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Intellectual Output 6 Guide of Best Practices

The project ToMIMEuS: Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities (No: 2019-1-RO01-KA202-063245) has been funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union.



THE TRANSYLVANIAN
MUSEUM
OF ETHNOGRAPHY



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İSTANBUL MEDENİYET
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UNIVERSITY OF
THESSALY



MUSEUM
OF CYCLADIC
ART
NIKOLIS AND DOLLY
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Project Identification

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Introduction

The Erasmus+ Program entitled “ToMIMEUs: Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities” (No: 2019-1-RO01-KA202-063245) is funded by the European Union and the coordinating partner of the Project is the Transylvanian Museum of Ethnography (Romania).

Erasmus+ ToMIMEUs project aims to strengthen the profiles of staff who are involved in design of exhibitions and educational program from the partner museums in the four countries (Romania, Greece, Hungary and Turkey). It is important to underline the innovative and interdisciplinary character of ToMiMEUs project which aims to enhance the skills and knowledge of the museum staff regarding two different categories of individuals with sensory disabilities (i.e. vision impairment (VI) and deaf or hard-of hearing individuals (DHH) and develop multisensory and inclusive practices for individuals and groups with sensory disabilities as well as groups with individuals with and without disabilities.

The development of skills will help the museum staff:

- a) to understand the heterogeneity and the different needs of individuals with sensory disabilities,
- b) to address and respond to the needs of individuals with sensory disabilities, and
- c) to adopt multisensory and inclusive practices for the development of educational programs and educational material and technological means in order to enhance the access and inclusion of individuals with sensory disabilities for individuals and groups with sensory disabilities as well as groups of individuals with mixed abilities and needs (with and without disabilities).

The outputs of ToMiMEUs project will be Open Educational Resources uploaded in the portal of ToMiMEUs, namely the syllabus, videos from inclusive learning experiences, the development of differentiated and inclusive programmes and a best practices guide which will include innovative features in the sense of introducing specifications or/and recommendations into how to address individuals with and without SD based on the principles of differentiation, Universal Design and Universal Design of Learning.

ToMiMEUs project aims to enhance access and inclusion in museums for people with SD and without disabilities through the development of social scenarios, adapted material and the implementation of inclusive activities for groups with children with and without disabilities.

Guide of Best Practices

The guide of best practices includes a presentation and analysis of project activities, results and discussions in relation to the overall prior experience in ensuring increased accessibility in museums for people with sensory disabilities (SD). The best practice guide refers to the experiences of the participants in regarding interaction and communication, their emotions, the use of the created resources, the challenges encountered and how they approached them. Erasmus+ ToMIMEUs Project focuses on the ways that museums can address and support visitors with sensory disabilities (SD) in their programs and services. Inclusive educational activities were developed and implemented by museums for children with visual impairment and children who are deaf and hard of hearing together with children with typical development with the aim to raise awareness, to improve interaction and communication, to increase accessibility and available programs which support inclusion and its implications. The partner museums of the project in which the inclusive educational activities were implemented are the Transylvanian Museum of Ethnography (Romania), Nicholas and Dolly Goulandris Foundation Museum of Cycladic Art, (Greece), Hagymányok Háza (Hungary), TCDD I. Regional Directorate (Turkey) and NI Museum and Institute in Bitola, (North Macedonia) and The Homeland Museum of Knjaževac (Serbia), which are members of the Balkan Museum Network

Competences of museum staff regarding aspects of inclusion and accessibility, resources and supporting inclusive learning experiences were developed through training (online and face to face) delivered by University of Thessaly (Greece) and Babes-Bolyai University (Romania) based on the training manual that was developed within the project by University of Thessaly, Greece. The project outputs benefited the experience and expertise of Istanbul Medeniyet University, (Turkey) and Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Hungary

The development of the IO6 is based on the results of IO1 (Scoping), on the implementation of the information within the IO3 (the Training material for professional development course), on the IO4 (Adapted learning experience - critical overview), on IO5 (Inclusive learning experience), on the training programs that were conducted in Greece and Romania (C1, C2), on the survey regarding the museum staff needs and experience of educational programs with persons with and without sensory impairments (SI). The guide is also based on the results and the discussions that took place during all the transnational project meetings (M1, M2, M3, M4, M5) and the multiplier events from the project partners (Turkey, Hungary, Greece and Romania). Communication and interaction between the partners were enabled by the project portal (S.C. Atomo Ro S.R.L., Romania).

The development and implementation of the inclusive educational activities had a positive and real impact at different levels (personal, social) for museums and also for persons with sensory impairments (SI). Through the involvement of individuals with SD, they acquired better self-advocacy skills enabling them to play an active role regarding their access to the museums. The differentiated and inclusive activities based on the principles of Universal Design and Universal Design of Learning promoted inclusion at educational and societal level.

A collaborative network between universities and museums and a sustainable learning community was created during the ToMiMEUs' duration involving all relevant stakeholders who had the chance to interact through the ToMiMEUs portal, to exchange their experience and ideas, share their concerns and improve their methods and techniques.

In the same time, the broad community of museums, schools and associations for and of the benefit of persons with SD and disabilities in general were informed about the actions and results of the ToMiMEUs project. The project partners are already widely experienced at disseminating information through publication in scientific journals and conferences. Many positive aspects, implications and results were obtained throughout the lifetime of the project.

1) The activities of the ToMiMEUs project have respected the principles of the action research methodology such as understanding of the setting and context in general, research and investigation, analysis of practice, applying theory through action, evaluating practice, involvement of colleagues and others concerned, reflection, discussion and sharing of meanings, validation of professional change.

2) The feed-back from students with disabilities and the feed-back from children with typical development showed an enriched and improved level of collaboration between the museum staff and the individuals with SI and ultimately the level of inclusion of visitors with SI in museums within different groups (with and without disabilities). They expressed their emotions, their contentment of being able to have such experiences, to touch and explore some exhibits, to have the opportunity to hear some pertinent explanations through the audio guides, to be able to participate to some creation activities together with the specialists, to receive some specialized guiding in sign language.

3) Regarding the best practices which could be extended to further projects we can mention the feedback from the specialists in the museums after the training phase in which faculty members and experts from each participating university were in charge for spreading their knowledge. Staff of the museum developed professional competences in how to elaborate the presentations for the artefacts ranging from the dimension, objects and colors to the historic

and artistic context for the items and, in the same time, to answer the possible questions coming from the participants. In the same time as a result we can mention the fact that the staff understood the importance of visual and tactile stimulation using different methods and inclusive/adaptive techniques. These aspects allowed them to create content and materials adapted for people with sensory disabilities.

4) Accessibility programs were also included in the museums priorities, meaning that visits for individuals with visual and hearing disabilities were supported , that they could approach the artefacts.

