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# EXPLOITATION GUIDE OF THE “PARENTS FOR ALL” PROJECT PRODUCTS FOR STAKEHOLDERS AND POLICY MAKERS

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# Exploitation Guide of the “Parents For All” Project Products *For Stakeholders and Policy Makers*

## INTRODUCTION

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A major challenge for the increasingly multicultural Europe is the smooth social integration of migrants and refugees, including their children. Migrant integration takes place at multiple levels, and one of the most sensitive fields is that of school education. There are many interventions focusing on teacher competence, the concept of intercultural education, and diversity management in the classroom. However, another important factor affecting the integration process is **parental engagement and attitude**. Both parents from the host societies and migrant/refugee parents have direct influence on the attitude, behaviour and performance of their children, and consequently the integration process as a whole. **Positive parental engagement is of paramount importance for the social inclusion of migrant/refugee children.**

*Parents for All* is an EU-funded project (KA2 Strategic Partnership for Innovation in Adult Education, 2017-2019) aiming to support parents to deal with diversity in multicultural Europe. The project was implemented in Greece, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Scotland and Spain.

Through the needs analysis carried out in the partner countries prior to the implementation of *Parents For All*, it was established that in all countries there was a significant lack of interventions supporting parents from the host societies to deal effectively with diversity at schools. Except for general offers on intercultural skills or antiracist activities, there are no targeted training offers addressing the needs and concerns of parents from the host societies. At policy level, integration strategies and interventions focus mainly on migrant/refugee parents, while the parents of the host societies are in most cases not involved. **There is a clear need to promote systematic training and awareness-raising among parents from the host societies.**

Regarding migrant/refugee parents, a series of training offers in language and diversity issues more or less exists in all partner countries. However, in all countries, **a significant lack of suitable training material for the acquisition of intercultural skills, better inclusion of migrant/refugee parents into the national educational system, and parental engagement** has been reported.

Therefore, the *Parents For All* project focused on the role of parents in integration as a two-way process. Through its activities the project:

- Empowers parents from the host societies and of migrant origin in dealing with ethnic and cultural diversity at schools
- Provides tailor-made training material for parents, helping them to develop intercultural skills and actively support school activities for social inclusion
- Raises awareness through audio-visual material
- Promotes the notion that parental engagement for social inclusion is a collaborative, reciprocal and mutually rewarding process.

Improved competences and increased awareness on behalf of parents are expected to have a positive effect on the interaction of pupils of different origins, cooperation with school, and social integration in general. As the piloting of the training materials with 97 parents in 6 countries demonstrated, **the potential impact of the training materials is very high**. About 80% of parents agreed that the training material empowered them in helping their children to cope with diversity; 84% felt that the training material encouraged them to participate in school activities that promote interculturalism. Regarding parents from the host societies, 78.1% consider that the training material helped them realise their stereotypes to a fuller degree, while 81.7% agreed that the training material helped them understand the challenges that migrant/refugee parents face, and become more empathetic towards them.

With the full confidence of providing high-quality and much needed integration tools, we present to all stakeholders involved the project products and their possible uses. This short guide provides some recommendations on how the training and audiovisual materials produced can be used in different contexts in order to empower parents in dealing with diversity. The teaser of the project, available at [www.parents4all.eu](http://www.parents4all.eu), can be used in connection with any material or as a standalone.

## TRAINING MATERIALS FOR HOST SOCIETY PARENTS

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### *Description*

*Parents For All* training materials tackle cultural, educational, social and psychological parameters involved in migrant integration, parent cooperation and diversity management. Common concerns of parents are dealt with, and a number of activities encourage parents to take the initiative and get to know better migrant/refugee parents. Materials can be used for self-study, for discussion in trainer-facilitated meetings or both in combination.

