



International conference
Broaden Horizons
Networks and Experiences for Successful Roma Inclusion

Roma Early Childhood Inclusion (RECI+) Croatia Report *Research findings*

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Lifelong
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RECI+

Croatia Report

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CHAPTER 1. The Country Context and the Situation of the Roma Population

CHAPTER 2. Overview of Health, Social and Education Services and Impact on Roma Groups

CHAPTER 3. The Early Childhood Education and Care System and the Place of Roma Children and Parents within It

CHAPTER 4. Challenges

AIM: provision of **quantitative and qualitative data** to increase understanding

- brief **contextual guide** to Croatia
- the best **available statistical data** (health, social welfare, education)
- the **major features** of Croatia's early childhood development systems
- identify and analyse **priority early childhood concerns and policy issues**

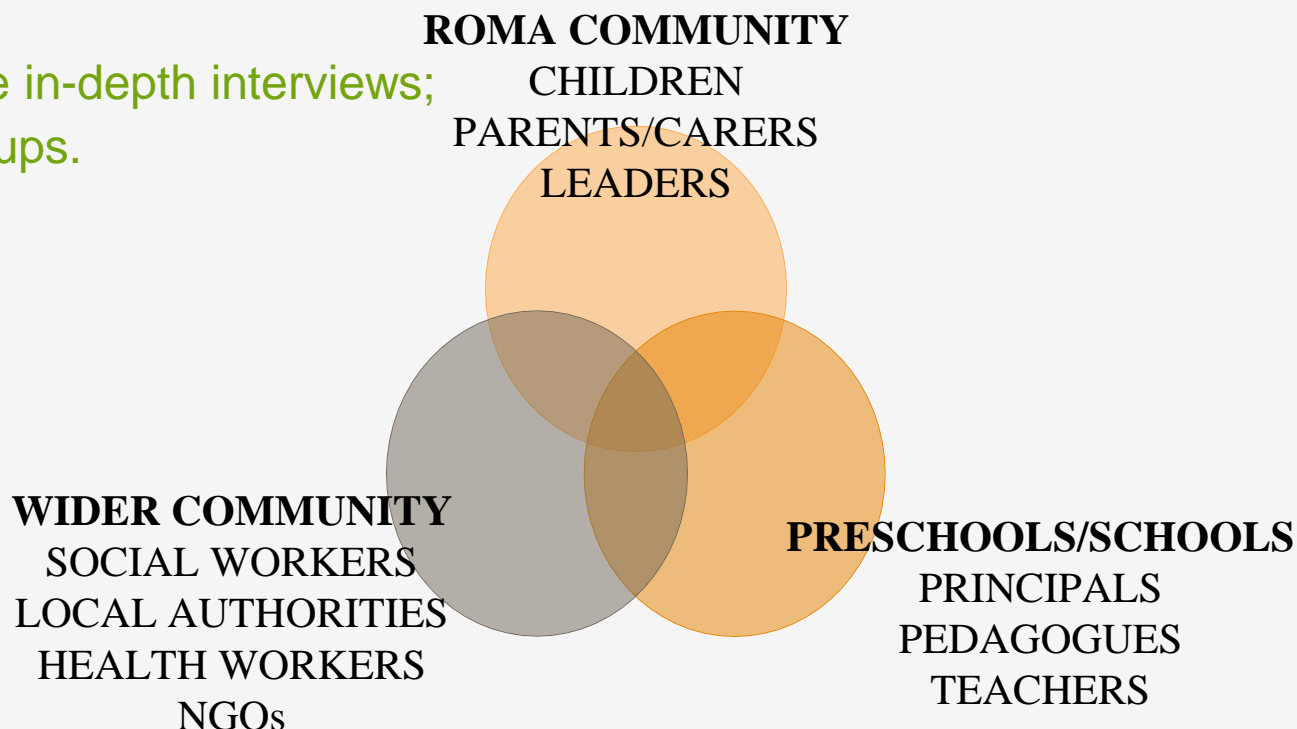
+ research findings RECI+ Croatia study

RECI+ Croatia study

Research Methodology

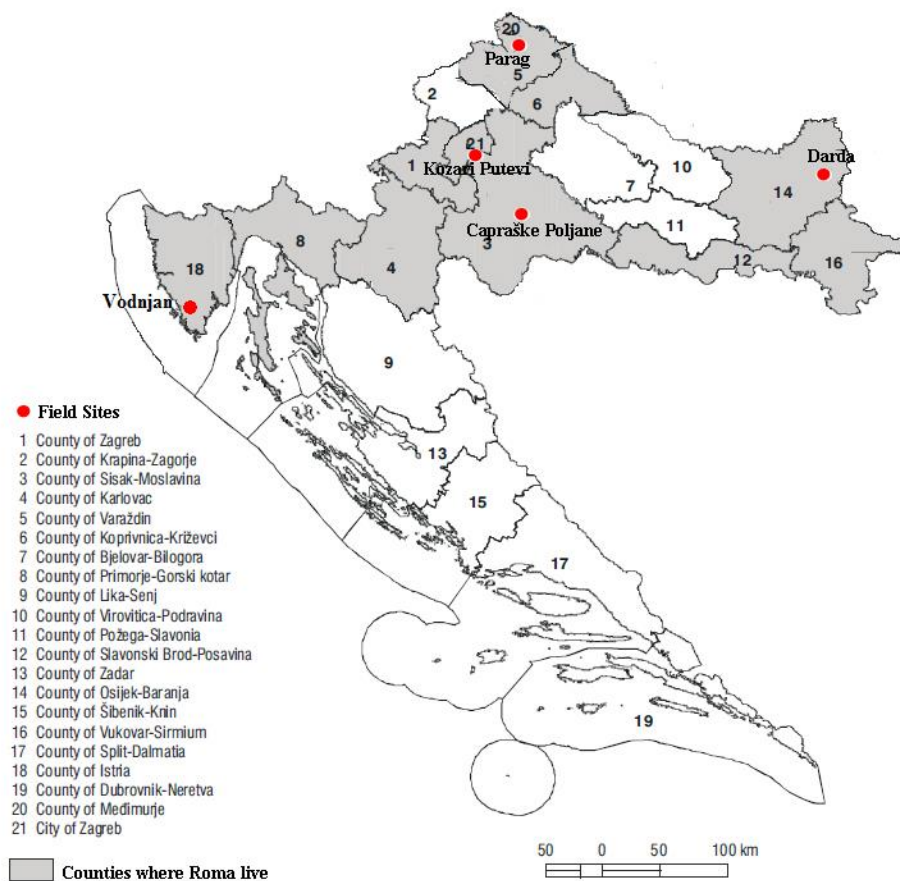
Research methods

- fieldwork observation;
- surveys;
- qualitative in-depth interviews;
- focus groups.



RECI+ Croatia study

Research Locations



RECI+ Croatia study

Research findings

- Findings from the RECI+ Croatia Study conclusively show that there are **gaps** in the early childhood education and care system that have a disproportionately negative impact upon young Roma children and their families.

→ **The RECI+ Croatia Study found that only 20% of all children (aged between six months and six years) in the Roma households surveyed were included in any kind of preschool education or the preparatory pre-primary year program.***

Reflects that Roma children have reduced opportunities to develop to their full potential

RECI+ Croatia study

Research findings

- o **Early childhood development** is one of the most important keys to breaking the cycle of poverty and exclusion

→ In this study, **none of the children** at one location were included in any type of educational service prior to primary school.*

Who can send their children to kindergarten? We don't have enough to feed our children today ... who can pay for kindergarten? (Milena, mother of four children)