5) Another example of good practice is the perception of the museum specialists concerning persons with sensory impairments, their needs, including cultural and epistemic ones. This perception was enriched after the activities within the project, after the training programs. The specialists in the museums will know from now on how to work with individuals with SI, they can now understand their emotions, their way of seeing things, their way of establishing interactions.

6) Accessibility of the websites, the creation of digital narratives about some collections, digital guided tours in sign language (for those with hearing impairments), the construction of an application offering an audio guided tour for the highlights of some galleries (for those with visual impairments) were taken into discussion. And these aspects were clearly specified during the transnational meeting and the multiplier event (M5) in Cluj-Napoca, in all the presentations of the museums specialists, with very pertinent examples that showed the involvement of the staff in all the activities meaning good policies and practice for persons with and without SI.

7) Museums planned new workshops and contacted associations or people with disabilities in order to cooperate and to organize guided tours for individuals with special needs. Educational programs for deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired children and programs for children with typical development were developed and implemented in many of the museums of the countries within ToMIMEUS and some of them highlighted the importance of an accessibility art curator as a staff member.

8) Educational activities were developed focusing on learning about folk crafts (gingerbread baking, felting, folk dancing) within the museums and workshops organized after audio guided museum tours with art sessions (using clay, play dough, painting) in which participants can express their feelings and can offer a feedback of what they understood and learned during the visits. We can give also some other examples: pottery workshops aimed to

see the collaboration between children with and those without disabilities, with both educational and barrier-breaking purposes, activities in which children see/feel the difference between wool and hemp clothing etc.

9) Interactions and learning between children with and without disabilities took place.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MUSEUM PROGRAMMES

NICHOLAS AND DOLLY GOULANDRIS FOUNDATION MUSEUM OF CYCLADIC ART (GREECE).

The activities designed by the Education Department of the museum aim to promote the understanding of the Cycladic Art Collection by persons with and without sensory disabilities. Access and accessibility are the core elements of the activities, and it is expected to help participants to deepen their understanding when it comes to Cycladic Art, through braille, subtitles (Greek and English) and sign languages (Greek and International).

Deaf and Hard of Hearing people

The Education Department designed a recorded tour of the Cycladic Collection in Greek Sign Language, with Greek subtitles, and in International Sign, with English subtitles.

The video is displayed on a screen in the hall of the Cycladic Collection. It is also available on the Museum's website, which also features information about the visit to the museum in sign language. Lastly, at the entrance of the museum there is a video with information about the Museum in sign language (which collections it features, which are accessible to the deaf, the Museum's opening hours, ticket information/free for the disabled and their escort).

The guided tour in sign language covers the main themes of Cycladic Culture and is accompanied by relevant images and the duration is 15 min. approximately.

For the preparation of the texts, and in order for them to be effective in sign language, we asked for guidance from Hands Up, the company that undertook the creation of the video in sign language.

People with Visual Impairments

For the visitors who are blind or visually impaired, the education department designed a mobile showcase, which offers a tactile and acoustic experience, along with a tour of the hall of Cycladic Culture. It is designed on the basis of equal inclusion for people with visual disabilities, without excluding its use by any visitor who wishes to enrich the experience of the tour by using it. Its theme is Cycladic Culture, with an emphasis on marble sculpture, which is the most representative sample of Cycladic Art.

The idea to create a trail within the Cycladic Art room in order for people with visual impairment to be able to participate in the on-site museum tour was generated within the Education Department. Prior to the implementation of the idea, we consulted Aineias Martos, a person with visual impairment. After discussing with Aineias, we selected the stops/showcases and decided on the objects that he had to “see” by touching exact replicas. This is how the idea of a mobile showcase was born and it is based on the assumption that the mobile showcase is used by at least two people, up to a small mixed group (with or without disability). Additionally, during the visit, the team is accompanied by trained museum personnel.

The mobile showcase will be moved, within the space, by a museum employee and follow a route for which the visitor will have already been informed. The visitor will be provided with the floor plan of the space in tactile form and tactile maps of Greece and the Cyclades, separately. The tactile experience is based on exact copies of representative objects. In their original form, the figurines and utensils are made of marble, which is why most copies are made of marble (except those that are not available in marble and are made of resin). This information is included in an introductory paragraph, embedded in the showcase.

The copies are placed in small drawers that open axially, with one rotation. For a more ergonomic use of the showcase, we agreed that its upper surface will be the space where the user can touch and inspect the copies they will get from the drawers. The lowest storage space can feature additional material, printed, tactile, etc.

Written information about the project, the Cycladic Civilization and more specifically about the figurines are available in braille and large print as well. All copies carry a number/code, so that it is easy to combine them with the information (audio or written).

Along with the tactile experience, an audio tour of the Cycladic Art Collection has been created, which complement the tactile experience offered by the Mobile Showcase, providing copies to the blind and the visually impaired. For the preparation of the texts, we deemed it necessary to collaborate with the NGO “Me Alla Matia, as well as with people with blindness, so that the texts provide the necessary scientific information about Cycladic Culture and the

marble figurines, while simultaneously covering the needs of people with blindness. The texts were composed by the Department of Educational Programs and have been adapted by the Team of “Me Alla Matia.” They are also translated into English and evaluated by a group of blind people.

The texts were then posted on the Clio Muse Tours platform, which is already collaborating with the museum. The platform also hosts the guided tours of the permanent collections in sign language. This application, which is free of charge, is addressed to the museum’s visitors, but is also used by people with blindness who are familiar with the use of special smartphones that convert written texts to audio files. For blind people who don’t have this ability, the recorded files will accompany the mobile showcase (via a cell phone provided by the museum), providing information and instructions about the tactile experience for the blind.

HUNGARIAN HERITAGE HOUSE. MUSEUM OF HUNGARIAN APPLIED FOLK ART

The idea of an accessible exhibition was inspired by the Erasmus+ ToMiMEUs project, which aims to create a multisensory museum that also welcomes visitors with sensory disabilities. The first interactive exhibition which took place in the Hungarian Heritage House laid the foundation for the successful implementation of the Erasmus+ ToMiMEUs project. During the program, knowledge was conveyed and creative activities were provided for mixed groups of children with and without sensory disabilities in a museum environment and museum educational workshops. The basic hypothesis was that the role of inclusive, activity-oriented museum educational activities is significant, as they increase the awareness of the participants about disabilities and diversity. Workshops held in a mixed group of students from different schools relieved children's anxieties and made friendships. The various sensory injuries have brought attention to the need to approach each other and the environment differently, and at the same time to the fact that the museum is an excellent place for co-education. From November 2021 to April 2022, we hosted 5 visually impaired and 5 non-visually impaired, 5 hard-of-hearing and 5 non-hearing impaired 10-12 years old students for a total of 4-4 museum educational workshops. The students of the cooperating partner institutions came from the Mária Ward Primary School, the Dr. Béla Török Primary School and the Primary School for the Visually Impaired. Our goal was to get to know the museum, us, the employers, each other

and the difficulties of the children, the differences in their perceptions. In addition to frontal work, we also tried individual, pair and group tasks in the sessions.