The material is structured in 2 units. **Unit 1, Basic Intercultural Skills**, helps host-society parents to become more self-aware in cultural issues, develop more tolerance and acquire basic intercultural communication skills. It contains three chapters:

- Chapter 1: Self-perception and perception of the other
- Chapter 2: Developing tolerance and understanding
- Chapter 3: Intercultural communication principles

**Unit 2, The role of parents in social inclusion and cohesion**, provides parents with practical information that will help them to cultivate positive attitudes towards migrant integration and diversity, viewing parental engagement for social inclusion as a collaborative and mutually rewarding process. Unit 2 contains the following chapters:

- Chapter 1: ECM integration<sup>1</sup>: Meaning and benefits for the society
- Chapter 2: Benefits of children experiencing diversity
- Chapter 3: Impact of prejudice and racism on children
- Chapter 4: Understanding challenges ECM parents face
- Chapter 5: Learning about other educational systems
- Chapter 6: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

Training material for host society parents is available in all partner languages (English, German, Greek, Italian, Lithuanian and Spanish). Training content is delivered through a variety of training activities, which help the learners to get motivated, obtain knowledge and understanding, reflect more profoundly on certain issues, apply newly gained insights in everyday life and interact with their diverse environment. Group activities help trainers to encourage self-reflection and make hidden assumptions or attitudes come to the surface.

### *Possible uses by stakeholders*

- 1. Parent associations:** Parent associations can make the material available on their websites or provide links, in order to facilitate access to any parent interested. In addition, parent associations can use the material or parts of it in workshops or other trainings they might provide.
- 2. Parent Schools:** The training materials can be used in the frame of Parent Schools for face-to-face training and as self-study material.
- 3. Teachers and school staff:** School principals and teachers can use the materials during teacher-parent meetings or organize workshops for teachers and parents. Young teachers can use the materials to better understand parents' positions (both local and foreign) on intercultural issues which very often occur at school.
- 4. School libraries:** All materials could be available printed and online in the relevant languages at the school libraries. New parents could be informed that these materials are available free of charge. This might be included in a school's welcome package for the parents of new pupils.
- 5. NGOs and other institutions working in the field of migrant integration** can use the materials to train local volunteers who work or prepare to work with migrants, to implement awareness raising workshops among the host society, and to facilitate intercultural understanding between mixed groups.
- 6. Education departments of regional and local authorities:** Regional and local authorities have departments for educational issues, including adult and lifelong training. The

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<sup>1</sup> The terms migrant/refugee parents or ethnic and cultural minority (ECM parents) are used alternatively in the materials, taking into account the terminology that applies in each country of the project partnership.

*Parents For All* training materials can be used as a whole or in parts for targeted education in intercultural issues and awareness raising.

7. **Integration offices/centres:** All materials can be made available at the resources sections of these offices for the public. In addition, materials can be used for the design of effective interventions involving the host society and the migrant/refugee communities (two-way integration).
8. **Regional and National Academies of the European Wergeland Centre:** The EWC Summer Academies strengthen the culture of democracy and human rights in schools and local communities in 26 countries. Training is addressed at teachers, school principals and parents. Selected parts of the *Parents For All* products can be used in such trainings. EWC also disseminates information and serves as a platform and meeting place (<http://www.theewc.org/Content/Who-we-are>).
9. **Living Democracy platform of educational resources** (<https://www.living-democracy.com>): This platform is available in 12 languages, including most of the Balkan countries. Resources are organised per target group, i.e. teachers, students, principals and parents. The *Parents For All* training materials could be made available on the parents' and the principals' page. This would allow parents and schools outside the *Parents For All* partnership to benefit from the project's products. They, in turn, could use the materials according to their needs, in self-study, group trainings or other forms of training, or translate the materials in their respective languages.

## *Country Specific Recommendations*

### **Greece**

**Resource platform for primary and secondary school teachers in Greece** (<http://dschool.edu.gr>): Teachers who participated in the piloting of the training materials said that the materials could be very well used for various activities in class. Upon permission of the General Directory of Primary and Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, the material could be made available on the platform with various resources for Greek school teachers. Thus, teachers could select when and how to use certain parts of the material.

