

DIFE: Digital Integration for Equality

## PR: National Report

### **PR: IDENTIFICATION OF BARRIERS FACED BY ROMA AND MIGRANTS IN THE FIELD OF ADULT EDUCATION**

Responsible Partner: Initiative – Centre for Education, Croatia

*October 2023*



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### **Notes for partners<sup>1</sup>**

*Please, draft this National report (EN) based on references, evidence and activity reports provided through the National Reporting and specific Templates*

*This report should count a minimum of 15 pages, not exceeding the lengths of 30 pages.*

Interviews and Focus Group reports shall be submitted as part of the national fieldwork reports, as annexes. Consent forms shall be kept separate from interview recordings, and reports. The electronic or hard copies of **consent forms** should be kept with the partner organisations, and **NOT shared with the IO1 coordinator**.

The **file name** of qualitative data is required to be saved in the following way:

- A. **Interview code** = Fieldwork country\_I\_No. of interview [Example: IT\_I\_2]
- B. **Focus group code** = Fieldwork country\_FG\_No. of FG [Example: CY\_FG\_1]

All partners will deliver national context information collected during desk research and fieldwork:

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<sup>1</sup> This section is for internal use: to be deleted

## 1. General data on the population of the Roma and Migrants in Croatia

- 1.1 Roma and Migrant population in Croatia country (number, age, gender balance, country of origin)

The 2021 census recorded that there are 17,980 Roma in Croatia. However, according to unofficial data from the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, 30,000 to 40,000 Roma currently live in Croatia, which means that a large number of them do not declare themselves as Roma, but under some other nationality.

As for migrants in Croatia, it is not possible to determine the exact number. If we talk about refugees, according to [official government data](#) from 2022., more than 8,600 refugees resided in Croatia. Official statistics for the first half of 2023 show that over 24,000 people applied for asylum in Croatia, while only 15 asylum applications were approved. Most of these refugees come from Ukraine due to the conflict in that country, but there are also refugees from other parts of the world who seek asylum in Croatia. As for economic migrants, there are significantly more of them in Croatia. It is also not possible to determine the exact number, given that a large number of them entered Croatia in the last few years. According to [official data from the Ministry of the Interior](#), a total of 172,499 residence and work permits were issued in 2023. Out of the total number of issued residence and work permits, 112,981 permits were issued for new employment, 40,660 for extending permits, and 18,858 for seasonal workers, most of them in tourism. and catering (16,882). Of that number, over 38,000 permits were issued to citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, over 24,000 to citizens of Serbia, over 23,000 to citizens from Nepal, over 15,000 to citizens from India, over 10,000 to citizens from the Philippines, over 8,000 to citizens from Bangladesh.

Data on gender are not available for migrant workers, but statistical indicators by gender are available for those seeking international protection - according to these data, in March 2024, a total of 1,181 women applied for asylum and 4,862 men.

Statistical data on the gender of members of the Roma national minority are not officially kept.

## 2. Key findings and barriers regarding Roma and Migrants education and training that raise their integration

- 2.1 Current situation: living conditions, employment, health, involvement in public life, as well as in education and training opportunities
- 2.2 Drop-out of Roma and Migrants learners (rate, reasons)
- 2.3 Most frequent Adult qualifications and courses acquired

2.1. As for the Roma in Croatia, the living conditions remain challenging, with many facing significant poverty and social exclusion. According to a report by the [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#), a substantial proportion of the Roma population lives in substandard housing without basic amenities like running water and electricity. Overcrowded living conditions are common, exacerbating health and social issues. Employment rates among the Roma community in Croatia are [notably low](#). Discrimination and a lack of education and training opportunities are major barriers to employment. Many Roma are engaged in informal, low-paid jobs, with few enjoying stable and formal employment. Initiatives are in place to improve job prospects for Roma, but progress is slow, and many still face significant barriers to entering the formal job market. Health outcomes for Roma in Croatia are generally poor. Limited access to healthcare services, coupled with the poor living conditions, contributes to higher rates of illness and lower life expectancy. Many Roma communities face barriers to accessing health services, including discrimination and a lack of awareness about available healthcare options. Roma participation in public life and decision-making processes remains limited. Discrimination and social exclusion often prevent Roma from engaging fully in civic activities. Efforts are being made to increase Roma representation in local and national politics, but significant gaps remain. Education for Roma children is improving but still lags behind the general population. Many Roma children attend segregated schools or classes and face higher dropout rates. There are initiatives to support Roma education, such as additional classes in the Roma language and programs aimed at reducing dropout rates. However, educational attainment remains a significant challenge, impacting their long-term employment prospects.