Museum educational workshops

Ice breaking workshops

When the children first came to the museum, team building activities were played to help to get to know each other.

On 17th November 2021, under the guidance of Aliz Bangó, Csilla Dobinszki, Réka Farkas, Boglárka Gál, Viktor Konrád, István Megyeri, there were games played by 5 students of Mária Ward Primary School from 9:30 to 10:00 that could help non-disabled students to understand the difficulties, disadvantages and differences in their disabilities for the visually impaired.

We borrowed simulation glasses from ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Needs Education, which the children tried and we played some games with them. After half an hour arrived children from Primary School for the Visually Impaired and we played together after then. At that time, we focused on getting to know the unusual place and people.

On 23rd February 2022, a similar workshop was held by Aliz Bangó, Boglárka Gál, Judit Járfás and István Megyeri for other 5 students of Ward Mária Primary School and for the 5 hard-of-hearing students of Dr. Béla Török Elementary School but this time hearing impairment was the basis for raising disability awareness in children with typical development.

Taste it at the museum! – tradition of making gingerbread

On 9th December 2021, under the leadership of Réka Farkas and Boglárka Gál, the second workshop was realized for the mixed group of sighted children and children with visual impairment. This time, an hour was spent in the exhibition of Scents, tastes, shapes – Look by hand, see by heart, where the students could learn about the tradition of gingerbread making. Gingerbread was often sold in markets and fairs, it was a favourite sweet of children, a love gift for young people. There were various kinds of ginger bread, different in their preparation, shape and method of decoration. The children played a shape recognition and concave-convex pairing game with closed eyes, spice recognition with scents. In the second half of the session, they made gingerbread together.

What's this? Felt! – tradition of felting

On 16th February 2022, under the lead of Csilla Dobinszki and Boglárka Gál, the children arrived for the third workshop. On this time the children learned about the motifs of felting, various objects of use made of felt and the processing of wool. The wool recognition game was placed in the exhibition, where they had to sort different kinds of wool, wool of different thread thicknesses by touch, they played some games with their eyes closed. In the second half of the session, the children made felted tulips.

Shepherd's life, shepherd's dance tradition

On 18th March 2022, the mixed group of hard-of-hearing and non-hearing-impaired children arrived for the second time to the museum. This workshop was led by István Megyeri, Viktor Konrád, Judit Járfás and Boglárka Gál. In the exhibition everyone was looking for an object related to the life of shepherds (hat, whip, chain stick, shepherd's crook, axe, etc.). For learning activities, they were given tasks in pairs (object description, drawing etc.). Each pair of students had to walk through stations to gain knowledge in a playful form on information boards placed in the exhibition (lamb-finding labyrinth, picture puzzle, etc.). and on a touchscreen through digital games (object and photo pairing). The second half of the session was enriched by stick dance and skill games which was popular among shepherds, accompanied by bagpipes.

See by hands – tradition of pottery

On 23rd March 2022, the mixed group of hard-of-hearing and non-hearing-impaired children arrived for their third workshop and after that on 7th April 2022, the fourth and final museum educational workshop was held for the mixed group of children with and without visual impairment. The workshops were held by Aliz Bangó and assisted by Boglárka Gál.

Taking in hand the visualization tools in the exhibition, the children learned about the possibilities of decorating pottery. They were also able to pick up clay tiles with different patterns, with which we played an association game of different feelings. Some tiles were placed next to each other in such a way that we felt beautiful, ugly, cheerful and sad feelings by touching. On these workshops, we also used the information and play boards in the exhibition, on which a puzzle was put out by the pairs of students together. In the second half of the workshops, the students in pairs made friendship bowls and flower pots by clay. Aliz Bangó later burned out in her pottery studio. We gave it to the students with a flower of

friendship implanted in it, so that they could think of their friends from other school when watering and caring of them.

Shepherd's life, shepherd's instruments

On 22nd April 2022, the last museum educational workshop was realized under the leadership of Zoltán Szabó, Judit Járfás, Viktor Konrád and Boglárka Gál for the hard-of-hearing and non-hearing-impaired mixed group of children. In the exhibition we learned about the various shepherd flutes and the children could get acquainted with the shepherds' favourite instrument, the goat pipe. They could expand their knowledge with a playful true or false game. In the second half of the workshop, they could play on a bagpipe synthesizer and an old gatekeeper game (two children making a gate with their arms, the others walk under it, if the music stops, the gate closes and whoever stays in the gate joins the gate, so the gate expands and grows, who last stays under the gate is the winner).

At the end of the workshops, children wrote to their friends from the other school to tell them what they felt during the workshops at the museum. Their answers were very kind: "Good luck!", "Never give up!", "I hope we see each other again!", "It was good to be with you!", "I hope our friendship will last a long time!", "I'm glad you helped me!". We hope that from different schools children with sensory disabilities and children without disabilities made long lasting friendship during the workshops.

The success of the pilot project is shown by the fact that the Primary School for the Visually Impaired would like to continue the cooperation, and there have been several requests from visually impaired institutions that they intend to participate in our workshops in the 2022-2023 school year. Thus, the project has not been completed, in the future we would like to make our guided, playful museum educational workshops available to as many visitors with sensory impairment as possible.

TRANSYLVANIAN MUSEUM OF ETHNOGRAPHY

Transylvanian Museum of Ethnography is one of the first museums in Romania to undertake programmes and activities aimed at creating and improving the cultural offer in order to include people with sensory disabilities in the cultural act. Among the projects implemented so far for this purpose we mention the following:

2009: "Equal opportunities in access to culture. Museum techniques for cultural integration of people with disabilities" – tactile exhibition for the visually impaired persons.

2013: “Silence – an overcome barrier” – series of activities for students (7-11 years) with and without hearing impairments and verbal communication.

2014-2017: „Bridging the Gap between Museums and Individuals with Visual Impairment (BAGMIVI)” – training for museum employees and activities for visually impaired persons.

2017: „Discover, learn, play!” – Activities for students with and without hearing and verbal communication disabilities.

Within the project ToMIMEuS: Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities, the museum organized two activities for students aged 6-14. One of the groups consisted of students with visual impairments, combined with students without sensory impairments, while the other group was formed with students with and without hearing and verbal communication disabilities. Due to the epidemiological situation, the courses were conducted both online and face to face.

The general objective of the courses was the inclusion and participation of children with sensory impairments in cultural-educational activities, achievable in an ethnographic museum. Also, the courses aimed to establish an optimal contact between students without and with special educational needs by carrying out common activities,

Purpose of the activity: increasing the degree of knowledge of the traditional culture by exporting an element with identity brand value: the traditional costume.

As preliminary activities for the preparation of the course there were : design and use of specific museum techniques: making a kit with samples of materials: worksheets: folk costumes – miniatures: textile dolls< demonstration and working materials for testing various textile techniques; choice of materials and decorating techniques.

