

“REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION”

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Impressions from schools visited

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SECONDARY ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS SCHOOL IN KOPER

Ljiljana Igrić, Focal point for Croatia

Through visiting schools we can better understand how mobility in education is working elsewhere. Students are given an opportunity: if they don't succeed in completing the programme of the gymnasium, they are given the possibility to complete their education choosing some of the other school programmes. Students who have completed one programme may attend other supplementary programmes that allow them to continue their study.

We visited one Slovenian language lesson which has been designed for students who come from other countries and who do not speak Slovenian. Talking with students, we found out that some of them are more, and some of them less integrated with peers. For example, a primary school student from Bosnia and Herzegovina who most successfully mastered the language, is actually best socially included; while some students from Kosovo, having Albanian as native language, keep socialising with peers with whom they can communicate in Albanian.

Discussions with our hosts were very enriching. They themselves have concluded that students who have other first languages than Slovenian – such as Albanian and Russian - need more than the legally provided support in learning Slovenian.

SECOND GYMNASIUM IN MARIBOR

Snežana Vuković, member of Steering Board and Policy Team, Serbia

In this school present we witnessed a holistic approach, where student orientation to high achievement (IB International Baccalaureate) does not exclude the need for emotional and social support to young people who are separated from their families, who experience cultural differences, and often do not speak Slovenian. In addition to learning Slovenian, students are provided with choice of numerous extra-curricular activities (60), as well as mentoring, and tutoring work. Students choose the tutor among the professors who will compensate the need of closeness with their families. Commitment is present at every step. One teacher said: *We, as a community are better, because we have them!!!*

It was a brilliant and motivating meeting with the school, and which gave us a model of support that can be applied to all students, because, it is a whole philosophy of observing students and of education in general.

BIO TECHNICAL CENTER IN NAKLO

Vera Kondikj Mitkovska, member of the PolicyNet team from “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

The Bio-technical Center in Naklo is an extraordinary example of a school which has placed a great deal of attention on training students for work. The vocational education and training is organised in cooperation with over 300 companies. The school also has an effective inclusive approach to students' individual educational needs, helping them to be successfully integrated in the school and wider community. The whole learning environment, including the facilities adapted to people with psychical disabilities, or healthy food programme, makes this school a true positive example of a support, care and dedication to growth and success of the students."

Biljana Sajkovska, member of the PolicyNet team from “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

Foreign students receive special attention in learning the Slovenian language and to integrate in the regular educational programme. The whole school is wheelchair accessible. The school also has its own farm where students grow organic food for market."

Jane Nikolovski, member of the PolicyNet team from “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

After the school visit we all had positive impressions on what has been done regarding inclusive education. The system is set to give results.

SCHOOL CENTRE IN LJUBLJANA

Borislava Maksimović, Focal Point for Serbia

This is a large, complex and extraordinary school. From the exemplary and dedicated directors of the Centre and Gymnasium, to the brilliant students and teachers it can also be seen in every contact, in every part of the school building, during the meeting with the students in the hallway, and talking with the staff. Positive discipline and diligence are dominant. It can be seen how important who the director of the school is! There was a great energy, lots of ideas, a vision that ensures steady growth of the school and the satisfaction of all who enter into it... We were impressed how the students in a short time learnt Slovenian with the help of their teachers. And students recognise how school invests in them, so they return back. They are accepted well by all with great care just because they are from other countries. Two wonderful boys who came from Bosnia and Herzegovina have shown us this kind of gratitude to their school.

Attentiveness to each step is present within the school and to those who come as guests. Probably to parents, too. **The motto of our Regional project reflects what can be seen in this school!**