Obstacles: shortage of preschool places/transportation costs/additional costs/fear of discrimination...

- o Regulations on the content and duration of preschool (Official Gazette 107/2014) contradicts the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Roma Inclusion 2013-2015

→ 250 hrs (150hrs) 1 yr vs 5hrs a day 1-2 yrs

RECI+ Croatia study

Challenges

- The RECI+ Croatia Study also identified **specific challenges** that relate to Roma inclusion in education that need to be considered:
 1. **Living conditions and multiple poverty factors**
 - have an **enduring negative impact on children** of all ages, particularly the youngest and their engagement with education (esp. at non-compulsory levels);
 - contribute significantly to **educational disadvantage**.
 2. **Home and community environments**
 - **threaten children's access and successful integration** into quality early childhood education and care.

RECI+ Croatia study

Challenges

3. Role of Roma women, mothers and caregivers

→ it is important to separately consider **the extent and impact of Roma women's social exclusion** as Roma women are closely connected to children in terms of their upbringing and education.

4. School success and integration

→ Roma children are **disadvantaged from the start and are more challenged compared** to children from the majority population.

→ as a result many Roma children 'drop out' early.

RECI+ Croatia study

Challenges

5. Implementation gaps

- There are **gaps** in policy and provision that hinder many young Roma children from accessing quality early childhood education and care:
 - these include a shortage of preschool places, long waiting lists and a lack of effective communication
- A further challenge relates to the **lack of uniform monitoring and evaluation** of the quality of preschool educational settings.
- Another challenge is due to **the lack of ethnically disaggregated data** (but not just numbers!) in all sectoral fields
 - effectiveness of existing measures??
 - cannot seriously evaluate progress in Roma inclusion

Thank you for your attention.

- The RECI+ Croatia report is accessible at:
http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/sites/default/files/publications/reci_croatia_report_eng-final_web.pdf