



PLA BARCELONA 17-19 APRIL 2024

Youth: intercultural education and prevention of discrimination.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prepared by Hellenic Open University and New Communities Partnership in association with Risbo, Netherlands
April 2024

**SIRIUS is co-funded by the
European Union**





1. Executive Summary

1.1 Peer Learning Activity Barcelona - Program

Thursday 18 April 2024

When	What	Where
08.30 – 09.15	Kick-off session, introduction of participants and expectations, background information	MiRu Association
09.15–10.30	Initial workshop on intercultural education and migrant inclusion by Antonio da Veiga Rocha	
10.30–10.50	<i>Break</i>	
10.50–11.35	Interview with Laia Gomez-Franco Estrella, pedagogical coordinator of MiRu Association	
11.35–12.15	Guided tour of the association projects.	
12.30h	<i>Lunch</i>	
15.00 – 15.30	Interview with Prometheus Barcelona project manager (empowerment of youngsters with a migrant background to access higher education), Bernat Jiménez, at High School Institut Barri Besòs.	Institut Barri Besòs
15.45 – 16.30	Interview with Pedro Casermeiro, director of Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne (which supports Roma students and disseminates Roman culture in schools).	
17.15 – 17.45	Closing session. Learnings and observations of the day.	

Friday 19 April 2024

When	What	Where
09.30 – 11.30	Visit the Superacció Association, accompanied by Maria Sans, a worker in the association, and by youngsters who will prepare a practical session + interviews	Ass. Superacció
11.30 – 13.00	Wrap up the final session: final questions and evaluation, critical issues for the PLA report.	
13.00 – 14.00	Closing session. Learnings and observations of the Peer Learning Activity.	

1.2 Peer Learning Activity Barcelona – Context

Barcelona, a vibrant city steeped in history and diversity, serves as the backdrop for our Peer Learning and Activity (PLA) visit centered around the theme of "Youth: Intercultural Education and Prevention of Discrimination." In a world marked by increasing globalization and cultural exchange, understanding and promoting intercultural education among youth is paramount for fostering inclusivity, tolerance, and mutual respect.

Throughout our visit, we had the privilege of engaging with several organizations dedicated to empowering young people and addressing issues of discrimination through innovative approaches and grassroots initiatives. These organizations serve as beacons of hope and catalysts for change, working tirelessly to create a more equitable and harmonious society.



Our journey began with a visit to the MiRu Association, where we delved into their efforts to promote intercultural understanding and social cohesion among Barcelona's youth. From cultural exchange programs to language classes and community events, MiRu Association plays a vital role in bridging divides and celebrating diversity.

Next, we had the opportunity to explore the Institut Barri Besòs, a pioneering institution committed to providing educational opportunities and support to youth from diverse backgrounds. Through tailored programs and mentorship initiatives, the institute aims to equip young people with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Our exploration continued with a visit to the Prometheus project at the Centre Cívic del Besòs i Maresme, where we learned about their innovative approaches to youth empowerment and social inclusion. Through art, culture, and community engagement, Prometheus project seeks to challenge stereotypes and promote dialogue among young people from different cultural backgrounds.

Finally, we concluded our PLA visit at the Superacció Association, an organization dedicated to promoting active citizenship and social justice among Barcelona's youth. Through advocacy campaigns, workshops, and civic engagement initiatives, Superacció empowers young people to become agents of change in their communities and beyond.

As we reflect on our experiences and insights gained during our time in Barcelona, it is evident that youth play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our societies. By investing in intercultural education and prevention of discrimination, we not only foster greater understanding and empathy but also lay the foundation for a more inclusive and equitable world for generations to come.

1.3 Take aways, Conclusion and Recommendations

In our pursuit of fostering inclusive societies, our exploration into the unique challenges faced by youth from diverse cultural backgrounds in navigating their identities and integrating into new communities has yielded invaluable insights. Through our Peer Learning and Activity (PLA) visit, we delved into various initiatives aimed at promoting intercultural education to combat discrimination and enhance the educational inclusion of migrant and refugee pupils, focusing particularly on the Spanish region of Barcelona. From our in-depth analysis of expert insights and organizational efforts, several key takeaways and recommendations emerge to inform European policy-making and foster greater inclusivity in education:

Key Take-aways

- 1. Holistic Support Structures:** Recognizing the multifaceted needs of migrant youth, it is critical to establish holistic support structures encompassing academic, emotional, and psychological dimensions to facilitate their integration and academic success.
- 2. Empowerment and Leadership:** Acknowledging power dynamics, initiatives should prioritize empowering young people, providing them with leadership roles, setting high expectations, and nurturing independence.
- 3. Preservation of Cultural Identity:** Striking a delicate balance between preserving cultural identity and facilitating adaptation to new environments underscores the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in fostering inclusivity.
- 4. Stakeholder Engagement:** The involvement of stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, community organizations, and youth themselves, is fundamental in driving systemic change and fostering inclusive educational practices.



Insights Gained

1. **Antonio da Veiga Rocha's Presentation:** Antonio highlighted the challenges faced by migrant youth in negotiating their identities and integrating into new communities, emphasizing the importance of cultural awareness and acceptance in fostering inclusive environments.
2. **Documentary Image, L'Associació MiRu:** Laia Estrella's visual narratives challenge stereotypes and foster empathy, showcasing the power of documentary images in promoting justice and inclusion for marginalized communities, including migrant youth.
3. **Romani Rights Advocacy, Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne:** Pedro's advocacy for Romani rights underscores the importance of policy reforms in fostering intercultural understanding and equality in education.
4. **Empowering Migrant Youth for Higher Education, Prometheus School Program:** Bernat Jiménez's program provides vital support to migrant youth aspiring for higher education, paving the way for a brighter future through empowerment and inclusivity.
5. **Nurturing Holistic Empowerment for Marginalized Youth, Superacció Association:** Under Maria Sans's coordination, Superacció offers comprehensive empowerment programs for marginalized youth, fostering social integration and personal growth.

