while the third gives Romani equal status with other languages. A similar cultural end was served by performances of song and dance by students from Roma and immigrant communities. In some cases, the performances were opened to the wider community, which offered a chance to forge closer relations with the local Roma community and in mainstream schools to foster greater awareness of the challenges faced by students from linguistic and cultural minorities. One school in Slovenia (Leskovec) adopted the practice of taking groups of non-Roma students to visit local Roma settlements, while another (Črenšovci) maintained "book houses" in the local Roma settlement, containing books donated by students and their parents.

### 3.1.2. *Successful classroom activities*

At the level of the classroom, the RPPE inspired a range of activities too extensive to list here; a full account is provided in the pedagogical guide published in parallel with this report. All participating schools created multilingual glossaries that brought together the language of schooling, Romani, English and sometimes other home languages; encouraged Roma students to write in Romani; and ex-

plored multilingual versions of fairy tales and other stories. One school in Slovenia (Maribor) reported notable success with cross-curricular projects; one school in the Slovak Republic (Košice) and one school in Greece (Volos) made regular use of bilingual learner logbooks, in which students wrote in the language of schooling and Romani. In general, any activity that included Romani was likely to secure the involvement of Roma students in all three school types and to arouse the interest of non-Roma students in mainstream schools.

### 3.1.3. *Less successful activities*

The erratic attendance of many Roma students was frequently cited as a problem because it tended to undermine activities that required regular involvement like keeping a logbook. Some schools reported that attempts at cross-curricular projects had failed, though (as noted above) in one case they were notably successful. School trips were sometimes poorly supported because Roma parents were reluctant to have their children participate. One mainstream school reported that some resistance to Romani was evident on the part of non-Roma students; and especially in mainstream schools, Roma students were sometimes unwilling to speak their language in front of their non-Roma peers.

### 3.1.4. *Lessons learnt*

There was general agreement that participation in the RPPE had made teachers more aware of the central role played by language in each student's identity and the importance of pedagogical flexibility, differentiation and learner empowerment in inclusive education. Teachers considered that by including Romani in their lessons, they had created a more welcoming classroom environment and developed new pedagogical skills. Some of them had also begun to make use of peer and collaborative learning.

More generally, it was agreed that the RPPE had given schools a greater sensitivity to linguistic and cultural diversity and positioned them as potential agents of social change. The project had helped them to confront and overcome stereotypes and to treat linguistic and cultural diversity with empathy and respect. One discussion group pointed out that inclusion requires schools to adapt to their students. In some cases, the RPPE encouraged schools to engage more actively with their local Roma community.

## 3.2. Impact

### 3.2.1. *Schools and classrooms*

It was agreed that the RPPE had encouraged schools to adopt a more open stance towards diversity and to create a more welcoming environment. Representatives of some schools reported that the RPPE had led to closer co-operation between

teachers, students and parents and had helped to bridge the gap between the school and the Roma community.

Some teachers reported that the enthusiasm with which students engaged in creative projects that included Romani and Roma culture had led to enhanced social cohesion. In mainstream classrooms, stronger social bonds between Roma and non-Roma students were reported, together with greater mutual respect and a shared sense of belonging. Some participants also reported better relations between students and their teachers.

### *3.2.2. Roma students*

The recognition that their language and culture are respected raised Roma students' self-esteem. The inclusion of Romani in the life of the classroom also helped them to better understand their home culture and to experience school as a place where they could be themselves. A minority of schools reported that the inclusion of Romani language and culture in the life of the classroom had a positive impact on the attendance of some Roma students.

### *3.2.3. Non-Roma students*

Some mainstream schools reported that the RPPE had helped to foster respect and empathy for Roma students; in general, non-Roma students were interested in the previously hidden language and culture of their Roma peers. One school reported that individual non-Roma students reacted negatively to the inclusion of Romani in the life of the classroom.

### *3.2.4. Teachers and classroom assistants*

Overall teachers and classroom assistants found that the RPPE provided them with a valuable professional experience: participation in the project enabled them to teach in more inclusive and culturally responsive ways. There was general agreement that the RPPE had promoted teamwork, boosted teachers' motivation, given them a new sense of purpose and made their work more interesting.

### *3.2.5. Parents*

The impact of the RPPE on Roma parents was varied. Some schools found that the inclusion of Romani language and culture in the life of the school and its classrooms led to more effective communication with parents and encouraged them to become more actively involved in their children's education and the life of the school. Other schools, however, reported that despite their best efforts, Roma parents remained unaware of the RPPE. In one mainstream school, non-Roma parents had at first been hesitant about the RPPE but were won over when they saw what implementation of the project entailed.