### **Germany**

P4A training material could be applied in mainstream training provision of the **state parent councils in Germany ("Landeselternbeirat")**. These "umbrella organisations" for parent representation in school and education offer regular trainings for parents who are active as parent representatives at the schools of their children. "They receive regular trainings and information, i.e. on the rights of parents, ways parents could best work with the teachers and principals of a school, information on legal procedures etc., and in this training the materials could be included and integrated very well." (Ulrike Brittinger, former head of Federal School Board Stuttgart, Germany)

## Spain

“Work with parents is usually channeled through the AMPA, although it is common to find low participation of family members in training and awareness-raising activities. Through attractive materials, it may be possible to reach a larger target audience than if they had to attend talks/training in person.” (Social Worker-Huelva ACOGE)

# TRAINING MATERIALS FOR MIGRANT AND REFUGEE PARENTS

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## *Description*

Again, the concept here is to provide migrant and refugee parents with the necessary competences to deal with diversity, overcome their concerns about integration, and support effectively their children in a multicultural environment. In addition, migrant and refugee parents are provided with essential knowledge about their host country, such as core values, key features of social life, the structure of the educational system, school-parent collaboration etc. The materials are structured similarly to those for host society parents. The units with their respective chapters are as follows:

### **Unit 1: Basic intercultural skills**

- Chapter 1: Self-perception and perception of the other
- Chapter 2: Core values of the host country
- Chapter 3: Intercultural communication principles

### **Unit 2: Empowering MR/ECM parents for social inclusion**

- Chapter 1: Integration: What it means and what it does not mean
- Chapter 2: Integration: Benefits for the child and the society
- Chapter 3: Understanding the educational system and the opportunities it offers
- Chapter 4: Support of school activities for the development of interculturalism

All materials have been produced in English. However, there is country-specific information for all partnership countries in Unit 1, Chapter 2 and in Unit 2, Chapters 3 and 4. In addition, **any organization interested is free to translate the materials (in part or as a whole) into other languages, according to their needs. The only condition is to inform the project coordinators, Olympic Training, about it and provide them with a copy** of the translated materials. These translations will be made publicly available at the project website ([www.parents4all.eu](http://www.parents4all.eu)), with reference to the organization that made the translation. For more information, please contact Olympic Training at [olykek@olympiakokek.gr](mailto:olykek@olympiakokek.gr).



## Possible uses

1. **NGOs, associations, international organisations and councils dealing with migrant and refugee integration and education:** Workshops and trainings can be offered to migrants and refugees using the training materials. Especially the section referring to the host country values (Unit 1, Chapter 2) and the one referring to the importance of integration (Unit 2, Chapter 1) could be used to support refugees and migrants in their struggle to adapt to the host country and integrate. Other options are to select and adapt the topics that are more relevant locally; present the host society's education system to migrant parents; hold meetings to present the available project materials for further study at home.
2. **Migrant communities and associations:** They could organise trainings on intercultural issues for parents or all adult members of their communities, using the *Parents For All* training materials. Alternatively, they could make parts of the materials available in their languages in order to benefit parents from their communities. In addition, they could create links on their websites to the project page where training materials are available. Migrant parents with more experience could read the materials, check what may apply to their specific context and then do the training with their peers.
3. **Applications and platforms addressed at refugees:** Refugees often seek information online on issues of their concern. Such applications and platforms could make the training materials available with providing the relevant links or translating parts considered especially important for refugee orientation.
4. **Schools:** The *Parents For All* materials are very suitable to directly work with parents at school. The materials could be used in meetings for short trainings or a specific topic on which parents seek more advice and information. Materials can be included in the welcome packages for new arriving foreign parents.
5. **Neighbourhood associations, community social services, camps, academies, and leisure centres** could offer support workshops with the use of the *Parents For All* materials, prioritizing those areas/centres where a higher percentage of foreign population is living.
6. **Migrant and refugee reception centres:** Materials could be made available as part of the welcome packages, especially the parts about the core values of the host society and the value of integration.
7. **Integration offices/centres:** All materials can be made available at the resources sections of these offices for the public. In addition, materials can be used for the design of effective interventions involving the host society and the migrant/refugee communities (two-way integration).