Recommendations for European Policy-making

1. **Strengthen Stakeholder Collaboration:** Enhance collaboration and coordination among stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of inclusive education initiatives.
2. **Invest in Professional Development:** Prioritize ongoing professional development and capacity-building initiatives for educators to enhance cultural competence and pedagogical effectiveness.
3. **Advocate for Policy Reforms:** Advocate for policy reforms and investments in education systems that prioritize the needs of migrant youth and foster intercultural understanding and acceptance.
4. **Empower Youth as Agents of Change:** Empower youth as active agents of change, amplifying their voices in shaping inclusive educational practices and policies.

In conclusion, our PLA visit to Barcelona has illuminated the complexities and challenges inherent in promoting intercultural education and preventing discrimination among youth. By heeding the lessons learned and implementing the recommendations outlined, European policymakers can take decisive steps towards building more inclusive and equitable educational systems for all.





PEER LEARNING ACTIVITY BARCELONA **17-19 APRIL 2024**

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Contents

- 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY..... 2**
- 1.1 PEER LEARNING ACTIVITY BARCELONA - PROGRAM 2
- 1.2 PEER LEARNING ACTIVITY BARCELONA – CONTEXT 2
- 1.3 TAKE AWAYS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 3

- 1. INTRODUCTION..... 4**
- 1.1 SIRIUS PROJECT AND PEER LEARNING ACTIVITIES 4
- 1.2 METHODOLOGY FOR PEER LEARNING ACTIVITIES 6

- 2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PEER LEARNING ACTIVITY 8**
- 2.1 CONTEXT 8
- 2.2 KEY PRACTICE 1 EXPLORED: ANTONIO DA VEIGA ROCHA 10
- 2.3 KEY PRACTICE 2 EXPLORED: MIRU 11
- 2.4 KEY PRACTICE 3 EXPLORED: PROMETEUS 14
- 2.5 KEY PRACTICE 4 EXPLORED: ASSOCIACIÓ CULTURAL GITANA RROMANE SIKLŮVNE 16
- 2.6 KEY PRACTICE 5 EXPLORED: ASSOCIACIÓ SUPERACCIÓ 19

- 3. TAKE AWAYS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 23**
- 3.1 INTRODUCTION 23
- 3.2 KEY TAKEAWAYS 24
- 3.3 INSIGHTS GAINED 24
- 3.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE PLA IN BARCELONA 25
- 3.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS AND EU POLICYMAKERS 26





1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SIRIUS Project and Peer Learning Activities

Within the ERASMUS-EDU-2022-NET call, the action SIRIUS 3.0 – Policy Network on Migrant Education aims to promote co-operation between different stakeholders, support inclusive policy development and implementation at different governance levels, and facilitate the inclusion of migrant children in and through education.

Objectives: Inclusive evidence-based policymaking and collaboration is feed by: (1) analysing and co-creating knowledge on the main challenges and policy approaches for inclusive education; (2) Identifying, sharing and promoting good policy practice and stimulating innovation and mainstreaming in policy development, experimentation and implementation;(3) Disseminating results more widely and in policy-friendly formats.

Activities and expected results: To achieve the above stated objectives, SIRIUS 3.0 proposes the following activities:

1. SIRIUS Watch, monitoring the most significant changes in policy, implementation and knowledge for ensuring inclusive education environments.
2. Spaces for Change, which entails tailored support and training for each network member on how to catalyze change in their own environment.
3. Peer-learning Activities, promoting transnational learning between various types of stakeholders.
4. Dissemination focusing on numerous audiences including policymakers.

The Peer Learning Activities (PLAs) are SIRIUS' means to consolidate good practice and promote knowledge transfer within the network. PLAs will be organised in such a way as to present the good practice from diverse perspectives of practitioners, policymakers and researchers. The visits shall

ensure that the visiting teams have access to the implementing practitioners and to the beneficiaries of the practice, including on-site visits to schools, interviews with teachers, students, school leaders. The visiting teams (peer reviewers) shall also be composed of mixed teams made up of practitioners, policy makers and researchers. Throughout the timeline of the program, eight PLAs will be organized. Each addressed to one of the priority areas mentioned by the EC. These series are captured in reports. This is serie 1: PLA Barcelona on 17 – 19 April 2024.

“Peer review is a systematic examination and assessment of the performance or practices of a specific unit of governance by a group of other units of the same level and range. The goal is to help the reviewed unit improve its policymaking, adopt best practices, and comply with established standards and principles. The examination is conducted on a no adversarial basis, and it relies heavily on mutual trust among the states involved in the review, as well as on their shared confidence in the process” (Pagani, 2002).



OBJECTIVES

1. Inform Host Countries and Stimulate Innovation.

Share insights with host countries to improve practices and foster innovation.

2. Recommendations to Visiting Countries

Provide visiting countries with actionable recommendations for transferring successful practices to their educational systems.

3. Knowledge Enhancement within SIRIUS:

Strengthen the SIRIUS network by increasing knowledge on effective practices, fostering collaboration, and understanding the reasons behind success.

4. Peer Knowledge Enhancement:

Afford peers the opportunity to deepen their knowledge on specific topics and gain insights into practical implementation in the visiting country. Understand your own context better, becoming aware of new possibilities or steps to take, and situating your work in a broader context.

5. Inform Replicability:

Deep understanding of the hosting organization's context is crucial for assessing the replicability of their approaches in different environments.

6. Dissemination of Findings:

Share Peer Learning Visit findings through the SIRIUS 3.0 annual policy conference, National and Regional workshops, and other dissemination channels. Provide descriptions of good practices to schools and practitioners across the EU.