Regarding migrants in Croatia, many face various challenges regarding their living conditions. Many reside in temporary accommodation centers which can be overcrowded and lack adequate facilities. This often results in substandard living conditions, impacting their quality of life. [The government](#) has been making efforts to improve housing conditions by providing housing units for up to two years for those seeking international protection and lacking financial resources. Employment opportunities for migrants in Croatia are gradually improving. Legal reforms have made it easier for migrants to enter the labor market. For example, migrants seeking international protection can start working three months after their application if they have no financial resources. However, many still face barriers such as language differences, recognition of qualifications, and discrimination. Seasonal work in agriculture, tourism, and forestry is common among migrants due to relaxed labor market tests for these sectors. [Access](#) to healthcare for migrants has been a significant concern. The Croatian healthcare system, while extensive, often presents barriers for migrants, such as language and cultural differences, and limited awareness of available services. Efforts are being made to integrate migrant health needs into national health policies, improve service provision, and train healthcare providers on culturally sensitive service delivery. Migrants' involvement in public life is limited, primarily due to language barriers, discrimination, and a lack of information about their rights and opportunities. Legal frameworks are in place to protect migrants' rights, but practical implementation often falls short. Efforts to involve migrants more in public life include initiatives to provide legal aid, information services, and support for civic participation. Education and training opportunities for migrants are improving but remain inconsistent. Migrant children have the right to primary and secondary education, and there are programs

aimed at helping them integrate, such as language classes. However, the dropout rate among migrant children is high, and access to higher education and vocational training is limited. Policies are being developed to better include migrant children and adults in the education system, but significant gaps remain.

2.2. The dropout rates among the Roma population in Croatia are significantly higher compared to the general population. Approximately two out of three Roma children do not complete their primary education. This high dropout rate starts early and continues to worsen as children progress through the education system. The situation does not improve in secondary education, where the dropout rates remain high. Only a small fraction of Roma students continue their education beyond the primary level. Less than one percent of Roma youth reach tertiary education. A significant proportion of Roma adults do not complete adult education programs. This is largely due to socio-economic factors, language barriers, and a lack of targeted support. Efforts are being made to address these issues, including targeted educational programs and initiatives to provide better support for Roma adults. However, much work remains to be done to ensure that Roma adults have equal opportunities to complete their education and improve their socio-economic status.

Migrant students have higher dropout rates compared to native Croatian students, primarily due to language barriers, socio-economic difficulties, and frequent relocations. Dropout rates in vocational education are particularly high. Migrants often struggle to complete VET programs due to inadequate support and resources tailored to their needs. The tertiary educational attainment rate for non-EU citizens is considerably lower than for Croatian nationals, reflecting difficulties in accessing and completing higher education.

(sources: <file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/UNICEF-2022-Education-pathways-in-Roma-settlements.pdf>  
<https://harvardpolitics.com/roma-education/> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Early leavers from education and training](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Early_leavers_from_education_and_training) <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/115b87dd-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/115b87dd-en> )

### 3. Adult system and programmes in Croatia

- 3.1 Characteristics of the Adult system and context (length, professions, subjects, qualifications)
- 3.2 Continuing professional development system of Adult trainers, educators

3.1. The education system in the Republic of Croatia includes several levels through which educational activities are carried out, namely: early and preschool education, primary school education, secondary school education, higher education and adult education (formal and informal). [The Ministry of Science and Education \(MSE\)](#) is the competent ministry for the field of education and it performs administrative and other tasks related to the education system in Croatia. Regarding adult education, in charge of planning, developing, organising, implementing, monitoring and improving the design of vocational education and adult education is the [Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education \(AVETA\)](#).

The most essential steps in the development of the adult education system are the adoption of the [Adult Education Strategy](#) in November 2004 by the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the establishment of the Adult Education Agency by Government Decree in May 2006 (Agency for VET and Adult Education since 2010, further: The Agency) and the adoption of the Adult Education Act in February 2007.

