

## **GOOD PRACTICE 88**

### **POLAND - PUBLICATION OF GUIDELINES FOR TESTING AND DIAGNOSIS OF ROMA CHILDREN**



#### Action type

Recognising the problem of overrepresentation of Roma pupils in special school system by authorities and Roma themselves, scientific research on the level of Roma children participation in special schools, analyzing the existing and used psychological methods and tests regarding pupils with multicultural background, reporting, promotion of culturally neutral tests towards the Roma pupils (and pupils with different cultural and linguistic background), publishing the results and their dissemination through the series of countrywide workshops for the pedagogical and psychological personnel, education law system changing.

Level of the good practice demonstrated

# One są wśród nas

## WYBRANE ZAGADNIENIA DIAGNOZY PSYCHOLOGICZNEJ DZIECI I MŁODZIEŻY W KONTEKŚCIE WIELOKULTUROWOŚCI ORAZ WIELOJĘZYCZNOŚCI

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Themes Education

Keywords desegregation, Equal opportunities, Inclusion, schooling

Duration (start/end) 2011

In progress Oui

Scale national

Context

All over the Europe the problem of overrepresentation of the Roma pupils in special schools system is present. The reasons of this improper phenomenon are complex: starting with the low education level of the general Roma population, through ghettoisation and spatial isolation of many Roma communities, ending with some prejudices towards Roma, discrimination and with lack of use of tailored educational tools enabled the Roma community achieving the educational successes.

Description

One of the possible methods to resolve the above mentioned problem of Roma overrepresentation in special school is sensitizing the pedagogical and educational personnel to special challenges and needs of Roma community and delivering to the psychologists adequate tools.

First stage of the action was to conduct a scientific research (Jagiellonian University, Cracow) concerning the Roma pupils in special schools. The results were published in a final report concerning the cognitive and linguistic functioning of Roma children in special and massive school, followed by the publication on the several aspects of the psychological testing and diagnosis of pupils with the multicultural and multilingual background, with a focus on Roma children.

The results and proposed solutions were presented to all Polish authorities dealing with the process of diagnosis and testing of children across the country, accompanied by the series of meetings with presentation concerning Roma culture, needs and problems specificity.

The most efficient factor in this activity was engaging all indispensable entities: Ministry of Education and its subordinated Center for Educational Development (center for teachers), Ministry of Interior and Administration, responsible for the national and ethnic minorities issues, academic environment, Roma NGO and Roma school assistants (mediators).

One of the important and systemic results was educational law's changes, which give possibility for formal including of Roma school mediators to be a part of diagnosis system, due to lack of education among majority of Roma parents. Roma assistants also play (should play) a role in encouraging the Roma parents to place their children in massive school system - as the parents are the only authorized persons acting to decide which school (mass or special) their children with mild mental disability should attend.

Language of the supporting documents Polish

Additional documents available Oui

List of attached documents [http://goodpracticeroma.ppa.coe.int/sites/default/files/wybrane\\_zagadnienia\\_diagnozy\\_psychologicznej\\_dzieci\\_i\\_mlodziyzy\\_w\\_kontekscie\\_wielokulturowosci\\_oraz\\_wielojezycznosci.pdf](http://goodpracticeroma.ppa.coe.int/sites/default/files/wybrane_zagadnienia_diagnozy_psychologicznej_dzieci_i_mlodziyzy_w_kontekscie_wielokulturowosci_oraz_wielojezycznosci.pdf),

[http://goodpracticeroma.ppa.coe.int/sites/default/files/2011\\_cognitive\\_and\\_linguistic\\_fu.pdf](http://goodpracticeroma.ppa.coe.int/sites/default/files/2011_cognitive_and_linguistic_fu.pdf)

Partners Civil society, including Roma community, governmental, local or regional, other

Does the policy respond to a EU request and/or refer to EU Directive ? Non

Method used

Scientific research, analysing data, reporting, recommendations, publication, dissemination of results and proposed tools and activities, education law changes

Technical resources 3

Human resources 5

Financing

Activity was financed from different sources: partly by private donation (Fundacja im. S. Batorego, scientific part), partly by governmental entities: Ministry of Education (publication), partly by Ministry of Interior and Administration and local authorities: local pedagogical and psychological centers (workshops, conferences).