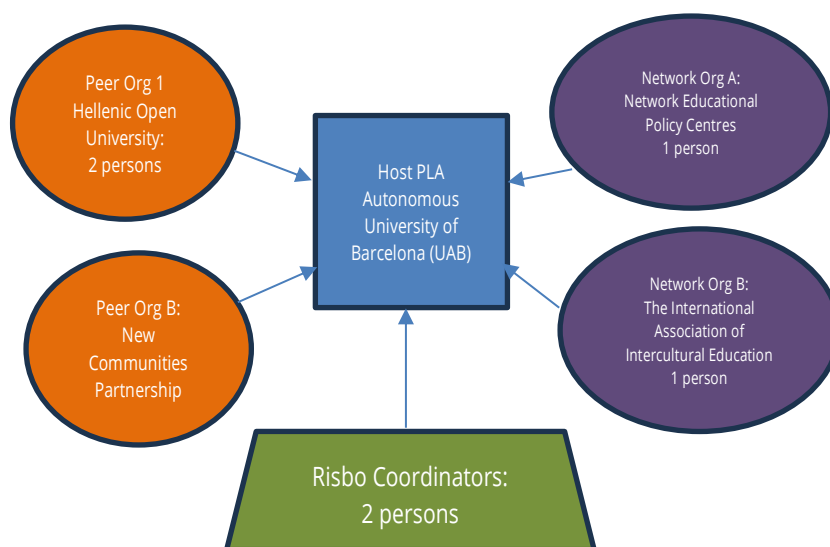
Objectives include Informing host countries on how they might further improve their practices and providing recommendations to visiting countries on how to transfer and apply practices in their educational systems. Peers will have the chance to enhance their understanding of specific topics and how to apply them in the visiting country. Finally, we will disseminate key findings and share insights with SIRIUS about what works and why, increasing knowledge and strengthening the network.

1.2 Methodology for Peer Learning Activities

The Peer Learning Visits will be implemented based on the established SIRIUS Peer Review methodology. This methodology was applied in SIRIUS reviews during the EC funded period 2012-2014, and further improved during the EAC/S28/2016 /Framework Partnership Agreement (SIRIUS 2.0) and in divers Erasmus+ projects by partners. The Peer Learning Activities (PLAs) are SIRIUS' means to consolidate good practice and promote knowledge transfer within the network. PLAs shall be organised in such a way that the good practice is presented from diverse perspectives of practitioners, policymakers and researchers. The visits shall ensure that the visiting teams have access to the implementing practitioners and to the beneficiaries of the practice, including on-site visits to schools, interviews with teachers, students, school leaders. The visiting teams (peer reviewers) shall be composed of mixed teams made up of practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

By inviting multiple stakeholders, the PLAs ensures an interesting field where practisioners, researchers and policy makers meet in an informal setting.

PLAs' objective is, on the one hand, to inform host countries on how they might further improve their practices and provide recommendations to visiting countries on how to transfer the practice to their educational systems. The Pear Learning Visits will thus ensure the increased knowledge within SIRIUS on what works and why, thereby strengthening the network. On the other hand, peers will have the chance to expand their knowledge in the visiting country on specific topics and obtain strategies to put the acquired knowledge into their local practice. Teams will be composed with two peers from each partner, alongside with two persons from two network organisations from the consortium. Leading to six peers in total and two coordinators from Risbo, the leading partner, making it a working peer group of eight professionals.





In a timeframe of four years (2023 - 2027), eight peer review activities will have been organised, where eight partner countries will have been able to organise a visit and sixteen partners will have been able to peer review an activity in another country.





2. Description of the Peer Learning Activity

2.1 Context

The Peer Learning Activity (PLA) held in Barcelona by the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) concentrated on youth intercultural education and preventing discrimination. It provided an essential forum for stakeholders to examine inclusive educational practices for migrant and refugee youth. Migrant and refugee youth in Catalonia often encounter barriers to education, including language differences, cultural misunderstandings, and instances of discrimination. These barriers can lead to feelings of alienation and impact students' academic performance and social integration. Schools and educational authorities are tasked with creating environments that not only support academic achievement but also promote a sense of belonging and respect for cultural diversity.

Through site visits, discussions, and analyses, the PLA aimed to unearth effective strategies, assess measurable outcomes, and formulate actionable recommendations to bolster intercultural education and combat discrimination within educational settings. Participants had the unique opportunity to witness the implementation of successful practices first-hand, engage in robust dialogues with educators, project leaders, and youth beneficiaries, and critically evaluate the transformative impact of these initiatives on creating inclusive and equitable learning environments.



Core principles emerged, emphasising holistic support, stakeholder collaboration, and culturally responsive pedagogy. Key insights highlighted challenges and promising strategies, advocating

for policy reforms and recognition of cultural diversity. Exemplary initiatives showcased by Antonio da Veiga Rocha (Mentoring programme), Laia Gomez-Franco Estrella (L'Associació MiRu, Mirada Rumiant), Pedro Casermeiro (Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne), Bernat Jiménez (Prometeus School Programme), and Maria Sans (Superacció Association) illuminated best practices in youth empowerment and intercultural education.

These initiatives ranged from empowering migrant youth for higher education to leveraging visual storytelling for social change and advocating for Romani rights and cultural inclusion in educational settings. By synthesising these insights and recommendations, the PLA aims to incite meaningful change in educational policies and practices across the European Union, paving the way for more inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive educational systems that empower migrant and refugee youth to thrive and contribute positively to society.

The programme looked as follows:

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2.2 Key Practice 1 Explored: Antonio Da Veiga Rocha

Antonio Da Veiga Rocha is a multi-disciplinary professional specialising in educational and creative spaces. He is the founder and director of KinSite Consultancy, a project that centralises diversity and equity understanding in social-production environments and the individual's social relations framework. More information can be found at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/antoniodaveigarocha/> and <https://www.kinsiteconsultancy.com/about-5>

Antonio da Veiga Rocha's keynote presentation explored the nuances of cultural integration through his experiences immigrating to



various countries. In his speech, he discussed the complexities of identity and the processes that contribute to cultural inclusion. Antonio shared anecdotes from his life as a Cape Verdean-Portuguese individual who immigrated to the United States and now Spain. Antonio shared his artwork, which included concepts of The Atlantic as an Identity and building a creative practice that focused on the African and African American/ African Caribbean / black experiences and studies. The works explore themes of identity, memory, and

generational stories.

Through his artwork and storytelling, he took the group through pivotal points in his life, highlighting the struggles and triumphs of adapting to a new environment. A key aspect of his journey was his recognition of the broader social contexts that influence educational and social barriers.

