

Hungary Good Practices: The UCCU Neki!-Project

Main Goals

- Reduction of racism
- Combat prejudices and negative stereotypes related to Roma
- Promotion of a tolerant and open society

Objectives

- Platform to discuss about different opinions without any taboos
- Young children should become familiar with the Roma culture
- Children should change their thinking about each other

Resources needed

- Space
- Young Roma, motivated to moderate the discussions
- Pedagogically competent teachers
- Informational material for the discussions, games etc.
- Collaborator network

Challenges

- Finding Gipsy and non-Gipsy children who want to participate
- Change the thinking of children in the long term about the Roma

In Hungary, a lot of people have negative stereotypes and prejudices related to Roma and therefore reflect anti-Gypsyist attitudes. Problematically, those people are those who know the least about the group and its culture which makes the lack of acceptance even bigger. The Uccu Roma Informal Educational Foundation is a Hungarian Roma civil society organization which wants to combat these prejudices against Roma and wants to provide a platform for dialogue between Roma and non-Roma. They focus on primary and secondary school students from whole Hungary who want to meet and engage in conversations with their young Roma peers.

The foundation usually goes into secondary schools and meets students from the age of 14 to 19 years. An essential part of this dialogue is that young Roma take part in the creation and process and moderate the discussion. Moreover, the students should be encouraged to talk about their opinions without any taboos and can ask questions. The meetings are informal and free and each game is interactive and brings up a new story. They provide a neutral platform for exchange which is not biased by the opinion of family and teachers.

The project gets promoted by Uccu through their website, their Facebook page and a promotion video in which they vividly express their vision and goals for this project.

Every session includes new people and new stories which makes it easy for everyone to participate without any preparation beforehand. Active and open-minded participation is the most important task during these meetings and discussions, next to honest questions and reflecting different opinions about Roma. Open communication should help develop critical thinking and questioning own prejudices. Students should become more familiar with the Roma culture and therefore develop an objective opinion about their peers.

Progress can be directly evaluated by asking Non-Roma if they have changed some of their perspectives about Roma and more indirectly if less people have prejudices in the long term.



Picture description

Facts and points:

- The Uccu foundation was established in 2010
- They believe that real learning happens through dialogue, personal experience and active participation
- Over 100 schools in Hungary asked for the programs and help of Uccu
- Most of the educational sessions are led by young volunteers
- 10 000 children participated and asked questions about Roma



They helped me a lot in living my identity more intensely.

Ildi Csanya - 23 years old