The Act stipulates that adult education is based on the following principles: lifelong learning; rational use of educational opportunities, territorial proximity and universal access to education under equal conditions and following the abilities; freedom and autonomy in choosing the manner of content, form, means and methods; respect for diversity and inclusion; professional and ethical responsibilities of andragogic workers; guarantees of the quality of the educational offer and respect for the personality and dignity of each participant.

The two main goals of adult education are: 1. Acquiring individual transversal competencies – initiative and entrepreneurship, learning how to learn, cultural expression, social inclusion (volunteer, environmental, political, and similar activism), adopting and applying democratic values and attitudes, parenting skills, creative and artistic appreciation and expression, developing basic economic, financial, and media literacy, etc. 2. Acquiring knowledge and skills that specifically enable employability, greater adaptability, i.e., mobility in the labour market.

3.2. The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) system in Croatia for adult trainers and educators is structured to ensure that educators continuously enhance their skills and knowledge to meet the evolving demands of adult education. This system is vital for maintaining high educational standards and ensuring that trainers are well-equipped to provide quality education. The CPD system for adult educators in Croatia is governed by the Adult Education Act and aligned with the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF). These regulations ensure that adult education is consistent with national educational standards and European guidelines. Adult educators can participate in formal education programs offered by universities and higher education institutions. These programs include postgraduate studies and specialized courses designed to enhance pedagogical skills and subject-specific knowledge.

Numerous workshops and seminars are organized by educational institutions, professional associations, and NGOs. These events cover various topics, including innovative teaching methods, digital competencies, and inclusive education practices. The Croatian government and European Union provide funding and grants to support the CPD of adult educators. Programs such as Erasmus+ offer opportunities for educators to participate in international training and exchange programs, enhancing their professional skills and expanding their educational networks.

## 4. Policies targeting Roma and Migrants in Croatia

### - 4.1 National and European Policies

#### National and European Policies Targeting Roma in Croatia

##### National Policies

1. *National Plan for the Inclusion of Roma (2021-2027)* The Croatian government has established the National Plan for the Inclusion of Roma for the period 2021-2027. This strategic document aims to enhance the integration of the Roma community into Croatian society and reduce the gap between Roma and the general population in key areas such as education, employment, health, housing, and social inclusion. The plan includes specific measures and actions to promote equality, combat discrimination, and improve living conditions for the Roma community. The plan is aligned with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, the Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities, and other relevant national laws and policies.

- Source: <https://pravamanjina.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/NPUR%202021-2027/Nacionalni%20plan%20za%20uklju%C4%8Divanje%20Roma.pdf>

2. *Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Plan for the Inclusion of Roma (2021-2022)* This action plan details the specific activities and indicators to be achieved in the first two years of the National Plan for the Inclusion of Roma. It includes measures to improve educational outcomes, health services, housing conditions, and employment opportunities for the Roma community. The plan also emphasizes the importance of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of these measures to ensure their effectiveness.

- Source: NPUR <https://www.nsur.hr/>

##### European Policies

1. *EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 and beyond* The European Union has set a strategic framework to guide member states in integrating the Roma community. This framework aims to address disparities in education, employment, health, and housing. Croatia's national strategies are developed in line with this EU framework to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to Roma integration. The framework also emphasises the need for member states to adopt inclusive policies, fight discrimination, and promote Roma participation in public life.

- Source: [European Commission](#)

2. *Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005-2015) and its Legacy* The Decade of Roma Inclusion was an initiative that brought together governments, international organizations, and civil society to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma. Although the decade ended in 2015, its principles continue to influence European and national policies aimed at Roma integration. The

initiative focused on education, employment, health, and housing, and its legacy is reflected in ongoing national plans and strategies.