Antonio emphasised that humans are not static; they are constantly in transformation. He stressed the importance of looking beyond superficial appearances to understand more profound layers of identity. He urged us to take on the responsibility of exploring beneath the surface to truly grasp the complexity of human transformation and the term "trans" as an integral part of growth. Antonio emphasises the need for "poly professionalism"—the ability to take on various roles to address the educational and social challenges immigrants face. The implementation process involves adapting to changing circumstances and engaging with diverse stakeholders. This approach is crucial to creating inclusive environments where people feel valued and understood.



Additionally, Antonio reflects on the lessons learned from his journey, emphasising the importance of asking open-ended questions and diving beyond the superficial. He suggests that identity is not fixed but constantly evolving, requiring ongoing efforts to understand and adapt to cultural differences.

He stressed the importance of collaboration among educators, community leaders, and other professionals to address the multifaceted nature of cultural inclusion. He uses the "Ten Men or More" project, a mentoring program for boys as they journey through self-exploration, to illustrate how teams of people must work together to create meaningful change. This collaborative approach allows stakeholders to contribute their unique perspectives and skills to achieve common goals.

Antonio's presentation can guide future efforts in promoting cultural understanding and social integration, encouraging educators, professionals, and policymakers to create inclusive spaces where people feel free to explore their identities without fear of judgment. Antonio's speech contains valuable insights for policymakers and others in the field. Key elements include:

Key elements include the crucial roles of adaptability, cultural understanding, and collaboration in successful integration and the creation of more inclusive environments that drive positive change.

2.3 Key Practice 2 Explored: MiRu

MiRu focuses on integrating refugees and unaccompanied minors into the educational system through inclusive storytelling and multimedia projects. This practice emphasises giving a voice to marginalised groups by involving them in creating documentaries and other visual content. Documentary participants were involved in creating visual content and given roles in post-production, allowing them to contribute to the narrative's development and shape the final product.

During the visit, we interviewed the key players behind this project, Laia and Julia. The team drew inspiration from university social education programs, research on students, and the photographers who saw the need to reshape the narrative around young migrants. By engaging participants actively and allowing them to express their unique voices through photos, the project sought to



move beyond passive storytelling to create a lasting impact. Participants actively engage in non-formal workshops, creating visual stories and reflecting on their experiences. Developing these projects gives participants a voice and a “sense of belonging.”

The primary goal of MiRu is to provide a platform for refugees and unaccompanied minors to share their stories and connect with the local community. Activities include collaborative workshops, photography

sessions, and group discussions. These educational environments celebrate diversity and encourage creativity. A vital aspect is that participants are involved in all stages of the process, from ideation to production. Participants are not just subjects in a documentary but an integral part of the creative process.

MiRu is dedicated to developing projects in the field of Education for Global Justice. We use the documentary image as a tool for reflection, training, and creating activities that resist and oppose injustice. We intend to be first-person speakers of invisible and stigmatised lives, generating new narratives that transform the hegemonic androcentric collective imaginary from the visual arts.

MiRu aims to address the socio-economic challenges faced by refugees and unaccompanied minors. The implementation process involves extensive collaboration with educational centres and youth refugee facilities. Photographs and images were used in photojournalistic projects to communicate emotions that words might not be able to convey, enabling participants to share their experiences non-verbally. This participatory approach, focusing on visual communication, aimed to change the narrative around unaccompanied minors and other marginalised groups who may otherwise find it difficult to share their voice.

Stakeholder engagement was crucial to the success of MiRu’s multimedia projects and support services. Key stakeholders included educational centres, refugee support organisations, and local government agencies. Collaboration involved coordinating activities, providing tangible resources, and ensuring participants had access to necessary support systems. This alliance extended to loaning cameras and other equipment and providing stipends for specific projects. The network built around the practice also offered housing assistance and other social services to help participants navigate daily challenges.



Support for the project came from interns in these* centres, who worked closely with the participants. Interns announced and coordinated the projects, which included not just one but three separate initiatives. This level of involvement gave participants a sense of agency throughout the process and ensured they did not feel exploited. The network also provided more than just project guidance—it offered housing assistance and other services that made a tangible impact on their lives.

MiR representatives describe how they “design and execute educational actions with other young people from Catalonia and other regions to share visual creations and educate them on values. We have worked with peasant and indigenous movements in countries all over the world. In Catalonia, we have been creating communications for five years with young people from Morocco who arrived in Europe without positive adult references, as well as with young people in non-formal educational fields.”

Challenges included coordinating schedules, ensuring adequate resources, and managing different realities among participants regarding status and support. The initial version of the documentary caused disagreement due to unclear messaging, requiring a re-evaluation of the practice's goals.

Additionally, the value of a subjective, participant-led approach became evident, leading to a more authentic and engaging narrative. Reflecting on these insights, a potential for inclusive storytelling to drive positive change in educational and social settings emerged.

The participants also found strength in their community and word-of-mouth networking, with incentives provided to keep them engaged. After the project ended, individual and group reflection sessions allowed participants to assess their journey and articulate their growth. Role reversals fostered a collaborative atmosphere while motivating participants and keeping them actively involved.

Measurable outcomes included the successful production of documentaries and other visual content that reflected the participants' lived experiences. The impact was observed through increased community engagement and a shift in perceptions about refugees and unaccompanied minors. Quantitative data demonstrated a rise in positive feedback and a growing network of supporters. Qualitative data, such as participant testimonials, highlighted the personal growth and sense of empowerment participants gained from the practice.

The emphasis on inclusivity and participant involvement can serve as a model for other educational programs and EU policy recommendations. By allowing participants to lead the narrative, the practice fosters a sense of ownership and community integration. The vision for this project focused on dignity and a sense of value and agency for the participants. By creating and sharing their stories, the participants became active contributors to the community rather than merely subjects of the documentary. The team behind the project emphasised non-formal workshops and social outings to encourage a learner-teacher dynamic, bridging the gap between



established residents and newcomers. Laila describes how her role has shifted from being a mother to becoming a sister and her aspirations to transition into a friend and colleague as well, showing how this program fosters a sense of family and community beyond the project's scope.