The first activity took place on 16.12.2021, in the main exhibition hall of the museum, where the children were received by the head of the activity and by the museum staff, being greeted orally and through sign language. In an introductory discussion, students were introduced to the characteristics and functions of museums, as well as the specific function of the museums of ethnography. The habitat types were also presented: urban (many people, many buildings of different sizes, many streets etc.) and rural (fewer people, few buildings, longer distances, few streets, smaller houses with outbuildings, few community buildings / church in the centre of the village, gardens, land outside the village, basic occupations and way of life). Then the activity continued with the clarification of the notion of clothing and its primary role, that of protecting the body. In a practical demonstration, each child received a cotton glove,

being urged to put on his glove and observe the difference between covered/uncovered; glove function. This clarified the notion of clothing in terms of its practical function.

The second activity took place on 07.04.2022, with the participation of a group of students aged 6-7, students with visual impairment and students with typical development.

The structure of the second activity was similar to the previous one, but its content was simpler, being adapted to the age and abilities of the participants. No written worksheets were used, and the tasks performed by the children were easier: three-thread weaving, ordinary puzzle, wooden tactile puzzle with textile materials attached.

Conclusions

The time for the presentation of the two groups, the preliminary discussion about how to communicate with the persons with sensory impairments, the presentation and learning of signs (good morning, hello, thank you) or the exclusively tactile exploration of a selected artefacts stimulated the interest and empathy of children with typical development. Even during activities they asked questions related to the sign language and tried to establish contact with children with hearing impairments through the few signs they learned. Therefore, we can consider that our goal to raise awareness to this way of communication and to the interaction with children of the same age, but with different needs, has been achieved.

The activity was planned for a smaller group (five students without disabilities, five students with sensory disabilities), but in the end a larger number of participants were presented, at the request of the teachers of the typical children group. The difficulties caused by the larger than expected number of participants were overcome by supplementing the number of curators, each of them supporting six children.

The preparation of a sufficiently large number of teaching materials, the coordination of individual activity or practice in small groups were important in order to balance the work pace and to provide satisfaction to all participants in order to complete their tasks.

The chosen theme was at the same time known for children (the notions of dressing/undressing, practical functions of clothing), but they were also receptive to new information (types of raw materials, social functions of garments), adapted to the age of the participants.

The diversity of operations and the pace at which they took place contributed to maintaining the interest of children throughout the activities.

ISTANBUL RAILWAY MUSEUM

Istanbul Railway Museum opened in 2005, in the historical Istanbul (Sirkeci) Station, an old railway station with a great history, which is trying today to become a significant tourist objective, highlighting a heritage full of meanings.

Works done at the museum within the ToMiMEUs Project for an accessible and inclusive museum aimed to increase the level of accessibility both for visitors with visual impairments and for those with hearing impairments. In order to organize activities for people with visual and hearing impairments, the museum staff attended the training courses organized within the project. Also, the planning of the activities was done through discussions held at the museum with the representatives of the non-governmental organizations Audio Description Association and Individual with Visual Impairment Association of Türkiye.

The first activity at the Istanbul Railway Museum was held on January 16, 2022, and was entitled “Passengers to the train, the train is leaving!” developed by one of the project researcher, Dr. Özcan Erkan Akgün. At the event, organized in partnership by TCDD and Istanbul Medeniyet University, participated children between the ages of 6 and 12 with various levels of visual and hearing impairments. Accompanied by museum staff previously trained within the scope of the project, the children were first introduced in the museum as a whole. Afterwards, they experienced various materials and roles in the museum through creative drama activities. After their conclusion, the children drew and painted pictures about the environment and things they knew and experienced within the scope of the activity. After the art studies, the experts from Istanbul Medeniyet University conducted interviews with the children and their parents. In the evaluation of the event, the participating specialists drew practical and theoretical conclusions related to its development, useful for the preparation of the following integrative learning activities carried out within the project.

The second activity at the Istanbul Railway Museum, held on March 27, 2022, having the name “Let's find the secret code in the museum!”, had as participants children between the ages of 6 and 16, representing a mixed group consisting of children with hearing impairment, visual impairment and typical development.

Like the first activity, the second one started with a general tour of the museum and with the presentation of all its collections. Developed by the project researcher Dr. Ayşe Tuğba Öner, the activity “Let's find the secret code in the museum!” aimed to guide the children to follow the clues and found the cards hidden in the museum. By deciphering the secret code on each card, the children tried to find all the cards. The children who found all the cards and solved the

codes completed the activity. A certified sign language interpreter accompanied the children throughout the whole process, from the first moment they came to the museum. After the event, Istanbul Medeniyet University team of experts held interviews with the children and their parents, who expressed their level of satisfaction with its development.

BALKAN MUSEUM NETWORK – A DEVELOPING EXPERIENCE

The activities of the partner museums were happily complemented by the contributions made to this project by a number of museums from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Serbia and North Macedonia, members of the Balkan Museum Network. Even if the Balkan Museum Network contribution was expected to occur mainly in the field of dissemination of the project results, the participation of the museum specialists in the transnational project meetings and the permanent contact with the other project partners led to the identification of additional forms of involvement of the member museums in organizing activities for people with disabilities.

Based on the experience gained within the TOMIMEUS project, two of the museums, member of Balkan Museum Network, namely NI Museum and Institute in Bitola, North Macedonia and The Homeland Museum of Knjaževac, Serbia organized activities involving mixed groups of visually and hearing impaired children, with the participation of children without disabilities.

Feel the heritage

Activity involving 15 children with and without visual impairments, realized after a preparatory phase which consisted of a zoom meeting and a museum visit. The activity started with an Interview/questionnaire for teachers and special educators and children, and proceeded with presenting to the participants, tactile museum objects, replicas and copies of the museum objects, tactile images, legends and interpretative texts on Braille. The organizers also made a “museum suitcase” full of various objects - tactile copies, made in different materials (type, shapes, and texture). The activity also included the following aspects: explaining to school mates experience based on description and after touching the tactile images; chance to uncover the “secret” alphabet to the schoolmates without impairments; every participant could write a word or their name on Braille; evaluation.

Explore the Museum

Activity involving 15 children with and without hearing impairments, age 7-15 years, realized after a preparatory phase including an on-line introduction via Zoom and a museum visit and also an interview/questionnaire for assessing the needs of teachers and special educators and children. The activity included: sign language interpretation of a number of selected objects from the museum collection; creative workshop, involving special education teachers and art teachers. The materials for workshop included: paper, colours, glue, videos, tablets, and museum copies. The materials made during the workshop were presented in an exhibition.

The contributions from the Balkan Museum Network partners have consistently complemented the consortium's experience, opening it up to areas still under-explored, and demonstrated the existence in these partner organizations of competencies that could be developed in the future projects.