- Source: [Council of Europe - Dosta! Campaign](#)

*These policies, both national and European, aim to create a more inclusive society where Roma individuals have equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of life, free from discrimination and socio-economic barriers.*

## **National and European Policies Targeting Migrants in Croatia**

*While Croatia has been historically known as a country of emigration, it is slowly becoming a destination for some. In 2022, for the first time since 2008, Croatia saw a positive migration rate, mostly as a consequence of the liberalisation of the labour market and the easier approval of work permits for third-country nationals (TCNs). However, there is a need for more policies that would facilitate the integration of migrant workers and their families into Croatian society. Still, Croatia has no official integration programme.*

*It has adopted policies to ensure the high protection standards for those in need of international protection and to manage migration flows effectively. The country is a beneficiary of the Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF), which help in managing migration and enhancing security measures.*

*On 5 February 2021 the Croatian Parliament adopted a National Development Strategy - an overarching strategic document for national development that provides a framework for the preparation of all [local, regional and national strategies until 2030](#). In the area of social policy, the strategy envisages for the advancements of the accessibility and quality of social care for vulnerable groups, including victims of trafficking and international protection beneficiaries. Since 2018, there has been a shift to understand and implement integration as a process happening on level of [local communities](#), rather than only on the national level or in the capital of Zagreb. This has largely been the result of the resettlement and accommodation of beneficiaries of international protections in smaller towns across Croatia.*

*At the local level, the City of Zagreb adopted an Action plan for integrating applicants for international protection and persons granted international protection for 2022 as a part of [Eurocities' CONNECTION project](#), as well as the [City of Zagreb Action plan for implementation of the Charter of Integrating Cities for 2023 and 2024](#). The City of Osijek has also developed its Plan of local integration of TCNs through the project [INTEGRA](#).*

*In December 2022, the Standing Committee for the Implementation of the Integration of Foreigners into Croatian Society adopted the [Protocol of Procedures for the Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection](#).*

## 5. NEEDS and GAPS

- Gaps and mismatches of the Adult institutions and the sector
- Skill gaps and mismatches of Adult trainers and the sector

*Adult education in Croatia plays a crucial role in integrating marginalized groups such as migrants and the Roma community. However, the sector faces significant challenges due to gaps and mismatches in the programs offered by adult education institutions and the skills of the trainers.*

### **Gaps and Mismatches of Adult Institutions and the Sector**

*Despite efforts to improve adult education, many Croatian institutions do not offer programs specifically tailored to the needs of migrants and the Roma community. This lack of specialization leads to a shortage of relevant skills and knowledge that these groups need to improve their integration and employment prospects. Furthermore, while there are programs financed by European funds and implemented by various NGOs, the involvement of formal adult education institutions in these initiatives remains limited. This discrepancy suggests that the broader adult education sector is not fully aligned with the needs of marginalized communities, leading to inefficiencies in program delivery and outcomes.*

*Still,, there are some lifelong education programs for Roma adults - for example, at the People's Open University Čakovec, which also implements projects financed from European funds. As for the lifelong education of migrants in Croatia, their formal and informal education is not monitored in Croatia and there is no information about them.*

### **Skill Gaps and Mismatches of Adult Trainers**

*Adult educators in Croatia often lack the cultural competencies and understanding necessary to effectively engage with Roma and migrant learners. This gap in trainers' skills makes it challenging to create inclusive learning environments where these groups feel understood and supported. Furthermore, training programs for educators do not sufficiently cover cultural sensitivities or the specific educational needs of these marginalized groups, which is critical for effective teaching.*

*Language barriers also contribute to the skill mismatch, as many trainers do not speak the native languages of the Roma or migrant communities, limiting their ability to communicate effectively with learners who may have limited proficiency in Croatian. This issue highlights a significant gap in the professional development of adult educators, where language training and cultural competence should be prioritized.*

*To address these challenges, there is a need for more targeted professional development for adult trainers, as well as the inclusion of specialized programs within adult education institutions that are designed to meet the specific needs of marginalized groups.*

## 6. Brief summary of the key findings reached through the online survey with Roma and Migrants

- 6.1 Demographic characteristics of the participants Page
- 6.2 Key findings of the online survey with Roma and Migrants citizens

### **Demographic Profile**

- **Participant Composition:**
  - 20% were people under temporary protection
  - 20% were asylum seekers
  - 60% were members of a migrant community
- **Age Distribution:**
  - All participants were within the 18 to 60 age range.
  - 40% were between 18 to 24 years.
  - 40% were between 25 to 39 years.
  - 20% were between 40 to 60 years.
- **Gender:**
  - Gender distribution was relatively balanced with a slight male majority.