2.4 Key Practice 3 Explored: Prometheus

Prometheus is a municipal program dedicated to ensuring that all students have equitable access to higher education, regardless of economic and social backgrounds. They support young people from public institutes in neighbourhoods with lower-than-average university rates in pursuing their academic goals and achieving a college degree. Originating as a Raval community project in the 2016-2017 academic year, today's initiative constitutes a program promoted by the Neighborhood Plan with the collaboration of Barcelona Science and Universities. Currently, the program's day-to-day operations are managed by the Raval Comprehensive Educational Association and the AFEV.

Prometheus is executed in close collaboration with the Barcelona Education Consortium and Ciutat Vella, Sant Martí, and Nou Barris



districts. Additionally, eight public institutes are part of the program: the city's public universities (University of Barcelona (UB), Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), Polytechnic University of Catalonia (UPC) and Pompeu Fabra University (UPF)), as well as the Open University of Catalonia (UOC). In 2016-2020,

Prometheus, in collaboration with Barcelona Science and Universities, adopted the Neighborhood Plan as its own. Together, they added economic and human resources to the plan to strengthen and extend it to other neighbourhoods with similar characteristics. The funding provided by the City Council of Barcelona guarantees the project's continuation. The budget has been gradually increased as the project proceeds.

We met Bernat Jimenez, the Barcelona project manager of Prometheus, at the High School Institut Barri Besos, one of the eight high schools in Barcelona involved in the project. He explained that the project aims to motivate, support, and encourage youngsters from migrant backgrounds to consider attending university and eventually achieving success in higher education. The project supports the



students academically, technically, socially, and economically and accompanies them from high school until they finish their university studies. This support also includes assistance with procedures such as scholarship applications and enrolment, as well as financial support tailored to the specific needs of each pupil.

The students should be enrolled in schools participating in the project and from the neighbourhoods the project targets. They should be motivated to pursue university studies, willing to accept the group's dynamics, and eager to join the school community and participate in the social commitments expected of young Prometheus men and women. In the 2023-2024 academic year, 92 young people joined Prometheus, 80% more than the previous academic year and the highest number since the program began.

"It is also the course with the most significant direct access to the university, with 54 young people, 27 from each entity, which is 42% more than in 2022-2023." As for new graduates, the class of this course is made up of 15 young people.

As of the 2023-2024 academic year, 300 young people have accompanied the program since 2016, including 37 graduates. 220 participants are active university students, 80 are in transition, and most are engaged in a higher degree training cycle. Together with the two previous promotions, 37 young people have completed their university studies to date, which is the program's primary objective. Women constitute about 60% of the participants.

The project manager described Prometheus's primary goal as achieving social integration and social commitment to the school community and activities. B. Jimenez emphasised that although the primary objective is to help children from migrant backgrounds achieve initial access to university, the project also aims to ensure success during their studies and beyond, supporting them after graduation by helping them find a job in their field. This is achieved in collaboration with universities and Barcelona Activa, among others. B. Jimenez suggests that the "holistic" accompaniment they provide- academic, emotional, psychological, practical, and economical- makes a difference for this project. The majority of the student population of the universities comes from middle- and high-class backgrounds, and very few come from migrant families. The project aims to alleviate the challenges that arise from these differences and provide migrant students with chances for social mobility through education while simultaneously eliminating social discrimination against migrant students.

The manager also emphasised that mentoring plays an essential role within the framework of study accompaniment, thanks to the collaboration of volunteers. The project also provides private classes to university students who need additional help with their studies.

The increased number of Prometheus young people at university achieving academic success has been made possible by an increasingly intense and systematic dedication on the part of all the universities, manifested in the growing number of people, services, and units



involved, as well as in the increase in resources allocated to Prometheus students in the form of salary scholarships from universities. While the universities involved are public institutions there are still fees ranging from 1.200,00 to 2.000,00 Euros per year. The project provides these fees for Prometheus students in the form of scholarships, removing the financial barrier for students from low-income families, especially for those achieving high grades.

During their university studies, Prometheus students receive both academic and personal support and monitoring from the program's representatives in close collaboration with the universities. At the same time, they accompany each other, share experiences, and actively participate in talks held regularly at the institutes to motivate students from similar backgrounds to continue studying and attract their attention to the program. In this way, they become references and role models in their neighbourhood while reinforcing their educational imagination, a central value of the program.

The implementation process includes organising meetings with families, giving information about the program, and empowering students to set goals for higher education. While the program encourages familial support, families are not involved in the actual project. The stakeholders are the schools, the Universities, and the local authorities. Students are motivated to participate voluntarily and get involved in weekly coaching meetings at participating schools, extracurricular activities, and university visits. Successful participants also participate to encourage younger students through face-to-face meetings.

Two program beneficiaries, currently students at the University, shared their experiences from the Prometheus project with us. They were both very enthusiastic about their studies and experience in the program. The female student, currently studying to become a primary education teacher, described the Prometheus as the pillar in her life that helped her discover herself. She stated: "Prometheus helped me in the journey to get to know myself, my capacities and abilities [...] and guided me to choose my field of studies". The male student emphasised that the program encouraged him to continue his education and to choose what was best for him to study. He suggested that his family was not very supportive initially and did not value university studies. Nevertheless, they accepted his decision to study Mechanical Engineering. Both Prometheus students consider themselves lucky and expressed gratitude for the academic, practical, and emotional support and guidance provided by Prometheus.

2.5 Key Practice 4 Explored: Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne

Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne highlights the importance of preserving and celebrating Romani culture while advocating for the rights of Romani youth.

In the context of the PLA focus on intercultural education and prevention of discrimination, Pedro Casermeiro, the director of Romani Siklovne, provided profound insights into the challenges and aspirations of the Romani youth community in Spain. Pedro's impassioned



advocacy revealed the deep-rooted historical injustices and persistent systemic discrimination faced by Romani youth despite their centuries-long presence in Spain. The organisation's primary objective revolves around fostering academic success among Romani students in Barcelona's Bon Pastor suburb, a demographic often marginalised and overlooked within the education system. Romani Siklovne's efforts extend beyond academic support, encompassing broader objectives of cultural preservation and social empowerment. Pedro highlighted the linguistic struggles stemming from the 1749 genocide that nearly wiped out the Romani language. This tragic event resulted in the emergence of a mixed dialect, known as the Kalo dialect, which poses communication barriers within the Spanish Romani community. Addressing these linguistic challenges is intertwined with the organisation's mission to promote Romani ethnic identity and combat the erasure of cultural heritage.



