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Breaking barriers to Roma children's education and inclusion:

Policies and Practices for the Educational Inclusion of Roma Children in Greece

The Hellenic Institute of Educational Policy (IEP) operates under the supervision of the Greek Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports and implements policies and practices based on an inclusive philosophy for ensuring inclusion and promoting equal learning opportunities for all children. It embraces the priorities and objectives of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Roma Social Inclusion 2021-2030 and works towards the goal for every Roma child to have access in education.

In this context, IEP focuses on inclusive education, implements actions and projects that contribute towards an effective inclusion of Roma children in school. In particular, the role of IEP is, among others, a) the continuous scientific and technical support of the design and implementation of educational policies and practices regarding the education and training of teachers on minority issues, b) the creation of Curricula that will ensure that identities, language or languages, special educational needs, students' competences, skills and attitudes are recognized without discrimination and segregation, c) the creation of learning materials that take into account the specific needs for the educational inclusion of other linguistic and cultural minorities, such as Roma populations.

IEP currently participates as national coordinator in the experimental pilot project of political implementation of the Council of Europe entitled "The role of the Romani language in the educational integration of Roma children and youth: from politics to practice" in primary schools of the country during the school years 2021-2025.

The aim of this presentation is to highlight the potential of innovation of Roma education in primary schools in Greece. It focuses on aspects of curriculum delivery and resources, which have been shown to have contributed in raising school achievement and attainments of Roma children. Finally, the discussion draws some lessons that can be learnt from such approaches and concludes by emphasizing their role in promoting equality and diversity in the education system, to enhance the consistent and diligent school attendance of Roma children from kindergarten and to award for every Roma child the right for Education and a brighter future.