

NEWSLETTER ISSUE #3

- September
2021



Highlights in Issue #3

- Management issues
- Study visits and NAPs
- What has happened since release of Newsletter Issue #2?
- Next steps in project

STAIRS 2019-2022

The purpose of our newsletter is to collect and publish project-related events and developments as well as to share new materials for a certain period of time to keep the partnership well-informed and up-to-date. It is important for us that the status of our common project is transparent for the whole partnership.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Study visits successfully concluded in winter of 2020 in online format with 40+ participants including project staff and participating experts as well as hosts, lecturers and students of institutions visited. Details see below.

4th PM (15 December 2020, online) --- project partners expressed satisfaction with study visits, and gratitude towards organising partners. Main focus of PM was clarifying financial issues concerning recalculation of budget, as well as discussing possible dates of following PMs. Igor Peras and Adél Csernovitz introduced WP5 activities and deliverables to prepare work on NAPs.

CANVAS – documentation of study visits uploaded and completed by partners and experts for preparatory and follow-up activities of study visits.

Progress report submitted and accepted (October 2020). Although approved, all costs - including ones reported already – will be checked by EACEA at final reporting stage.

Next interim financial report due 30 September 2021.

Amended partner contracts signed and sent to all Partners in summer 2021.

All current tasks have been **assigned** and updated at [Teamwork](#).

STUDY VISITS AND NAPs

The whole partnership wishes to express special thanks to the [Irish](#) and the [Portuguese](#) hosts of the study visits. After months of delay and many cancellations and iterative planning, we had two very well-organised, wonderfully accomplished study visits in the online space where real learning could take place. Participating experts as well as project staff could only speak in superlatives regarding the delivery of the two events. Participants have gained a lot of experience and acquired new knowledge. Summaries of the experience are available in English in Teamwork and [published on the project website](#). Study visits served as the beginning of learning about policy processes, and they provided many lessons for participating experts as well as inputs for the NAPs. After the study visits, experts in each learning country could start working on the *national adaptation plans* (NAPs) based on lessons learnt. Three of them have been completed in due time. Summaries of finalised NAPs are available in English in Teamwork and **will be published on the project website soon**.

What has happened since the release of Newsletter Issue #2?

We believe that regular reporting regarding partnership progress creates transparency and supports trust building. We asked each partner to summarise their last few months as well as their status quo in a few sentences.

- **P1 Tempus Public Foundation (TPF) --- Budapest, HU**

The year of 2020 and the first half of 2021 were extraordinary for the TPF similarly to all partners. The Covid-19 situation resulted in the fact that we had to reimagine several practical aspects of the project. We managed to prepare the online study visits, organise two engaging and successful workshops (Apple on the Tree) for stakeholders (teachers, school principals, etc.), a prep workshop for the experts we are working together with, and involve them in our course in Canvas to smoothen the work of all of them working along with partners in the project.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, most of us still work remotely. Schools and kindergartens were temporarily shut down, too.

The Tempus Public Foundation is stable and its operation has been reorganised to carry out the majority of tasks online. Our project team is operational.

We work with two of our original experts, Eszter Szegedi and Enikő Gönczöl, and replaced Ferenc Arató with a new expert, Petra Földes. Our experts represent various fields related to the topic of inclusion in education. Their professional competencies complement each other and, overall, cover the most important content directions for the STAIRS project.

Participating in the online study visits was one of the most important milestones accomplished in the framework of the STAIRS, and both of them were executed wonderfully.

The STAIRS team is getting prepared for the 5th PM on 21-22 September, in Ljubljana as well as a conference organised by our Slovenian partners on 23 September.