Moreover, the Romani Siklovne actively confronts societal prejudices and institutional biases through advocacy for equality in education and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. Pedro emphasised the need to recognise the Romani community's history and accountability for past injustices, advocating for memorial justice and transitional justice initiatives. By engaging with policymakers and educational institutions, the organisation aims to effect policy reforms that foster inclusivity and dismantle systemic barriers hindering Romani youth's educational attainment and social integration.

In practical terms, the Romani Siklovne implements tailored support programs to enhance Romani students' academic performance, provide mentorship, and facilitate access to educational resources. These initiatives empower Romani youth academically and instil pride in their cultural heritage, fostering resilience against discrimination and internalised marginalisation. The organisation endeavours to challenge stereotypes and promote understanding and acceptance of the Romani community's diverse cultural contributions through community outreach and awareness campaigns.

Recommendations for Mediation in Dialogue with the Government:

Policy Advocacy Coalition: Formulating a coalition of NGOs, civil society organisations, and academic institutions to collectively advocate for Romani rights and educational reforms. This coalition can present unified policy recommendations to the government, emphasising the urgency of addressing systemic discrimination and promoting inclusive education policies.

Engagement Platforms: Establishing regular dialogue platforms between Romani community leaders, policymakers, and government representatives to facilitate constructive discussions on policy priorities, resource allocation, and implementation strategies. These platforms can provide a space for mutual understanding, collaboration, and accountability in addressing Romani youth's educational needs.



Policy Briefs and Research: Developing evidence-based policy briefs and research reports highlighting the socio-economic challenges faced by Romani youth and the potential policy interventions to address these challenges. These documents can serve as advocacy tools in negotiations with the government, presenting compelling data and case studies to support policy recommendations.

Community Empowerment Workshops: Organising workshops and training sessions for Romani youth and community members to enhance their advocacy skills, leadership capabilities, and understanding of government processes. Empowering the community to effectively articulate their needs and engage in meaningful dialogue with policymakers strengthens their position in advocating for policy reforms.

Public Awareness Campaigns: Launching public awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the Romani community's cultural heritage, history, and contributions to Spanish society. These campaigns can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, and generate public support for inclusive policies that promote Romani youth's educational and social inclusion.

In conclusion, by employing these mediation strategies, Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne can effectively engage with the government, advocate for Romani rights, and advance policy reforms that promote educational equity and social justice for Romani youth in Spain.

The discussions and insights shared from successful experiences in mediating with policymakers produced several practical recommendations for opening dialogue with the government and effecting positive change in legislation related to the Romani community.

We highlighted the importance of formulating a coalition of NGOs, civil society organisations, and academic institutions to advocate for Romani rights and educational reforms collectively. This policy advocacy coalition can present unified policy recommendations to the government, emphasising the urgency of addressing systemic discrimination and promoting inclusive education policies.

Establishing regular dialogue platforms between Romani community leaders, policymakers, and government representatives is important to facilitate constructive discussions on policy priorities, resource allocation, and implementation strategies. These platforms can provide a space for mutual understanding, collaboration, and accountability in addressing Romani youth's educational needs.

Additionally, developing evidence-based policy briefs and research reports highlighting the socio-economic challenges faced by Romani youth and the potential policy interventions to address these challenges. These documents can serve as advocacy tools in negotiations with the government, presenting compelling data and case studies to support policy recommendations.

Organising workshops and training sessions for Romani youth and community members to enhance their advocacy skills, leadership capabilities, and understanding of government processes. Empowering the community to effectively articulate their needs and engage in meaningful dialogue with policymakers strengthens their position in advocating for policy reforms.

Finally, we suggest launching public awareness campaigns to raise awareness about the Romani community's cultural heritage, history, and contributions to Spanish society. These campaigns can foster empathy, dispel stereotypes, and generate public support for inclusive policies that promote Romani youth's educational and social inclusion.



In conclusion, by employing these mediation strategies, Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne can effectively engage with the government, advocate for Romani rights, and advance policy reforms that promote educational equity and social justice for Romani youth in Spain.

2.6 Key Practice 5 Explored: Associació Superacció

Superacció demonstrated the impact of community-based projects and grassroots activism in addressing discrimination and promoting social justice among youth. "We aim to support minors who have been mistreated by the system and provide a holistic support system tailored to each individual's needs." - Quote from Superacció representative.



Following the peer learning activities, we gathered comprehensive insights into Superacció's pioneering efforts in migrant education services, particularly in Barcelona, Spain. Notably, their dedicated work with unaccompanied minors originating from Morocco and the Canary Islands, who have endured significant trauma during perilous migration journeys by boat. Addressing this pressing issue, Superacció has strategically outlined plans to establish a dedicated centre in the Canary Islands, aiming to mitigate the

risks associated with minors embarking on dangerous sea voyages. With an impressive success rate of 75%, Superacció's impactful interventions have positively influenced the lives of approximately 5,600 young individuals since their inception in 2012.

Superacció's operational framework is underpinned by a committed team of staff, educators, and volunteers who collectively deliver a diverse range of supportive services. Among these offerings are comprehensive accommodation facilities, a varied program of sports activities, and psychological support tailored to navigate complex intercultural and social dynamics. Leveraging innovative approaches such as transcultural psychology, Superacció utilizes sports like triathlon to promote emotional well-being and resilience among their beneficiaries. Moreover, the program offers individualised support mechanisms to address addiction and trauma-related challenges, coupled with robust education and independent living skills training. Recognizing the pivotal role of employment in fostering long-term integration, Superacció places significant emphasis on facilitating pathways to sustainable livelihoods for their beneficiaries.