### **Educational Background**

- **Education Levels:**
  - 40% had less than primary education.
  - 60% had primary education or higher.
  - Among those with higher education, 20% had secondary education, and 40% had participated in adult education programs or continuing education.

### **Employment Status**

- **Current Employment:**
  - 80% of participants were unemployed.
  - 20% were self-employed.

### **Experience with Adult Education**

- **Participation in Adult Education:**
  - 60% had participated in adult education for more than 10 years.
  - 40% had participated for less than a year or between 1 to 5 years.
- **Motivation and Barriers:**
  - **Motivation:** Participants were motivated by opportunities for better jobs, higher salaries, and language support.
  - **Barriers:** Key obstacles included lack of information, financial resources, and support. Time constraints and lack of motivation were also significant barriers.

### **Preferences for Educational Programs**

- **Program Format:**
  - 50% preferred only online programs.
  - 50% attended both live and online programs.
  - All participants preferred programs held in the morning or evening.
- **Program Content:**
  - High interest in programs focused on digital literacy, integration into the labor market, social integration, and business classes.
  - Participants expressed a need for more information about existing programs and better tailoring to their needs.

### **Perception of Opportunities**

- **Perceived Adequacy:**
  - 50% felt there were adequate opportunities available.
  - 50% felt there were not enough suitable programs available.
- **Satisfaction with Available Programs:**
  - 50% felt the programs were varied and suited their interests.
  - The other 50% believed there were not many programs on offer, but those available did meet their interests.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

- **Tailoring Programs:** Programs need to be better tailored to the specific needs of adult migrants and Roma community members.
- **Innovative Teaching Methods:** There is a need for teachers to use more innovative methods.
- **Language Preparation:** Language preparation is crucial for effective participation.
- **Accessibility:** Programs should be free or affordable to increase accessibility.

### **Conclusion**

*The survey highlighted the need for better-tailored educational programs, improved access to information, and increased financial and motivational support for adult migrants and members of the Roma community. These findings suggest that addressing these obstacles can significantly enhance the participation and success of these groups in adult education programs.*

## 7. Brief summary of the key findings reached through the online survey with Professionals

- 7.1 Demographic-professional characteristics of the participants

- 7.2 Key findings of the online survey with professionals working with Roma and/or Migrants

### 1. **Demographics and Expertise:**

- 44.4% of respondents are volunteers working with migrants.
- 33.3% are professionals working with adult Roma and/or migrants.
- 11.1% are educators for adults, specifically Roma and/or migrants.
- 11.1% are experts in migration but not directly involved in education.

### 2. **Areas of Focus:**

- The main areas identified for intervention include personal and professional skills development (77.8%), psychological support (77.8%), and social and cultural support (66.7%).
- Legal assistance and democratic/inclusive education also received significant attention.

### 3. **Experience:**

- 33.3% have 1-2 years of experience, while another 33.3% have over 7 years of experience.
- 22.2% have 3-5 years, and 11.1% have less than a year of experience.

### 4. **Perceptions of Value:**

- 88.9% of respondents believe the interventions have significant value.
- Only 11.1% rated them as having moderate value.

### 5. **Key Skills and Knowledge Areas:**

- Integration into the labor market (100%), digital literacy (100%), and reproductive health (88.9%) are considered crucial areas.
- Other important areas include protection from discrimination (88.9%), active citizenship (77.8%), financial literacy (77.8%), language courses (77.8%), and mental health (88.9%).

### 6. **Challenges:**

- 77.8% of respondents identified language barriers as a significant challenge.
- 66.7% indicated that there is no language barrier.

### 7. **Satisfaction and Effectiveness:**

- All respondents agree on the effectiveness of the interventions.
- The perception of quality ranged from average to excellent, with 66.7% rating it as good and 22.2% as excellent.

### 8. **Frequency of Interaction:**

- Most respondents interact with the target groups frequently, with 55.6% indicating they do so often, and 33.3% sometimes.

### 9. **Educational Background:**

- 66.7% of respondents have higher education qualifications.

- 22.2% are involved in lifelong learning or adult education.

**10. Age Distribution:**

- The majority of respondents (88.9%) are aged between 25 and 39, with only 11.1% being over 60.