FEED-BACK AND TESTIMONIALS OF CHILDREN

Balkan Museum Network

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| <p>Evaluation results – children with hearing impairments and other disabilities</p> | <p>Age - from 8-14, boys – 8, girls – 7; 15 in total From 9 – 38 mixed group of children and people with disabilities (former students of the special class in primary school) 3 girls and 7 boys, 10 in total</p> <p><i>I go to museum several times during the year – 10 answers, I don't go to museum every year - 14 answers, I have never been to a museum - 1 answer; I go to museum only with the school - 14 answers I go to museum with friends and family – 10 answers</i></p> <p>What do you think what a museum is? <i>I know what is museum, I was there last year-I remember everything; In a museum I see very interesting weapon; Museum is a place where you can see nice paintings; Museum is a building where curators tell stories about old objects; Museum is a place where we have chance to see sign language videos about the objects; I have never been to museum, but I will go soon; I think that museum is a something like treasure box; Museum is a place where we can see old objects (5 answers are very similar); Museum is a very interesting place full of interesting stories; Museum is a building where people care about the objects from the past; Museum in our city is an old building and inside they present old costumes, dishes, coins, icons. (Irena's comment: "Many of the answers are connected to a "PLACE" and also, they remember a lot of the objects from previous years".) Museums preserve memories, old things, what we use for life in the city and the countryside, we make exhibitions in the museum and plays, we embroider, knit, weave, play instruments, have fun...</i></p> <p>How much time do you usually spend in an exhibition? <i>45-60 minutes x14 answers; 60-90 minutes x 10 answers;</i></p> |
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| | <p>Which of the listed do you do in a museum? <i>Watching video (yes), Listening to audio narration (yes), Reading (yes), Drawing (yes), Writing (no), Watching/listening a tale (yes), Playing games (yes), Playing a computer/digital game (yes), Touching an object (yes), Look for objects (yes), Learn new words (yes), Learn new things (yes);</i></p> <p>Did you make by hand something in a museum that you took home? <i>Yes, I made drawing and I put them on a wall in our school (all 15)</i> <i>Yes, we drew, made cakes, baskets, had a show and workshops (10 answers)</i></p> <p>Did you read the inscriptions next to the objects during the museum visits? <i>Yes, some of inscriptions;</i> <i>Yes, I read a lot of inscriptions (yes);</i></p> <p>How did you feel during your museum visits? <i>I had such a good time that I would definitely go to a museum again. (All 14+10 answers);</i></p> <p>Do you know an adult or child who has a visual (hearing) impairment? <i>Yes;</i></p> <p>If your answer to the previous question was yes, where do you know the visually or hearing impaired person from? <i>One of my friends has a visual/hearing impairments;</i> <i>Other: we are all with hearing impairment;</i></p> <p>Have you ever been to a museum with someone with a visual or hearing impairment? <i>Yes;</i></p> |
| <p>Evaluation results – teachers – mixed group of children (hearing impairment) and other disabilities</p> | <p>How did you prepare the children for this visit? <i>Lectures, stories, previous visit to museums and guest speakers from museum, dialogue;</i> <i>Other: Presentation of sign language videos on YouTube related to exhibition, Zoom meetings with museum stuff and children before the visit;</i></p> <p>2. What role did you have during the visit with the children? What did you do? <i>Professional assistant; Interpretation on sign language, during Zoom meeting, during museum visit, during creative workshop (professor - sign</i></p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p><i>language interpreter); Fostering creativity and interaction, sharing knowledge during creative workshop (Art teacher);</i></p> <p>3. Please name 3 benefits of the museum visit for the children: <i>Opportunity, visibility, inclusion, accessibility, collaboration; More information about cultural heritage, socialisation, fun, creativity;</i></p> <p>4. What challenges/ difficulties did you encounter during your museum visit with the children? <i>Physical barriers; Challenge: to organise workshop in a Covid 19 restrictions and protocols; No difficulties: „We have our own Van, so when you are ready- we will come to visit you” (The school and the children hotel where they live is distanced several km from the museum).</i></p> <p>5. What opportunities could you identify after this museum visit? <i>We can give directions to museum stuff, about what will be useful for children, according their needs, ability etc.; Organise a visit, at least once a year for children, as they wish to gain more knowledge about cultural heritage; Organise creative art workshop at least twice a year and support talents (deaf children express interest for art)- Art Teacher; New opportunities for association members and PWDs, new workshops and programs, additional digital content;</i></p> <p>6. Suggestions: <i>We suggest to continue with sign language videos about museum exhibits and other topics (cultural heritage) and share with other special schools in a country; We suggest to put QR codes next to exhibit, (as you do) for more objects. Facilitate new opportunities and workshops.</i></p> |
| Evaluation results – children with visual impairments | <p>1.How old are you? 12;</p> <p>2.Please, underline the correct answer: <i>girls- 12;</i></p> <p>3.How often do you go to museum? <i>Once a year (all 12);</i></p> <p>4.Who do you go to museum with? <i>I go to museum only with the school. x (all 12)</i></p> <p>5.What do you think what a museum is? <i>Building full of old things, place where you can have extra education and fun, building where museum stuff care about old costumes, place where I find old coins, museum is a place where we can go with masks and see exhibition, a place where you can ask 100 questions about the</i></p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p><i>old objects, museum stuff tells interesting stories, in a museum you can take a lot of photos of old objects, museum is a place where we can make drawings and stay in a front of the showcase, museum is a place where you can touch several objects and touch tactile images, museum is an institution which is a friend to a children, museum is a place where you can see a lot of thing from the past.</i></p> <p>6.How much time do you usually spend in an exhibition? <i>45-60 minutes x (all 12)</i></p> <p>7.Which of the listed do you do in a museum? <i>Watching video (all 12), Listening to audio narration (all 12), Reading (all 12), Drawing (all 12), Watching/listening a tale (all 12), Touching an object (all 12), Look for objects (all 12), Learn new words(all 12), Learn new things(all 12);</i></p> <p>8.Did you make by hand something in a museum that you took home? <i>Yes, I made clay copies (workshop -two years ago), my painting;</i></p> <p>9.Did you read the inscriptions next to the objects during the museum visits? <i>Yes, I read a lot of inscriptions (all 12);</i></p> <p>10.How did you feel during your museum visits? <i>I had such a good time that I would definitely go to a museum again (all 12);</i></p> <p>11. Do you know an adult or child who has a visual (hearing) impairment? <i>Yes (all 12);</i></p> <p>12. If your answer to the previous question was yes, where do you know the visually or hearing impaired person from? <i>One of my classmates has a visual/hearing impairment(11 participants); (Two children with big percentage of impairment but did not state that): Other: "I am a child with VI" (1 participant);</i></p> <p>Have you ever been to a museum with someone with a visual or hearing impairment? <i>Yes x (all 12);</i></p> |
| <p>Evaluation results – teachers – mixed group of children (visual impairment)</p> | <p>1.How did you prepare the children for this visit? <i>Lectures, Stories, Presentations, Leaflets, Videos, Guests from the museum/previous visits to the museum, visiting museum's web site, Zoom meetings with museum stuff and children before the visit, etc.;</i></p> <p>2.What role did you have during the visit with the children? What did you do? <i>Organising the visit, cooperation with museum stuff, finding connection with the exhibit with regular program topics, fostering exploring, assisting the visually impaired through museum, etc.;</i></p> <p>3.Please name 3 benefits of the museum visit for the children:</p> |