A fundamental tenet of Superacció's operational philosophy is prioritising quality over quantity, emphasising the importance of maintaining manageable cohort sizes to ensure personalised attention and effective intervention. This tailored approach has been



instrumental in yielding impactful outcomes and fostering enduring connections with beneficiaries. Superacció's success stories extend beyond mere program participation, with many beneficiaries assuming leadership roles within the organisation or returning as adults to contribute through work or volunteering opportunities. This remarkable trajectory underscores the profound and lasting impact of Superacció's migrant education services on the lives and communities they serve.

Superacció's commitment to community-based projects and grassroots activism, particularly in empowering marginalised youth facing discrimination and social injustice, is evident through its holistic approach, which provides a diverse array of supportive services tailored to each individual's needs.

Superacció's primary goal is to empower marginalised youth facing poverty, homelessness, and undocumented status by providing comprehensive support systems tailored to their specific needs. Their activities encompass a wide range of interventions, including housing, education, sports, language learning, and extracurricular activities. Their context in Barcelona, Spain, is marked by a commitment to addressing the trauma, isolation, and mental health struggles prevalent among the youth they serve.

Superacció's implementation processes are characterised by their commitment to quality over quantity, ensuring personalised attention and effective intervention for beneficiaries. Their approach involves engaging a dedicated team of staff, educators, and volunteers to deliver diverse, supportive services while prioritising manageable cohort sizes for maximum effectiveness. Operational highlights underscore an engagement-driven methodology that analyses participants' needs and provides holistic support, incorporating psychological and emotional assistance at both group and individual levels and often collaborating with families. Superacció ensures a comprehensive intervention process that promotes social integration and reintegration by addressing multifaceted aspects of participants' lives.

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration are integral to Superacció's operations. They work closely with local communities, government agencies, and other organisations to enhance their impact and reach and the sustainability of their projects. The program's success is reinforced by its partnership with public health agencies and educational institutions, which ensures comprehensive support for the youth it serves. Additionally, they actively involve families (when possible) in empowering young relatives and providing emotional support. Superacció creates a support network that enhances their interventions' impact and promotes community engagement and ownership.

Superacció's initiatives boast significant and measurable positive outcomes, with a commendable success rate of 75% and approximately 5,600 individuals positively impacted since program inception.



The organisation's activities revolve around two core pillars: social integration through sports and personal development training. Utilising sports, art expression, and physical activities, Superacció provides avenues for physical health while fostering resilience and life skills among vulnerable youth. Notably, their use of sports, particularly triathlon training, as a tool for socio-educational intervention stood out as an innovative approach.

The Triathlon training program promotes socio-educational insertion by instilling values of discipline, teamwork, and healthy competition, benefiting over a thousand participants. Beyond sports, Superacció offers holistic support through workshops, counselling sessions, and skill-building activities, enhancing participants' emotional well-being and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, Superacció provides round-the-clock accommodation facilities, ensuring a safe environment for vulnerable youth and offering ongoing extracurricular activities tailored to individual needs and interests.

Superacció's holistic support system, tailored interventions, and innovative use of sports as a tool for socio-educational intervention could serve as valuable models for organisations and policymakers working with marginalised youth. Their emphasis on personalised support, innovative methodologies, and stakeholder collaboration offers valuable insights for organisations and policymakers working in youth empowerment and social inclusion. Recommendations include prioritising comprehensive support systems, integrating sports-based interventions, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders to address the diverse needs of marginalised youth effectively.

Superacció has faced challenges such as addressing trauma and mental health struggles among participants and ensuring sustainable funding for its initiatives. Other challenges include resource constraints, navigating complex intercultural dynamics, and addressing the diverse needs of beneficiaries. Despite these hurdles, Superacció remains committed to its mission and continues to adapt and innovate to meet the evolving needs of the communities it serves.

Through their peer learning activity, Superacció has gained valuable insights into the importance of holistic support, stakeholder collaboration, and innovation in addressing the complex needs of marginalised youth. Their experience underscores the necessity of adaptability, resilience, and a steadfast commitment to equity and social justice in achieving meaningful and sustainable impact in intercultural education and combating discrimination among youth. Superacció's emphasis on personalised support, stakeholder collaboration, and innovative approaches in empowering marginalised youth offers crucial lessons for future practices and policy recommendations in the field.





3. Take aways, Conclusion and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

In the pursuit of fostering inclusive societies, it's imperative to address the unique challenges faced by youth from diverse cultural backgrounds as they navigate their identities and integrate into new communities. The PLA group has delved into various initiatives to promote intercultural education to combat discrimination and enhance the educational inclusion of migrant and refugee pupils. The aim was to identify inclusive education practices for students with foreign backgrounds, with a particular focus on the Spanish region of Barcelona, and to highlight effective strategies, measurable outcomes, and recommendations for improvement through an in-depth analysis of expert insights and organisational efforts, including:

- Conducting site visits to local education institutions to observe and document successful inclusion practices.
- Participating in in-depth conversations centred on understanding the influence of cultural disparities, societal obstacles, and communication intricacies within educational environments.
- Facilitating dialogues with educators, project leaders, and young beneficiaries to understand their projects' role in fostering educational inclusion.
- Analysing the implemented measures to dismantle social barriers and cultivate environments conducive to intercultural dialogue and understanding.
- The pivotal role of parental support and encouragement in facilitating the integration and academic success of migrant youth.
- Recognition of the intricate interplay between cultural nuances and educational dynamics, necessitating individually tailored approaches to foster inclusivity.
- Addressing systemic barriers and biases within educational institutions is imperative for creating equitable learning environments for all students.

The journey towards inclusive education for migrant youth is fraught with challenges and invaluable lessons.



3.2 Key takeaways

1. **Holistic Support Structures:** Recognizing the multifaceted needs of migrant youth, it is critical to establish holistic support structures encompassing academic, emotional, and psychological dimensions to facilitate their integration and academic success.
2. **Empowerment and Leadership:** Acknowledging power dynamics, initiatives should prioritize empowering young people, providing them with leadership roles, setting high expectations, and nurturing independence.
3. **Preservation of Cultural Identity:** Striking a delicate balance between preserving cultural identity and facilitating adaptation to new environments underscores the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in fostering inclusivity.
4. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The involvement of stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, community organizations, and youth themselves, is fundamental in driving systemic change and fostering inclusive educational practices.