Financial resources 4

Participation

Roma community is active in the field of education, mostly through the Roma school mediators. The problem of overrepresentation of Roma pupils in special school was signaled for years both: by several Roma leaders and Roma school assistants. Responding this demand the relevant Ministries: Education and Ministry of Interior and Administration collected available the data. Roma NGO initiated the research program. Roma school mediators assisted the researchers in reaching the Roma community. One of the results of this activity was involving the Roma school mediators formally in the process of diagnosis (partly) on the legal basis, with accordance to appropriately changed law system.

Results obtained

It was estimated before launching the governmental programs for Roma benefit in Poland in 2001 that the share of Roma pupils in special school system was approx. 30 %.

According to existing data the level of Roma children in special school diminished (data from the year 2016) to the level of approx. 8,3 % of Roma pupils in special schools.

Long-term perspectives and sustainability of the action

Promoting the higher education for Roma, promoting the legal opportunity to place children with mild mental disability in mass schools, using the scholarships, awareness raising among the Roma parents, positive influence of Roma school mediators, stable sensitizing of pedagogical and psychological personnel to the special needs of Roma pupils – within the framework of governmental strategy for social inclusion of Roma up to 2020 and other existing legal and financial tools.

Expected results (goals and indicators) Diminishing of the percentage of Roma pupils attending the special schools to the level of general population share (approx. 3 %).

What are the keys to success of this action?

- proper recognizing the scale of problem
- will to collect and analysis all available data
- stable and sustainable actions made by all relevant stakeholders, including the Roma community

What were the main difficulties encountered?

- general law system – in that case offering additional financial support to families with mentally disabled children that can be an economic incentive for poor families without stable income

What would you recommend to those carrying out a similar action?

Keep it and develop!  
Evaluation process

The action taken towards the analysis of the level of attendance of the Roma origin pupils to the special schools in Poland and the publication of the guidelines on testing and diagnosing the Roma children was presented by the Polish representative, Mr Krystian Barzykowski, PhD, from the Jagiellonian University, Cracow, during the *ad hoc* **Committee of the Council of Europe on Roma and Travellers issues CAHROM**, held in Budapest, Hungary, 9-11 March 2016. The method of action, the research and its results and the publication itself met with high interest of Hungarian participants and participants from countries taking part in this visit, devoted to the system of testing and diagnosis of Roma children with allegedly mild mental disabilities: Czech Republic, Netherlands, Slovak Republic and FYROM.

Action validated as a good practice by

Practice was nominated to the European Roma Spirit Award in 2016 and was one of three final candidates in the category of "Institution" to the award.

Validated by Other

Diffusion resources Publication or report, Website

Internet [http://www.bc.ore.edu.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=583&from=&dirids=1&ver\\_id=&lp=1&QI=](http://www.bc.ore.edu.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=583&from=&dirids=1&ver_id=&lp=1&QI=) <http://mniejszosci.narodowe.mac.gov.pl/mne/romowie/edukacja-dzieci-romskic/7573,Podreczniki-i-publikacje.html>

Publication or report Final report: [http://www.academia.edu/5535196/Raport\\_ko%C5%84cowy\\_z\\_projektu\\_bada\\_wczego\\_Funkcjonowanie\\_poznawcze\\_i\\_j%C4%99zykowe\\_dzieci\\_romskich\\_ucz%C4%99szczaj%C4%85cych\\_d\\_o\\_szk%C3%B3%C5%82\\_podstawowych\\_specjalnych\\_i\\_masowych\\_konteksty\\_spo%C5%82eczne](http://www.academia.edu/5535196/Raport_ko%C5%84cowy_z_projektu_bada_wczego_Funkcjonowanie_poznawcze_i_j%C4%99zykowe_dzieci_romskich_ucz%C4%99szczaj%C4%85cych_d_o_szk%C3%B3%C5%82_podstawowych_specjalnych_i_masowych_konteksty_spo%C5%82eczne) Publication: [http://www.bc.ore.edu.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=583&from=&dirids=1&ver\\_id=&lp=1&QI=](http://www.bc.ore.edu.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=583&from=&dirids=1&ver_id=&lp=1&QI=) <http://mniejszosci.narodowe.mac.gov.pl/mne/romowie/edukacja-dzieci-romskic/7573,Podreczniki-i-publikacje.html>

Other Academic - Jagiellonian University, Cracow

Action type

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