*These findings provide an overview of the expertise, areas of focus, and challenges faced by professionals working with adult Roma and migrants. They highlight the need for continuous support in various domains, particularly in skill development, mental health, and overcoming language barriers.*

## 8. Brief summary of the key findings reached through the organised focus group / interviews with Roma and Migrants adults

### ***Integration System and Politics in Croatia***

- **Awareness and Access:** Some participants are aware of organizations like Borders None and Jesuit Refugee Service but have not accessed their services. Information often comes from other migrants or posters in asylum centers.
- **Initial Steps:** Initial integration steps include reporting to the Ministry of the Interior. However, the bureaucracy is difficult to navigate, and long waits for asylum decisions are common.

### ***Obstacles in Integration and Non-formal Education***

- **Language Barrier:** The primary obstacle is the language barrier. Google Translate is often used but is not always reliable.
- **Translation Services:** Lack of consistent translation services makes participation in educational programs difficult.

### ***Experience with Civil Society Organizations***

- **Positive Experiences:** Some organizations provide language courses, legal support, and mentoring programs, which are highly valued by the participants.
- **Mentorship:** Mentorship programs help with practical aspects of integration, such as finding housing and understanding local customs.

### ***Formal Adult Education Participation***

- **Limited Participation:** None of the participants had been involved in formal adult education. They are interested in joining Croatian language courses at universities if available.
- **Lack of Information:** There is a general lack of information about accessing formal education and recognition of qualifications.

### ***Impact on Personal and Professional Development***

- **Positive Impact:** Participation in non-formal education programs helps pass the time, learn new skills, and integrate into society.
- **Language and Culture:** Learning Croatian and English is seen as crucial for communication, employment, and understanding local customs and traditions.

### ***Experiences of Discrimination***

- **Mixed Experiences:** Most participants have not faced discrimination, but there are instances of racial profiling by police. Some have traumas related to police from their home countries, impacting their perception.

### **Motivation for Non-formal Adult Education**

- **Language Learning:** The main motivation is learning the language to ease communication and daily activities.
- **Social Integration:** Participants are also motivated by the desire to meet people, make connections, and spend their time productively.

### **Challenges in Non-formal Adult Education**

- **Language of Instruction:** Programs conducted in Croatian and English pose challenges for those not fluent in these languages.
- **Continuity and Content:** Lack of continuity in programs and limited opportunities to learn about Croatian culture and traditions are significant challenges.

### **Sense of Belonging**

- **The feeling of Belonging:** Due to safety, freedom, and cultural similarities, many participants feel more at home in Croatia than in their home countries.

### **Education Opportunities**

- **Inequality:** Migrants feel they do not have the same educational opportunities as the local population due to financial constraints and language barriers.

### **Recommendations**

1. **Enhanced Language Support:** Provide more comprehensive language courses and consistent translation services to aid integration and participation in education.
2. **Information Dissemination:** Improve the distribution of information regarding formal education opportunities and the recognition of foreign qualifications.
3. **Continuity in Programs:** Ensure continuity in educational programs to facilitate better learning outcomes.
4. **Cultural Orientation:** Offer more programs that teach Croatian customs, traditions, and social norms to aid cultural integration.
5. **Address Financial Barriers:** Implement financial support or subsidies for migrants to access adult education programs.

*These findings highlight the critical areas that need attention to improve the integration and educational experiences of migrants in Croatia.*

## 8. Brief summary of the key findings reached through the focus group /interviews with educators, professionals, and volunteers working with adult Roma and/or Migrant adults.

### *Educational Qualifications and Experience*

- *P1: Professor of Croatian and Italian, experience teaching Croatian to migrants, and managing heterogeneous linguistic groups.*
- *P2: Social worker, involved in language learning, retraining, work culture, and labour law for migrants, experienced in digital transition during the COVID-19 pandemic.*
- *P3: Economist, a migrant in Croatia, studied Croatian as a foreign language, emphasises overcoming fear in language learning and psychological phases of migrants.*
- *P4: Lawyer, studied Croatian as a foreign language, focuses on monitoring and advocating for language learning for migrants under international protection.*

### *Duration of Service*

- *P1: 6 years*
- *P2: 4 years*
- *P3: 2 years*
- *P4: 8 years*

### *Awareness of Civil Rights and Duties*

- *Language teaching includes explaining civil rights and duties.*
- *The need for a more systematic and effective provision of civil rights information.*
- *Migrants often lack awareness and rely on informal networks for information.*
- *The discrepancy in knowledge, with better-informed individuals often being more educated.*

