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## **Erasmus+ Project "Supporting Opportunity in Schools: Promoting Educational Equity (S.O.S)**

European countries have fulfilled the right to education, reaffirmed in many declarations, making education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable. But it is not enough. Education plays a key role in determining how we spend our adult life and it has been proved that an individual's level of education directly correlates to future quality of life. Consequently, there is a need for schools and education systems to focus on equity, as a measure of achievement, fairness and opportunity to ensure that socioeconomic background, disability, race or gender issues are compensated and everyone can attain the same type of healthy lifestyle.

School stakeholders have a key role to enhance equity in education and school autonomy is a drive for school quality. By enabling schools to combine equity and quality, all children are given opportunities for a good quality education. These reasons let us set the aim of this project: To empower schools to enhance and assess equity and the following specific objectives:

- To develop school practices that enhance equity in education.
- To create a framework to assess equity in schools.
- To empower school heads to lead school changes that increase equity in their schools.
- To promote awareness and collaboration in school communities to enhance school equity.

In a European project, it is important to generate and share new knowledge collaboratively; this is why we have created a partnership with different stakeholders: schools, universities and educational authorities, from five different countries with different schools systems and different school autonomy traditions.

The partnership is formed by nine institutions from Belgium, Italy, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom. The coordinator of the project is the General Inspectorate of Education in Catalonia, a regional educational authority, which supervises and evaluates equity in schools. In terms of educational authorities with similar competencies, we have as partners, the Evaluation Council of the Education System in Catalonia, the Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per la Lombardia, the Inspectorate of Education in Sibiu and Scholengroep Brussel, a school group with administrative power. With also count with Istituto Casati and Institut El Calamot, two secondary schools that along with some schools from Scholengroep Brussel have successfully tackled equity with good practices. Finally, the Welsh Centre for Equity in Education and the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu have expert knowledge on equity in education and are essential to set theoretical frameworks and publish good quality materials.

The target participants of the project are:

- Students will participate in awareness activities: logo competitions, recording of equity school practices.
- Head teachers and school leaders are the key to spread good school practices in schools, to implement ways to evaluate it and to supply a bottom-up perspective.
- University researchers will provide the theoretical knowledge of the topic.
- Educational authorities staff will enhance the evaluation of equity in schools within their area of influence.

To achieve the objectives of the project, several activities and intellectual outputs will be produced:

- General activities: project website, logo competition, erasmus+ corners, term newsletters.
- Intellectual outputs: framework to assess school equity with methodological guide, digital tools and training course for school leaders and a specialised school equity portal with theoretical framework and recording of good practices.

We will apply action research and reflective practice methodologies, as they involve active participation, reflection, problem solving techniques and a process of continuous learning. We will use teamwork as an organizational strategy with the setting of a steering committee with one member from each institution acting as project leaders and four different work teams: project management, communication, evaluation and documentary production.

We expect the following results:

- School heads will be empowered to deal with equity in their schools due to professional development course and the availability of tools to evaluate equity.
- All stakeholders will become more aware of the importance of equity in education due to the availability of the project's intellectual outputs and the planned dissemination activities: school leaders meetings and multiplier events.
- All the staff in the project institutions will increase their knowledge and expertise on school equity thanks to their participation in the project.

We also expect a very important outcome, which is an increase of the number of schools that evaluate equity and implement good school equity practices within the project's area of influence. We have set a dashboard of output and outcome indicators to measure the results and the impact. The availability of all the products developed in the project in different open platforms will ensure the longer term benefits of it.