## Country Specific Recommendations

### Greece

**Coordinators of refugee schooling (Συντονιστές Εκπαίδευσης Προσφύγων):** They are in charge of coordinating primary and secondary education of refugee children in public

schools. They are in direct contact with refugee parents and they are well acquainted with the needs of this particular target group in awareness raising, informing and training in intercultural skills. The coordinators could organise interventions for refugee parents, using the *Parents For All* products they consider more appropriate for each occasion.

**Municipal Centres of Migrant Integration (KEM):** Such centres are operating in 10 municipalities in Greece. They could use the *Parents For All* training materials in trainings for migrants, refugees and the community, using the budget for intercultural issues.

## ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT

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### *Description*

Closely connected to the project's aims and the training materials is the Assessment Toolkit. It is designed for individual users on the one hand as well as different institutions and organisations working with parents and integration.

The structure of the toolkit is as follows:

#### 1. **Pre-assessment activities**

- a. *Pre-assessment of attitudes.* This is a validated intercultural sensitivity scale developed by Chen & Starosta (2000). The scale is common for both parent groups.
- b. *Self-assessment of perceived training needs.* Parents are presented with a set of questions related to the desired learning outcomes (DLOs) of the training material. The questions are different for HSP and MR/ECMP groups. The results help parents identify the training material that will be the most useful for them.

#### 2. **Assessment activities related to the DLOs of the training materials**

A variety of assessment activities are available for each chapter of the 2 training units, based on their contents and focused on the DLOs. Parents will access them regularly as they work their way through the course. Activities are different for HSP and MR/ECMP groups. Besides checking that parents are meeting the DLOs, a key purpose of these activities is to reinforce learning.

#### 3. **Post-assessment activities**

- a. *Post-assessment of attitudes.* The same validated scale as in pre-assessment is used. Parents are invited to do the test again after training in order to find out to what degree their intercultural sensitivity has been improved.
- b. *Course utility survey.* Parents are given the opportunity to comment on the training material and the impact it had on them. Questions are slightly different for HSP and MR/ECMP.

Besides the different activities for HSP and MR/ECMP, there are also three different versions of the toolkit in terms of format:

### 1. **Complete edition in PDF**

This document includes all available assessment materials aimed at both HSP and MR/ECM groups. The full version is especially useful for organisations or institutions working with the different parent groups, as it provides all assessments in one document. Its downloadable format facilitates offline use and printing.

### 2. **Complete interactive online edition**

Users can be able to access the different parts of the toolkit online (pre-assessments, assessment activities, and post-assessments) and receive prompt feedback on their answers. The online edition is neither downloadable nor printable.

### 3. **Parts embedded in and linked to training materials**

The assessment activities connected with the different units and chapters are embedded in the training materials (full versions only) thus allowing for ease of access for parents. The training materials include links to pre- and post-assessments of attitudes and perceived training needs so that parents can access them before starting the course and after they have finished the course. (*Note: the shortened versions of the training materials do not contain any assessment activities*)

The complete PDF edition is available in English, while the parts addressed at HSP are available also in the other partner languages (German, Greek, Italian, Lithuanian, and Spanish) embedded in the training materials.

## *Possible uses*

Organisations can use the Assessment Toolkit for the following purposes:

1. **Assessment of the existing intercultural competences of parents and the specific needs for intervention**, with the use of the Pre-Assessment Activities. This can allow then the organisations to *design tailor-made interventions*, with or without the use of the training materials designed by Parents4All. The *Self-Assessment of Perceived Training Needs* is especially useful when short trainings are planned and the implementing organisation wants parent feedback in order to prioritise the subjects to be dealt with.
2. **Assessment of attitude change** in intercultural issues as a result of training with the use of the Post-Assessment of Attitudes scale.
3. **Assessment of the achievement of the desired learning outcomes**, and the degree of understanding of the different learning materials (with the use of DLO related activities for each chapter).
4. **Assessment of the overall impact of the training material**, with the help of the Post-Assessment activities.