- **P2 Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias (CeIED) --- Lisbon, PT**

During the period at stake, the Portuguese partner attended the SV to Ireland and organised the SV to Portugal. While attending the SV to Ireland, a lot was learnt and we were a little afraid that we will not be able to meet the standards of the Irish event. Nevertheless, efforts were made by the Portuguese team to organise a rich experience to the attendees. Among the efforts made, videos were produced, with the collaboration of Lusofona University Department of Cinema, about the Portuguese good practices to provide attendees with a flavour of the local work being done. These videos indeed seemed to have pleased everyone. During the SV to Portugal it seemed that all the invited speakers were well chosen, once good discussions were carried out among the participants. Following the SV to Portugal, a PM was also carried out, taking stock of the work accomplished and pointing out the next steps to be given. One of those next steps, for the Portuguese partner, was to produce a new version of the Change Management Toolkit, in which a lot of effort was put resulting in a new version presented to the coordinator of the STAIRS by the end of April. Having been received the kind feedback from the coordinator, a new version of that document is about to be released for gathering partners feedbacks at the next PM in Slovenia.

Uploading videos to YouTube is in progress.

- **P3 Mary Immaculate College (MIC) --- Limerick, IE**

Despite Covid, we had a very successful virtual Irish study visit in November, where we had presentations on a range of education case studies that examined DEIS, Youthreach, Limerick DEIS literacy Initiative, SEN approach in Irish schools and the TED project in MIC. The study visit also had an opportunity to learn a few key Gaeilge words & phrases which could be put to use when the partners visit Ireland in person! Another highlight was a virtual historical tour of Limerick city. The Irish team also took part in the Portuguese study visit a couple of weeks later and it was interesting to examine the similarities and differences in multiagency approaches to inclusion across both countries. Over the last couple of months, the Irish partners have been busy working on the modules that will form the MOOC which is a key out from the STAIRS project.

[YouTube videos are available on our website.](#)

- **P4 Varaždinska županija (VC) --- Varazdin, HR**

During this period, Varaždin County as a partner in the project and together with selected experts, attended study visits to Ireland (Limerick) and Portugal (Lisbon). Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, both study visits were organised online, but thanks to partners from Limerick and Lisbon, during the study visits, we got an insight into the education systems of the two sharing countries from the project

(Ireland and Portugal). With a number of examples we had the opportunity to discuss and ask questions about how inclusive education in these countries works. The members of our expert group are: Zlatko Bukvić ("Tomislav Špoljar" - Center for Education), Marijana Dodigović and Irma Dračić (Varaždin School of Mechanical and Traffic Engineering), Silvija Ladić Fischer (Varaždin County), Nikolina Žajdela Hrustek and Valenina Kirinić (Faculty of Organization and of Informatics, Varaždin).

At the beginning of April, the STAIRS project was present at a scientific conference of Croatian educational rehabilitators in Primosten, Croatia.

During this period, we also worked intensively on our National Adaptation Plan (NAP) which presents a series of proposals for changes that should and could be made in the Croatian education system to make it inclusive and more accessible to various vulnerable groups of children and students.

- **P5 Centrum aplikovaného výzkumu a dalšího vzdělávání (CAVDV) --- Písek, CZ**

External evaluator, Ing. Jana Marková has completed monitoring reports #1 and #2 as well as provided feedback and evaluation on interim report of STAIRS project and deliverables provided to Commission in line with interim report.

- **P6 Center RS za poklicno izobraževanje (CPI) --- Ljubljana, SI**

The CPI staff, together with colleagues from the ERI and national experts, attended two online study visits. Within these, we analysed good practices from Ireland and Portugal and, based on case studies of the presented good practices, developed our National Adaptation Plan (NAP). NAP is intended for the use of identified good practices or individual, specific elements of these in Slovenia and is intended to support various stakeholders in efforts to (even) greater social inclusion of two defined target groups (students with low socio-economic status (SES), and students with special educational needs (SEN) in the vocational education in Slovenia. Based on the good practices of the mentioned countries, the proposals were formulated within the framework of four identified priority areas: 1) Inclusive attitude and sensitivity to social inclusion, 2) Identification and supporting students with low SES, 3) Empowering teachers to work with students with low SES and SEN, and 4) Cooperation, networking of various stakeholders in supporting students with low SES and SEN.

Due to the Covid-19 situation, all CPI staff work from home. All educational institutions were closed for a while, which means that all of our children stayed home. Nevertheless, we have managed to realise all planned tasks so far.