### *Challenges in Integration*

- *Discrimination, bureaucracy, and language barriers are significant challenges.*
- *Migrants' uncertainty about staying in Croatia affects their integration efforts.*
- *Psychological resistance and focus on negative aspects hinder integration.*
- *Misinformation and mistrust due to reliance on informal networks.*

### *Skills and Knowledge for Professionals*

- *Experts need more education on the different legal statuses of migrants and their rights.*
- *Continuous learning and empathy are crucial.*
- *Experience improves the ability to work effectively with migrants.*
- *Trust and cultural understanding are essential.*

### *Challenges for Professionals*

- *Language barriers and communication issues waste time.*

- *Greater cooperation and coordination among relevant bodies are needed.*
- *Creativity and experience are vital in overcoming integration challenges.*

### *Improving Work Quality and Integration*

- *Systematization and better coverage of topics and services.*
- *More experts and financial resources.*
- *Coordination and intercultural dialogue.*
- *Emphasis on language learning.*

### *Language and Cultural Barriers*

- *Use of digital tools, pantomime, and simple sentences to overcome language barriers.*
- *Establishing trust and working with other experts helps manage cultural barriers.*

### *Good Practices in the EU*

- *Welcome centres or one-stop shops as seen in Portugal and Stuttgart.*
- *Systematic integration examples from Austria.*
- *Local adaptation of good practices, such as Denmark's parental consultation hours and the Netherlands' informal language teaching by pensioners.*

### *Monitoring EU and National Provisions*

- *Mixed levels of monitoring changes, with some experts actively following policy changes, while others rely on expert contacts.*

### *Methods and Tools Used*

- *Digital technology (Google Translate, YouTube), visual tools, cards, and games.*
- *Practical and participant-centered teaching methods.*
- *Innovative methods include using practical examples and engaging participants' interests to make learning more relevant.*

*These key findings provide insights into the experiences, challenges, and recommendations of experts working with migrants in Croatia, highlighting the importance of language learning, systematic support, and intercultural understanding in the integration process.*

## 9. Identification of Good Practices

|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of Best Practice:</b>                                                   | Initiative - Centre for Education implemented project "Education to better integration of refugees"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Country:</b>                                                                 | Croatia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Short Description:</b><br>(300 words max)                                    | The main goal of this project was to increase the employability of refugees and asylum seekers through language and cultural integration programs, individual mentoring, as well as skills training for occupations in the tourism and hospitality affected by the staff shortage. Through the project, participants became competitive in the job market, which positively impacted their successful integration into Croatian society. |
| <b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Best Practice</b><br>(250 words max) | 43 individuals finished their education and gained qualifications in the service industry (bakers, waiters, cooks).<br>14 individuals received permanent employment through the project activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>How this Best Practice could be used/ transferred</b><br>(250 words max)     | It is necessary to implement programs and projects to strengthen the capacity, qualification and retraining of migrants and Roma, and connect them with potential employers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Website link:</b>                                                            | <a href="https://inicijativa.biz/en/projects/edukacijom-do-bolje-integracije/">https://inicijativa.biz/en/projects/edukacijom-do-bolje-integracije/</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>More Info:</b>                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of Best Practice:</b>                                                   | Center for Peace Studies from Zagreb implemented a program of mentoring and practice in civil society organisations for young Roma in 2021 as part of the "Arise Roma" project.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Country:</b>                                                                 | Croatia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Short Description:</b><br>(300 words max)                                    | This project aims to raise awareness, inclusion, support, and empowerment of Roma activists and Roma communities in Croatia. The logo we designed for the project represents a wheel from the Roma flag. The wheel is shaped in a way reminiscent of the rising sun, thus referring to the project name.                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Best Practice</b><br>(250 words max) | It was aimed at raising awareness, inclusion, support and empowerment of Roma activists and Roma communities in Croatia. In addition to the six-month internship and mentoring support program, the project included an awareness-raising campaign throughout the country, which included various activities, direct support to communities to fight discrimination, and training for intercultural mediators to work with the Roma population. |
| <b>How this Best Practice could be used/ transferred</b><br>(250 words max)     | It is necessary to implement awareness campaigns as well as mentoring programs and internship programs for young Roma.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Website link:</b>                                                            | <a href="https://www.romhr.hr/projekt/arise-roma">https://www.romhr.hr/projekt/arise-roma</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>More Info:</b>                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name of Best Practice:</b>                                                   | „TrAZILica – socijalna inkluzija i jačanje konkurentnosti azilanata na tržištu rada u RH“ Project                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Country:</b>                                                                 | Croatia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Short Description:</b><br>(300 words max)                                    | From March 28, 2019 to September 28, 2020, united by partnership and vision, the Jesuit Service for Refugees (project holder) and the People's Open University Zagreb (project partner) implemented the joint project "TrAZilica - social inclusion and strengthening the competitiveness of asylum seekers on the labor market in the Republic of Croatia", financed from the European Social Fund, Operational Program Effective Human Potential 2014-2020. |
| <b>Trends and Potential Benefits from this Best Practice</b><br>(250 words max) | Support, education and integration into society and the labor market for people who have refugee status in the Republic of Croatia, thus simultaneously responding to the market's current need for targeted trained labor in accordance with deficit occupations.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>How this Best Practice could be used/ transferred</b><br>(250 words max)     | This project serves as a best practice by providing targeted education and support, fostering long-term societal and economic benefits, and promoting sustainable development. Its success demonstrates how tailored interventions can effectively empower marginalized groups and contribute to broader social                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Website link:</b>                                                            | <a href="https://hrv.jrs.net/resource/trazilica-socijalna-inkluzija-i-jacanje-konkurentnosti-azilanata-na-trzistu-rada-u-rh/">https://hrv.jrs.net/resource/trazilica-socijalna-inkluzija-i-jacanje-konkurentnosti-azilanata-na-trzistu-rada-u-rh/</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>More Info:</b>                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## 10. Conclusions and recommendations