The Assessment Toolkit could be also used in different contexts, such as:

- School psychologists and social workers working directly at schools in processes of intercultural mediation and intercultural communication can use the toolkit to offer parents an **additional incentive to use the training materials** and to start with a personal intercultural learning process.
- Based on the assessment results, parents can be encouraged to **reflect on their learning and how they can put it into practice.**

## VIDEO WITH PARENT INTERVIEWS

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### *Description*

The *Parents For All* video “**The dream of integration – parents on diversity and integration**” presents interviews with native parents from the partnership countries as well as immigrants to those countries. A total of 16 different countries are represented in the video. In five questions parents were asked what they think about education, tolerance and multiculturalism. The video presents the answers in the original languages and comes with a choice of subtitles in the six project languages.

The purpose of the video is to help parents understand that *despite the cultural differences, most parents share common concerns and want the best for their children*. Parents can see that no matter the origin, people anywhere can be welcoming, open-minded and carrying valuable experiences with which they can benefit others. Positive steps that facilitate intercultural understanding and integration are presented, as well as thought-provoking expressions of parents on the benefits of diversity and the significance of tolerance. This will help parents to connect, exchange ideas, and consider more active participation at schools.

### *Possible uses*

1. **Uploading on websites:** A link to the video can be posted on websites related to parent issues, intercultural skills and migrant integration. Thus a larger number of parents can benefit from the audio-visual material.
2. **Presentation in awareness raising activities and trainings:** The video can be presented and discussed by any of the organisations mentioned before in the context of training activities and other interventions promoting integration, social cohesion and intercultural skills. Discussing about and pondering on the messages of the video can contribute to increasing their impact.
3. The video is good for **group work with parents**. A mentor or trainer could ask a group of parents for their answers on the five questions answered in the video. Parents can note their answers on paper. After this, they watch the video, listen to the answers of other parents from all over Europe and the world. This is followed by a group discussion.

4. Schools, parent schools, parent associations and other stakeholders could have the video either **in their libraries or their online resources** for use in parents' trainings and other empowerment and educational activities for parents.

## SHORT FILM: "WALKING A MILE IN A MIGRANT'S SHOES"

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### *Description*

This animated film presents the story of two families, a newly arrived migrant family and a local family. The migrant parents face challenges with the new school system for their children. The host society family wonders why it is so difficult to adapt. But then they receive a call from relatives living abroad who are in a similar situation as the migrant family is. This animated silent film comes with side comments in six languages.

The film aims to help parents walk in the shoes of the other side. Host society parents are often unaware of the challenges migrant/refugee parents face, whereas the latter may misinterpret the behavior of locals as lack of interest, hostility or prejudice. The film helps parents to reflect on the fact that they could be very easily "on the other side" and that it might be "one of them" who might need support and help.

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### *Possible uses*

The short film can be used by stakeholders in similar ways as the video. In addition,

1. The film can be shown at **parents' meetings and parents' trainings** at schools or elsewhere as a stand-alone tool. Teachers or the organisers of the training may use the film to stir discussion among parents and to encourage them reflect about the situation of other parents in their class or neighbourhood. Since the film shows ways on how to interact, how to open up, and how to learn from each other, this could be used as a "role model" or a practical guide for parents in real life. Parents could be invited to think of other situations where foreign parents may need help and how this help could be offered in a constructive way.
2. The film can be presented to **newly arrived migrant or refugee parents to show them that they are "not alone"** with their situation and that there are many ways to get help with all the questions about school, education etc. in a new country. Since the film comes as an animated film, it will be easy to identify with the characters and to follow the story. The film could be part of a "welcome package" for foreign parents, combined with country-specific information on the structure and function of the school or the educational system in order to help parents to better adjust and to know whom they could ask for help.
3. The film can be used **with students of different ages in an alternative way**. An exercise could be to have the film (the visual part) without the subtitles (the story) and students be asked to write their own personal story, based on their own educational experience and the experience of their parents. This could help to identify additional challenges or

barriers MR/ECM parents may face, and initiate discussions among students, leading to more intercultural understanding and empathy.

4. The film can be presented during festivals that promote a culture of hospitality and international events, such as the European Migration Forum or the International Children's Day etc.