- **P7 Pedagoški inštitut (ERI) --- Ljubljana, SI**

The ERI has continued to successfully participate and implement all project activities of the STAIRS. During much of this time, Igor individually coordinated the project and helped lead WP5, while Urška returned from maternity leave in May 2021.

The ERI, along with project partner, the CPI and national external experts in the field of inclusion, took part in the online study visits from Ireland and Portugal. In line with our country focus in the STAIRS project, a national summary of lessons learnt was prepared in order to filter the gained knowledge on upgrading national efforts to foster inclusion of students with low socio-economic status and special educational needs. During the first half of 2021 much of our resources were spent on preparing the Slovenian National Adaptation Plan (NAP) which is divided into 4 areas of priority intervention: 1) Inclusive attitude and sensitivity to social inclusion, 2) Identification and supporting students with low SES, 3) Empowering teachers to work with students with low SES and SEN, and 4) Cooperation, networking of various stakeholders in supporting students with low SES and SEN.

As for dissemination activities, the ERI invited project partners (the TPF and Varaždin County) to participate in a discussion panel at the annual ERI conference in September 2021. 4 abstracts were submitted (from the ERI, the TPF, Varaždin County, and the Network of Education Policy Centres - NEPC) and accepted for presentation at the conference with the common theme of focusing on striving towards successful inclusion in education in the region.

Next steps in project

5th partner meeting is being prepared. It takes place on 21-22 September 2021 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, hosted by our two Slovenian partners, the CPI & the ERI. The PM is going to be a hybrid event, since some of the partners cannot participate in person.

Some of the main objectives of the meeting are to better understand what lies ahead of us: tasks regarding the **MOOC**, the **Change Management Toolkit** and the **European Adaptation Guidelines**. All partners are asked to contribute to the completion of those tasks.

Study visits to Ireland and Portugal in November-December 2020 and Partner Meeting #4 on 15 December 2020 (Teams and Zoom)