### 3.2.6. *The wider community*

Mainstream schools were able to use their participation in the RPPE to highlight their openness to linguistic and cultural diversity; schools mostly serving Roma communities did not always find it easy to bring the RPPE to the attention of the wider community.

## 3.3. Sustainability

All schools agreed that it may be impossible to sustain activities that require additional funding and/or external support. However, they agreed that they would continue to make home languages visible throughout the school and to include them as far as possible in the educational experience of students. In Greece and Slovenia there is no standard written version of Romani, which means that using written forms of the language in the classroom is a perpetual challenge to teachers. More generally, it was agreed that the additional effort required by participation in an international project cannot be sustained indefinitely.

### 3.3.1. *Greece*

Representatives of the three Greek schools agreed that the project had introduced them to new ways of enhancing students' linguistic development; these will be maintained as far as possible. 10th Primary School of Nea Ionea will continue to produce its bilingual (Greek/Romani) newspaper, to dramatise stories for theatrical performance in Greek and Romani, and to create multilingual glossaries and printed material in two and sometimes three languages. The Greek schools will also continue to participate in projects designed to develop students' citizenship skills and to broaden their horizons by organising visits to museums and cultural institutions.

### 3.3.2. *The Slovak Republic*

The three Slovak schools plan to maintain RPPE-inspired classroom activities that don't require additional resources or special funding. The school in Košice will continue to work with fairy tales in Slovak and Romani, use bilingual student logbooks and organise events that connect the school with students' parents and the wider Roma community; the school in Šulekovo will focus on events that foster good relations between majority and minority communities; and the school in Vyškovce will maintain all RPPE-inspired activities because they add new dimensions to students' learning.

### 3.3.3. *Slovenia*

The Slovenian schools plan to maintain classroom activities that were developed as part of the RPPE, for example: working with fairy tales in Slovenian, Romani and

English, compiling multilingual glossaries, and promoting cultural activities associated with minority-language students, especially dance. The schools will also continue to celebrate International Roma Day and International Romani Language Day and to foster good relations with local Roma communities by arranging for students to visit the settlements and multi-purpose Roma centres. The school in Maribor will continue to use peer-tutoring as a way of providing language and learning support for Roma and other minority-language students.

### 3.4. Dissemination

Representatives of the participating schools agreed that at local and regional level they can best promote the RPPE by inviting representatives of the community, civil society and local/regional government to events in the school and by fostering links with other schools that have Roma students. There was general agreement that there is a need for teacher education materials that draw on the RPPE's activities and achievements and training programmes that introduce those materials to teachers. The video recordings that Slovenia made for the Bratislava conference will be used to publicise the RPPE. In the Slovak Republic, the RPPE's methods and results may be disseminated via Prši (English "rain"), an organisation that gives a voice to schools with Roma students and their problems. The Greek schools advocated the development of an annual national action plan for schools with Roma students.

### 3.5. Messages from the RPPE schools

#### 3.5.1. *To ministries and educational agencies*

Representatives of the Greek schools said that recognising and integrating the linguistic and cultural identity of Roma students is not a luxury but a prerequisite for effective inclusion. They appealed to their ministry to introduce RPPE-inspired actions into the public education system and to support them with appropriate funding and other resources; they also pointed out that the adoption of such measures has significant implications for teacher education. Representatives of the Slovak schools urged their ministry to further develop plurilingual approaches to teaching and learning and provide for the sharing of good practice. They pointed out that although the Slovak Republic has a standard version of written Romani, most teachers don't know the language and need help if they are to include it in their teaching. Slovak representatives also identified a need for more materials in Romani to support the inclusion of the language in classrooms. Representatives of the Slovenian schools said that teachers need more support in developing plurilingual and intercultural approaches.

### *3.5.2. To teacher educators*

The Greek representatives pointed out that teacher educators have a crucial role to play in preparing teachers to respond to the challenges of linguistic and cultural diversity. Teachers need background information, relevant pedagogical theory and practical skills if they are to convert linguistic and cultural diversity into educational capital. The Slovak representatives wanted teacher educators to know that plurilingual approaches are effective, though it takes time and patience to develop them; they argued that teachers should not be afraid if they don't know the home languages of their students: the students can help them. The Slovenian participants echoed these views.

### *3.5.3. To the Council of Europe*

The representatives from all three countries thanked the Council of Europe for devising the RPPE and funding its implementation. The Greek participants said that for them the RPPE has been not only an educational project but an act of recognition and empowerment. The Slovak participants expressed similar views, while regretting that it had not been possible for them to visit schools in Greece and Slovenia. In general, participants expressed the hope that the Council of Europe will continue to sponsor work in this area, perhaps by supporting replication projects in other member states. As the Greek participants put it, "Our students deserve it and the future of Europe needs it."