| | |
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| | <p><i>Gained knowledge, supporting creativity, positive atmosphere;</i></p> <p>4. What challenges/ difficulties did you encounter during your museum visit with the children?</p> <p><i>Challenge - to support exploring -without impairments children and pay more attention to sensory experience for VI children; No difficulties;</i></p> <p>5. What opportunities could you identify after this museum visit? <i>To stay in contact with museum stuff about the different topics related to regular program to enrich the students' knowledge, share experience with other teachers and suggest visit, more onsite visit or Zoom meeting etc.</i></p> <p>6. Suggestions:</p> <p><i>I am suggesting museum stuff to continue with educational workshops and visits for children with V.I. and with a cooperation with a special educator for our school to identify needs, ability etc.;</i></p> |
|--|--|

HUNGARY

Reflections of the students

At the end of the workshops, children were asked to write to their friends from the other school to tell them what they felt during the workshops at the museum. Their answers were very kind: "Good luck!", "Never give up!", "I hope we see each other again!", "It was good to be with you!", "I hope our friendship will last a long time!", "I'm glad you helped me!". We hope that from different schools, children with sensory disabilities and children without disabilities made long lasting friendship during the workshops.

Reflections of the teachers

Four teachers gave feedbacks after the museum educational sessions. Their answer about the preparation was different so they helped the museum visit with conversations and previous museum visits however they didn't feel the need of preparation. All of them positively emphasized that the museum's staff were well prepared and adequately piqued the children's interests. The environment and the topic of the sessions were carefully designed, paying attention to the needs of the children. They all mentioned that they accompanied the children and helped overcome communication difficulties. This clearly indicates that the museum educator/workshop leader and the accompanying teacher work in harmony and help each other within the framework of a session.

The teachers all said that was very useful and effective that the children could meet with other children with typical development.

Some suggestions were also made, according to which it is worth holding the sessions at a slower pace, so that an interpreter can help with understanding. There has also been a need for museum pedagogic sessions to be implemented in topics that can be adapted to the school curriculum. The experience is that in the group where there were only girls, closer friendships were formed, which allows to conclude that the effectiveness of the sessions can be influenced by the composition of the group, since it is a characteristic of developmental psychology that girls and boys in this age group are less friendly to each other.

The experience is that the success of the sessions can be influenced by the time schedule. For one group, we held the 4 sessions over a longer period of time, with us it was less possible to notice the formation of close relationships, while for the group who came to us 4 times in a shorter period of time, more excitement, anticipation and joy could be observed.

REFLECTIVE LOG FOR THE TEACHERS

Answer 1 (teacher from school of hard of hearing)

| |
|---|
| 1. How did you prepare the children for this visit? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lectures ○ Stories ○ Presentations ○ Leaflets ○ Videos ○ Books, Encyclopaedias, Albums ○ Guests from the museum/previous visits to the museum x Other: I did not prepare the children |
| 2. What role did you have during the visit with the children? What did you do? |
| <p>I accompanied the children.</p> <p>I helped overcome communication difficulties.</p> |
| 3. Please name 3 benefits of the museum visit for the children |
| <p>The sessions were useful for the children because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. they [the workshop leaders/museum] gave an experience, the knowledge was transferred experientially. It was good that the children could hold and try objects, that music and dance also appeared as activities 2. they [the workshop leaders/museum] provided knowledge that they [the children] can use within the framework of other subjects 3. they [the workshop leaders/museum] helped and are helping to connect with the national past, traditions, and their [the children] own roots 4. they [the children] could be together with non-hearing-impaired adults and children unknown to them, they could be part of the majority social environment |
| 4. What challenges/ difficulties did you encounter during your museum visit with the children? |
| <p>Organization - selection of participating children (choose just 5 children), integration of the program into school life (lessons, timetable, accompanying teachers), the museum is a long way from the school. But these were acceptable challenges/difficulties. Worth it!</p> |

5. What opportunities could you identify after this museum visit?

Based on the reference made during the sessions, it occurred to me how good it would be to organize museum pedagogic sessions specifically tailored to a specific curriculum, e.g. János vitéz (a Hungarian narrative poem)

Suggestions:

It might be worthwhile to try interpreting, when one of the chaperones would simplify linguistically what was said to the children, what advantages and disadvantages it might have.

REFLECTIVE LOG FOR THE TEACHERS

Answer 2 (2 teachers from school of visually impaired)

1. How did you prepare the children for this visit?

- Lectures
- Stories
- Presentations
- Leaflets
- Videos
- Books, Encyclopaedias, Albums
- x Guests from the museum/previous visits to the museum
- Other.....

2. What role did you have during the visit with the children? What did you do?

We were companions, we helped when needed.

3. Please name 3 benefits of the museum visit for the children

The sessions were useful for the children because:

1. They had the opportunity to meet other students.
2. They acquired new knowledge.
3. There were informative sessions.

4. What challenges/ difficulties did you encounter during your museum visit with the children?

There weren't too many challenges. Nothing caused them any difficulty.

5. What opportunities could you identify after this museum visit?

Other children from our school should also be able to attend these sessions.

Suggestions:

Our students are used to more verbal instructions. In several cases, we had to confirm this so that the workflow would not get stuck. You have to support things from multiple angles so that they can see, touch, and feel, and you have to constantly draw their attention to this.

REFLECTIVE LOG FOR THE TEACHERS

Answer 3 (teacher from school of hard of hearing)

1. How did you prepare the children for this visit?

- Lectures
- Stories
- Presentations
- Leaflets
- Videos
- Books, Encyclopaedias, Albums
- Guests from the museum/previous visits to the museum
- x Other: With a conversation

2. What role did you have during the visit with the children? What did you do?

If necessary, I helped in understanding the tasks and presentations during the session and craft workshop.