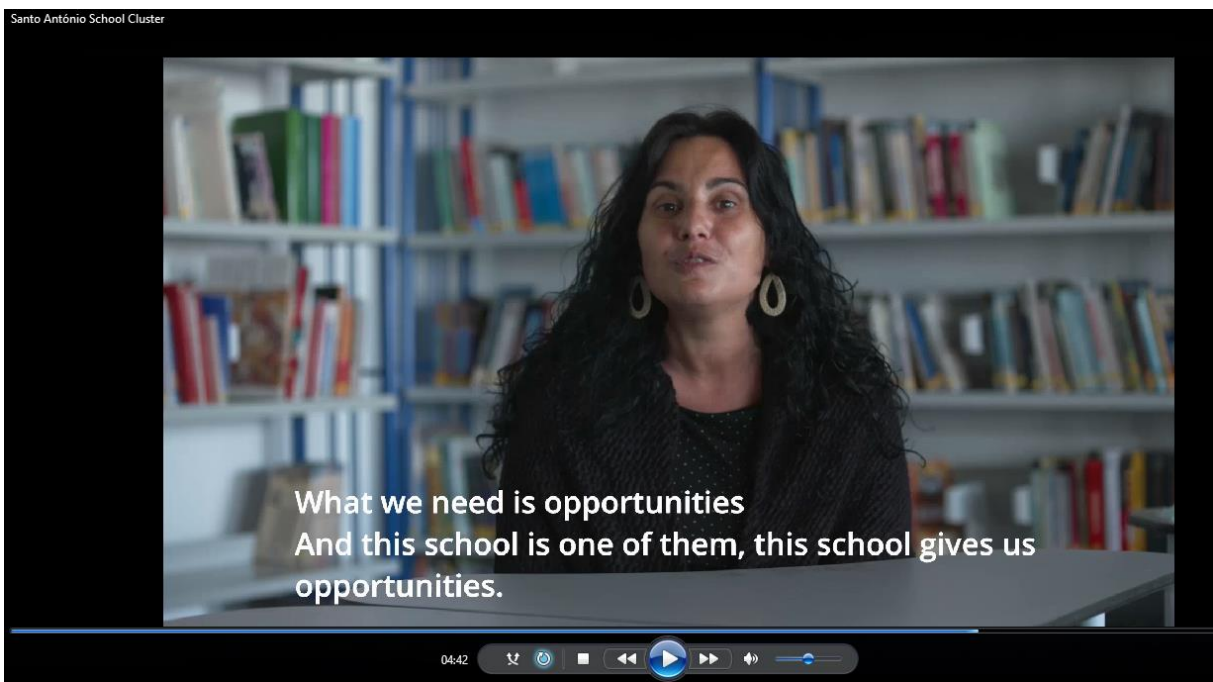
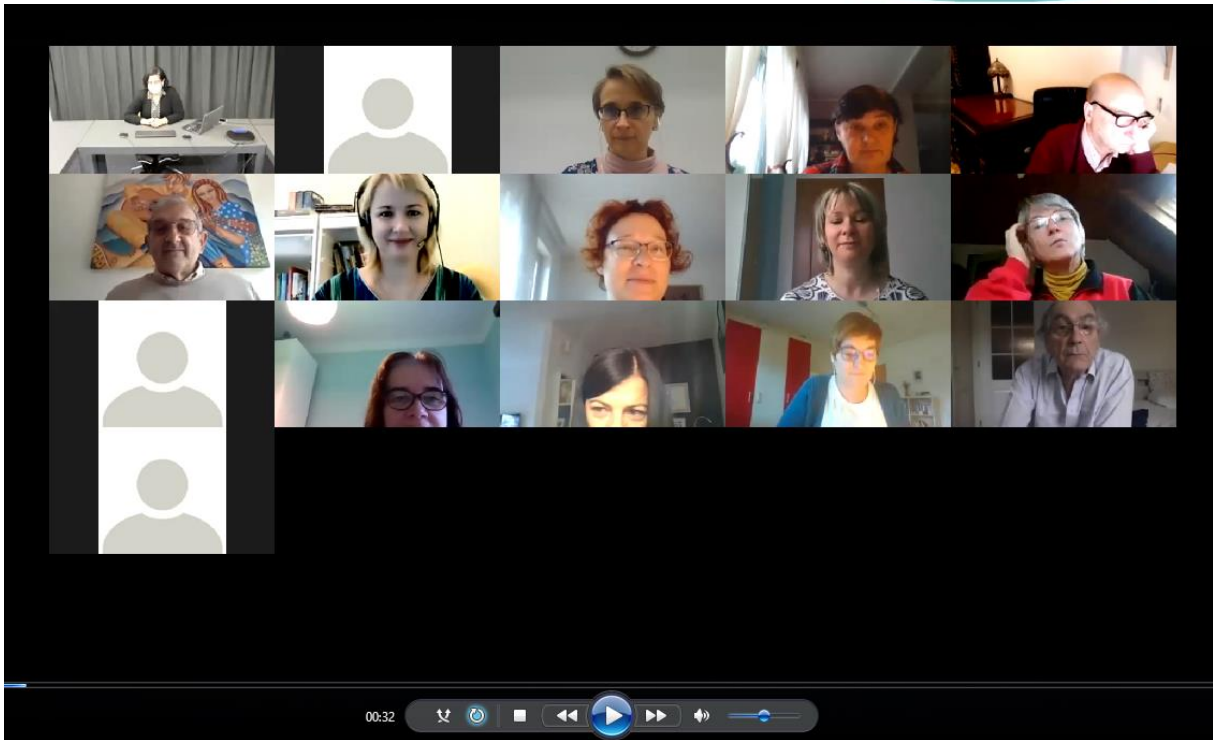
A Journey from Exclusion to Inclusion and Beyond

Shelly Moore, 2019 @TWEETSOMEMOORE

AMIC
ARIZONA MIDDLE INSTITUTE COLLEGE
COURAGE AND BELIEF

05:05

Participants: +13, M, VJ, KJ, D, N, BB, J, D, M



Míle Buíochas



Participant list: +16, M, VJ, KJ, D, N, BB, J, S, D, M. Includes small video thumbnails for participants.

23:28 [Meeting controls: chat, mute, video, play/pause, volume]