## 4. Conclusion

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The RPPE set out to explore possible roles for Romani language and culture in the educational inclusion of Roma children. It was at once less and more ambitious than an empirical research project. Less ambitious because it was not based on hypotheses and did not attempt to answer clearly defined research questions; more ambitious because the results summarised in this report and elaborated further in the accompanying pedagogical guide provide Council of Europe member states with a wide range of pedagogical procedures that have been shown to work. As its title implies, the project focused on Romani but from the perspective of the Council of Europe's plurilingual and intercultural approach to education. As participating schools with linguistically diverse student cohorts demonstrated, RPPE-inspired activities fostered the inclusion of immigrant students as well as their Roma peers.

The RPPE was designed to show how relatively minor adjustments to school policy and classroom practice can help to bring about the transformations targeted by the Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers referred to in section 1.1 of this report. On the basis of the descriptions of RPPE implementation in section 2 and the judgements summarised in section 3, it is possible to make the following claims:

- ▶ the inclusion of Romani and Roma culture in the everyday life of schools and classrooms impacts positively on the motivation and engagement of Roma pupils. In mainstream schools, it also arouses the interest of non-Roma students and helps to foster social cohesion. When Roma children are not proficient in Romani, the inclusion of the language and its culture in their educational experience helps to reconnect them with an important part of their heritage;
- ▶ in Roma-only schools where students speak a variety of Romani at home, the language provides a bridge into the language of schooling. By including written forms of the language, schools and classrooms acknowledge that Romani is a language like any other; this message is reinforced when other home languages are also present and included in the same way as Romani;
- ▶ when schools engage in bi- and multilingual projects that require translation between the language of schooling, curriculum languages, Romani and other home languages, they provide all students with an experience of plurilingualism and interculturality whose cognitive, cultural and social value cannot be overestimated.

It is important to emphasise that although participating schools received a small support grant from the Council of Europe, their implementation of the RPPE did not depend on the grant. Most of the activities they undertook, whether at school

or classroom level, required only minor adjustments to existing policy and pedagogical practice. It should thus be easy to replicate the achievements of the RPPE in other schools in the participating countries and other Council of Europe member states.

Very few participating teachers claimed to be proficient in Romani. In Slovakia and Slovenia they could call on the help of Roma assistants; in Greece they depended on whatever published resources they could find and occasional help from Roma NGOs. Either way, the RPPE shows that teachers have nothing to fear by including home languages they do not know in their lessons. Student motivation and engagement is likely to be enhanced if teachers look to them for help with their home languages.

This report began by acknowledging that the educational inclusion of Roma is an enduring challenge for Council of Europe member states. Other agencies of government and civil society also have a role to play in meeting that challenge, but the RPPE has shown that schools can lead the way. It is to be hoped that the competent authorities in member states will draw the attention of policy makers, curriculum developers, teacher educators, schools and teachers to the RPPE, its aims, activities and achievements.

The [Curriculum Framework for Romani and two accompanying versions of the European Language Portfolio](#)<sup>20</sup> were developed by the Council of Europe in the 2000s and published in 2008. They provided the basis for the [QualiRom project](#)<sup>21</sup> (2010-2013), funded by the European Commission and hosted by the ECML, which developed teaching materials in six Romani varieties. These in turn were promoted and disseminated by the ECML's [QualiRom Training & Consultancy](#)<sup>22</sup> (2016-2025). The appropriate next step in the Council of Europe's support for the educational inclusion of Roma might be a new ECML Training & Consultancy based on the achievements of the RPPE.

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20. Available at [go.coe.int/Roch1](http://go.coe.int/Roch1), accessed 30 April 2026.

21. Available at [www.ecml.at/Resources/PageQualiRom](http://www.ecml.at/Resources/PageQualiRom), accessed 30 April 2026.'

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This publication provides a narrative and descriptive account of the Council of Europe's Romani-Plurilingual Policy Experimentation (RPPE), a pioneering initiative from 2022 to 2025. Working with ten schools across Greece, the Slovak Republic, and Slovenia, this publication explores the critical role of Romani language and culture in fostering the educational inclusion of Roma children.

Structured in three parts, the author and academic co-ordinator of the experimentation, David Little, first sets the scene with the project's goals, the Council of Europe's concept of plurilingual and intercultural education and the organisation and management of the experimentation. It then delves country by country, profiling each school involved, sharing first-hand observations, and highlighting the diverse approaches and creative efforts made to enhance inclusion.

In its final part, the publication captures the reflections and evaluations of school representatives, highlighting the undeniable impact and the lasting value of the RPPE. Their voices affirm the project's success and offer forward-looking messages for policy and practice.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.