3.3 Insights Gained

Project initiatives which exemplify best practices in youth empowerment and intercultural education:

1. Antonio da Veiga Rocha's Presentation: Antonio emphasised the challenges faced by migrant youth in negotiating their identities and integrating into new communities. He highlighted the importance of cultural awareness and acceptance in fostering inclusive environments for youth.
2. Documentary Image, L'Associació MiRu (Mirada Rumiant): Laia Eatrella's compelling visual narratives challenge stereotypes and foster empathy, serving as catalysts for dialogue and social change. She showcased the power of documentary images in promoting justice and inclusion for marginalised communities, including migrant youth. Documentary participants were given a role in developing the narrative and shaping the final product, imbuing them with a sense of agency and responsibility. Through visual storytelling, Laia aimed to challenge stereotypes and encourage empathy and understanding.
3. Romani Rights Advocacy, Associació Cultural Gitana Rromane Siklövne : Pedro's impassioned advocacy for Romani rights highlights historical injustices and ongoing systemic discrimination faced by Romani youth in Spain and emphasised the importance of advocating for policy reforms to foster intercultural understanding and promoting intercultural dialogue and equality in the education system and equality in education.



4. Empowering Migrant Youth for Higher Education, Prometheus School Programme: Bernat Jiménez leads the Prometheus School Programme, offering vital support and guidance to youngsters from migrant backgrounds aspiring for higher education. By prioritising motivation and providing tailored support, Prometheus not only opens doors to higher education but also equips students with the tools and resilience needed to thrive in their academic and professional pursuits. Through its unwavering commitment to inclusion and empowerment, the programme paves the way for a brighter future for countless young individuals, breaking barriers and transforming lives.

5. Nurturing Holistic Empowerment for Marginalised Youth, Superacció Association: Superacció emerges as a beacon of hope for marginalised youth, offering a comprehensive empowerment approach. Under the coordination of Maria Sans, Superacció orchestrates practical sessions aimed at uplifting at-risk youth, integrating activities spanning from triathlon training to artistic expression. These sessions foster social integration and personal growth while providing essential services like accommodation and psychological support. Committed to equal opportunities and addressing complex issues like addiction and trauma, Superacció delivers tailored support from inception to autonomy, empowering each individual on their journey to success.

3.4 Conclusions from the PLA in Barcelona

From the diverse perspectives, experiences, and insights shared by stakeholders, several key systematic approaches have emerged as essential for the successful implementation of inclusive education initiatives. These approaches are critical for creating equitable access to diverse learning environments.

I. **Systematic Approaches:**

- **Individual Needs Assessments:** Conducting thorough assessments to identify and prioritize the unique challenges faced by migrant youth.
- **Professional Development:** Providing ongoing training and capacity-building for educators to enhance their cultural competence and teaching effectiveness.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborating with community organizations, governmental agencies, and civil society stakeholders to leverage collective resources and expertise.

II. **Stakeholder Engagement:**

- **Educators:** Serving as frontline agents of change by shaping the learning experiences and environments of migrant youth.
- **Policymakers:** Enacting legislative reforms and allocating resources to support inclusive education practices.



- Community Organizations: Acting as valuable allies by providing essential support services and advocacy efforts tailored to the needs of migrant youth and their families.
- Youth: Actively shaping their educational journeys, advocating for their rights, and fostering intercultural dialogue within their communities and schools.

III. **Measuring Impact:**

- Academic Achievement: Establishing metrics to gauge the educational progress and attainment of migrant youth compared to their peers.
- Social Integration: Assessing the extent to which migrant youth feel connected and included within their school communities.
- Emotional Well-being: Monitoring psychosocial outcomes to gain insights into the holistic development and resilience of migrant youth.
- Policy Impact Evaluations: Measuring the effectiveness of advocacy efforts in driving systemic change and fostering intercultural understanding within educational systems.

IV. **Promoting Youth Empowerment and Intercultural Education:**

- Concerted Efforts: Collaboration across sectors is essential to promote intercultural education and empower youth.
- Professional Development: Prioritizing initiatives that enhance cultural competence and pedagogical effectiveness among educators.
- Policy Advocacy: Pushing for policy reforms and investments in education systems that prioritize the needs of migrant youth and foster intercultural understanding and acceptance.
- Youth Empowerment: Empowering youth as active agents of change, fostering their agency, and amplifying their voices in shaping inclusive educational practices and policies.

3.5 Recommendations for Practitioners and EU Policymakers

Based on the insights gathered from the PLA, the following recommendations are proposed for practitioners and EU policymakers:

I. **Promote Participatory Practices:**

- Implement role reversal dynamics in programs, allowing participants to take an active role in shaping their stories. This approach fosters greater empowerment and a stronger sense of inclusion.

II. **Develop Robust Support Networks:**

- Establish comprehensive support systems that address various needs of refugees and unaccompanied minors, including housing, health, education, social services, and opportunities for reflection and feedback.



III. Foster Collaboration Among Stakeholders:

- Engage a diverse group of stakeholders, including educational institutions, community organizations, and government agencies, to create a collaborative approach to integration. Such collaboration can lead to more effective and sustainable outcomes.

IV. Ensure Flexibility in Program Implementation:

- Design flexible programs that can adapt to the unique challenges that may arise, addressing cultural differences and other logistical issues to facilitate smoother implementation processes.

V. Encourage Positive Community Engagement:

- Support initiatives that positively influence community perceptions of refugees and unaccompanied minors. This can be achieved through participatory projects that share personal stories, combat harmful stereotypes, and build bridges between different groups.

VI. Provide Mental Health Support:

- Develop partnerships with trained mental health professionals and ensure access to mental health services. Providing counseling and therapy helps participants process their experiences, manage stress, and maintain a positive outlook as they integrate into society or pursue higher education. This support is crucial for addressing trauma and promoting emotional healing, which is often overlooked.

These recommendations aim to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for refugees and unaccompanied minors, fostering successful integration and social cohesion. The PLA event in Barcelona underscored the importance of these approaches and the collective efforts needed to enhance inclusive education for migrant youth. By continuing to work together, we can create more equitable and supportive learning environments for all.