- Skills gaps and needs identification

The comprehensive analysis of the barriers faced by Roma and migrants in adult education in Croatia highlights several critical areas that need targeted interventions to improve their integration and educational outcomes.

### Key Findings:

#### 1. Living Conditions:

- Roma and migrants often reside in substandard housing conditions, lacking basic amenities and facing overcrowding. This impacts their overall quality of life and hinders their ability to engage in educational activities.

#### 2. Employment:

- Both communities face significant barriers to employment, including discrimination, lack of education, and limited access to vocational training. While legal reforms have made it easier for migrants to enter the labor market, many still face challenges such as language barriers and non-recognition of qualifications.

#### 3. Healthcare:

- Limited access to healthcare services, coupled with poor living conditions, results in higher illness rates and lower life expectancy among Roma. Migrants also face barriers due to language differences and lack of awareness of available services.

#### 4. Education:

- High dropout rates among Roma and migrant children and adults are prevalent. Socio-economic challenges, language barriers, and inadequate support systems contribute to these rates. Educational attainment among Roma is particularly low, impacting their long-term employment prospects.

#### 5. Integration and Civic Engagement:

- Both groups are underrepresented in public life and decision-making processes. Efforts to improve representation and engagement are ongoing but face significant gaps.

#### 6. Program and Policy Implementation:

- Existing policies and programs aimed at integrating Roma and migrants often lack consistency and sufficient support. There is a need for more tailored educational programs, improved access to information, and increased financial and motivational support.

### Recommendations:

#### 1. Enhanced Language Support:

- Provide comprehensive language courses and consistent translation services to aid integration and participation in education.

#### 2. Information Dissemination:

- Improve the distribution of information regarding formal education opportunities and the recognition of foreign qualifications.

#### 3. Continuity in Educational Programs:

- Ensure continuity in educational programs to facilitate better learning outcomes and provide consistent support.
- 4. **Cultural Orientation:**
  - Offer programs that teach Croatian customs, traditions, and social norms to aid cultural integration.
- 5. **Address Financial Barriers:**
  - Implement financial support or subsidies for migrants and Roma to access adult education programs, reducing financial constraints.
- 6. **Professional Development for Educators:**
  - Enhance the continuing professional development system for adult educators to include training on cultural sensitivities and the specific needs of Roma and migrant learners.

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