3. Please name 3 benefits of the museum visit for the children

The sessions were useful for the children because:

1. They were able to learn about new and interesting customs, objects and traditions.
2. In addition to the theory, the sessions were very good and interesting, and special thanks for the fact that they were able to get to know and hold in hand the objects more closely, so that they could get to know them better.
3. In addition to getting to know and trying Hungarian traditions, they made new acquaintances and friends and communicated more courageously with children without disabilities.

| |
|---|
| 4. What challenges/ difficulties did you encounter during your museum visit with the children? |
| It was not a particular difficulty for me, because the museum staff were all very kind and attentive during the sessions. (eg: They got a board on which the new words were written for hearing-impaired children.) |
| Perhaps one thing was a little difficult: they held the theoretical parts of the sessions so enthusiastically that it was difficult for me to "interpret" for the hearing-impaired children - when I saw that they did not understand something - so as not to disturb the session. |
| 5. What opportunities could you identify after this museum visit? |
| I think they have aroused the children's interest in the museum and traditions. We used to go to museum education sessions with our class, because the children are very interested. |
| Suggestions: |
| |

GREECE

Questionnaires after a visit from the Center for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind at the Museum of Cycladic Arts

8 participants (Teenagers)

Is this your first visit at the Museum of Cycladic Art?

100% Yes

Did you ever have taken part in educational programs in other museums?

87,5% Yes

12,5% No

Which of the activities of the educational program did you like most?

The visit at the gallery of the Cycladic Collection 12,5%

The art workshop 12,5%

Both 75%

During your visit at the gallery, you had the opportunity to touch copies of the figurines.

Can you please describe the experience?

Excellent, Perfect, Excellent experience, Unforgettable, Very nice, It was a very nice experience, Very nice experience, Amazing

At the art workshop, what did you like best?

Everything, Everything was excellent, Everything, The copies of the marble figurines, The marble figurines

In the gallery of the Cycladic Collection, you had the chance to touch copies of the figurines. Can you please describe the experience in a few words?

It was a very nice experience, Perfect, Unforgettable, Excellent, Excellent experience, Amazing, Very nice, Very good experience

- **Personnel of the Center for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind**

escorts' responses (4 participants)

Was it your first visit with a group from the Center for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind at the MCA?

100% Yes

From all the activities, which one was most liked by the group?

The visit at the gallery of the Cycladic Collection 25%

The art workshop 25%

Both 50%

Share please your comments (3 responses)

A very interesting experience

A unique experience

An unbelievable experience

What is your impression from the visit at the Gallery?

I think that an acoustic guided tour should be included, to offer the students more information. The guided tour was very explicit, but it should be more interactive to keep alive the students' attention.

As the students could not see the large number of figurines and other objects in the Gallery, an enlarged haptic experience should be more helpful. More copies of the figurines as well as acoustic information would enhance the experience.

ROMANIA

Questions for the children:

1. HOW DID YOU FEEL DURING YOUR VISIT?

Answers from typical children:

| Type of answer | No of children Total N=34 | Examples of children's answers |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Very good | 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Very good</i> • <i>I liked it a lot!</i> • <i>Magical</i> • <i>Very free</i> • <i>Very happy</i> • <i>Very interested</i> |
| Good | 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good</i> • <i>Good, I liked it</i> |
| Good in terms of activity | 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good because we have made interesting things</i> • <i>Pleased at first, then bored when they told the story</i> • <i>Very good, I liked the lesson about national clothing.</i> |
| Good in terms of novelty | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Like I was in a new world, full of beautiful things</i> • <i>Good because I have learned new things</i> |
| In terms of social interaction | 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Happy because it was also fun for other children with problems</i> • <i>Good, because I was with my classmates</i> • <i>Embarrassed because there were a lot of children and I felt shy</i> |

Answers from children with disabilities:

| Type of answer | No of children Total N=19 | Examples of children's answers |
|----------------|------------------------------|--|
| Very good | 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Very good</i> • <i>Happy</i> |

| | | |
|------|---|--|
| Good | 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good • I liked it |
|------|---|--|

2. HOW DID YOU COMMUNICATE WITH THE CHILDREN AND WITH THE ADULTS?

Answers from typical children:

| Type of answer | No of children Total N=34 | Examples of children's answers |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| Good, nice | 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I talked nice.</i> |
| I have learned new things | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>They explained how to braid, and I was able to learn</i> |
| I was asked to answer | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I liked that the lady named me to answer a question</i> |
| In terms of the explanations received from the museum staff | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have communicated very nicely, and I found out many things about Romania's traditions</i> • <i>I liked what they told us</i> |
| With signs | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I have signed</i> |
| By speech | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I asked questions and I talked with my classmates</i> |
| With speech and signs | 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I talked and I also signed.</i> |

Answers from children with disabilities:

| Type of answer | No of children Total N=19 | Examples of children's answers |
|---|------------------------------|---|
| With signs | 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I signed</i> • <i>The children and adults signed</i> |
| With speech and signs | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I talked and signed</i> |
| Very good | 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I communicated very well with the other kids, especially my classmates. The adults showed us interesting things, took care of us and organized nice games</i> |
| In terms of the explanations received from the museum staff | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I liked the activities with the adults, their explanations and their help with the braiding.</i> • <i>Very good, I listened to the story, I have worked with my teachers in</i> |

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| | | <i>puzzle and braiding and I participated in the games.</i> |
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3. WHAT WAS THE MOST INTERESTING/ BEAUTIFUL THING THAT YOU HAVE LEARNED?

Answers from typical children:

| Answer | No of children Total N=34 |
|--|------------------------------|
| The traditional costume and meeting children with hearing impairment/ visual impairment | 7 |
| Puzzle and braiding | 7 |
| Presentation of the Romanian costume | 4 |
| Braiding | 4 |
| The fabrics of the traditional costume | 4 |
| Naming the parts of the traditional costume | 2 |
| The mannequins dressed in the traditional costumes | 2 |
| Puzzle | 2 |
| The braiding, the costume, and meeting children with visual impairment which made me feel like their angel | 1 |
| Eating cookies | 1 |

Answers from children with disabilities:

| Answer | No of children Total N=19 |
|--|------------------------------|
| Braiding | 4 |
| Puzzle | 4 |
| Being together with many children | 3 |
| Learning about how people used to live in the past | 2 |
| I liked that we have played a lot | 2 |
| The mannequins dressed in the traditional costumes | 2 |
| The fabrics of the traditional costume | 1 |

| Answer | No of children Total N=19 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| The screed and the wooden axe | 1 |

REFLECTION LOGS FOR TEACHERS

Content:

- How did you prepare your students for the museum visit?**
- What role did you have during the museum visit?**
- Please identify three benefits of the museum visit.**
- What opportunities can you identify after this visit?**

Testimonial of one of the teachers from a special school:

- *I have helped with accessing the information for the hearing-impaired children by interpreting in Romanian Sign Language.*
- *I have assisted all my students in solving the tasks during the activities organized by the museum*
- *After the visit I have organized teaching activities in my class with the purpose of strengthening the knowledge received at the museum and insuring good feedback on traditions and national costume.*
- *Our activities focused on watching the pictures and videos from the museum visit, watching a short documentary on Romanian traditions, filling in a working sheet about their impressions and making drawings and paintings of the activities from the museum.*
- *In terms of benefits, the hearing-impaired students had the opportunity to interact with their peers from other schools; the game activities offered them the opportunity to practice with pleasure and interest their manual and artistic skills and the trip to a non-formal educational environment (like the museum) contributed to enhancing their learning experiences in a practical way.*
- *In terms of opportunities, I think that inclusion of students with hearing disabilities can be realised only with the involvement of different educational environments which are meant to facilitate the children's' learning experiences and to contribute to the idea of equal and indiscriminatory access regardless of the skills or competencies of the children. Hearing-impaired and Deaf students need to experience in a practical and direct way the contact with other kids their age so they can overcome the communication boundaries. I think it is also important to ensure an interpreter for the Deaf children so their teacher can assist them properly in the activities.*
- *I think there is a real need to attend such practical activities as often as possible to combine the learning and social experiences.*

TURKEY

Adapted learning experiences in Turkish State Istanbul Railway Museum: Testimonials and feed-back from children and their parents

Turkish State Istanbul Railway Museum staff conducted two activities with collaboration of Istanbul Medeniyet University ToMiMEUs project team. Totally 14 children (some of them participated both activities) experienced the inclusive activities. The first activity was on January 16, 2022 called '**Passengers to the train, the train is leaving!**'. Two female and five male children age between 6-12 participated with their parents. Three of the children had hearing impairment (HI), one of them had intellectual disability (ID), one had visual impairment (VI), one had multiple disabilities with visual impairment (MDVI) and one of the children had typical development (TD). The theme of this activity was how passengers and railway staff feel and experience of railway transportation. The activity conducted by the museum. After the inclusive, cooperative role-playing, participants and their parents shared their thoughts and experiences about the museum, visiting the museums, and this inclusive activity. The second activity was on March, 27, 2022 and the name of the activity was '**Let's find the secret code in the museum!**'. Three female and six male children age between 6-16 participated. Six children with HI, one child with MDVI and two children with TD were present. The theme of this activity was to find the secret code which is a word puzzle.

Eight mothers and one father, totally nine parents age between 35-51, accompanied their children at the activities and three parents out of nine had HI.

Some of the testimonials of the children (C) and the parents (P) about the first activity are:

C8: *"If it lasted for hours, he could have stayed for hours. Normally, he likes trains very much. We were traveling very often before the pandemic. Hearing the sound of the train, touching the rails, touching the train model made him very happy and he played the piano. We loved the piano there. (The child with MDVI -who can not use verbal language- parent's statement)"*

C10: *"Yes. All the things were beautiful. It was nice. I was a train dispatcher. Other than that, I liked the driver's cabin and the little train model."*

The significant statements of the children (C) and the parents (P) about the second activity are:

C6: *"I did not go to any museum before, but now, I would like to go to other museums."*

C13: *"I was just thinking that I will come and walk around, then leave. I was surprised when we started to do something like a game. We never played games like this at the school, I like it. It would be nice if it was at the school too, but I really liked it... It would be better if I played the same game in other museums. The others do not have such activities. It was my first time being at this museum and I liked it very much"*

C12: *"It was good. I liked to try to find the hidden clues in the driver's cabin and the piano."*

P9: *"Being allow to touch the things was great for the children with visual impairment. The sign language interpreter was there and there was SL translation. So, it was very good for the children with hearing impairment. Learning by direct experience (visual, tactile) was a good arrangement for our children."* (The child with MDVI -who uses tactile sign language- parent's statement)".

Besides these testimonials from the children and parents, it can be said that all participants noted that their experience at the museum was great. Seven children did not visit any museum before.

The parents with HI also have a very less museum visit experience and all of them stated that the activities were great.

MULTIPLIER EVENTS

Hungary

On **May 19, 2022**, the multiplication conference of the **Tomimeus Project** took place at the **ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Needs Education**.

The full social participation of people with disability can only be achieved if they are also given the opportunity to enjoy cultural events and exhibitions in a joyful, meaningful, and barrier-free way. Within the framework of the ToMiMEUS – Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities Erasmus+ project funded by the European Union, accessible museum exhibitions were created in the participating countries through the cooperation of universities and museums in Romania, Turkey, Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Hungary. Inclusive museum pedagogic sessions were implemented, too.

At the conference, we reported on the programs implemented in Hungary, organized by the House of Traditions with the support of ELTE University. The conference presentations described further initiatives and research from Hungary, that help people with disabilities to consume culture in an accessible way. Among the topics were audio narration, tactile exhibitions, tactile astronomy-themed exhibition, artistic experience and visual impairment, hearing impairment.

The conference was popular among Hungarian professionals.



GREECE

ToMiMEUs MULTIPLIER EVENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY

The University of Thessaly (Greece) organized its ToMiMEUs multiplier event on the 14th of May 2022. It included a panel of activities and presentations relevant to a. culture and inclusive museum, b. outcomes of the ToMiMEUs project, c. museum educational activities relevant to accessibility, aspects of inclusion and sensory disabilities, and d. artistic/cultural events (executed by the Laboratory of Access to formal and non-formal learning for individuals with sensory disabilities of the Department of Special Education and the Musical Ensembles of the University of Thessaly). Many organizations and institutions were invited to support and enrich the multiplier event and more than 100 people attended the event. Apart from the University of Thessaly (coordinating organization), the following institutions contributed significantly to an excellent outcome regarding positive impact and dissemination. In specific, the University of Patras, the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, the Athanasakio Archaeological Museum of Volos, the Museum of Cycladic Art, and the Tactual Museum of Athens were our significant “guests” who enriched and provided “food for thought”.

The roll up and the poster of the event

πρόσκληση Σας προσκαλούμε στη δια ζώσης Ημερίδα με τίτλο **Προσβάσιμα Μουσεία** προκλήσεις, προτάσεις κι αναστοχασμοί που πραγματοποιείται στο πλαίσιο του Ευρωπαϊκού προγράμματος Erasmus+ «ToMiMEUs: Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities»

Η ημερίδα θα πραγματοποιηθεί στο **Αμφιθέατρο «Κορδάτος»** στο **Παραλιακό Συγκρότημα Παπαστράτου** (Αργοναυτών και Φιλελλήνων), στις **14 Μαΐου 2022** και ώρα έναρξης **4.00 μ.μ.** Η παρουσία σας θα μας τιμήσει ιδιαίτερα.

Με αιτίσιν
Ο Επιστημονικός Υπεύθυνος του Προγράμματος
Βασιάνη Αφεντζή
Αν. Καθηγήτρια, ΠΤΕΑ Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλίας

Για να συμμετάσχετε είναι απαραίτητο να συμπληρώσετε τη φόρμα εγγραφής: <https://forms.gle/Fbyq1HJ1g1eqdMyl9>
ΠΡΟΣΟΧΗ: Ο αριθμός των συμμετεχόντων θα είναι περιορισμένος και οι εγγραφές θα πραγματοποιούνται βάσει προτεραιότητας
• Θα δοθούν βεβαιώσεις συμμετοχής σε όσους/όσες συμμετέχουν δια φυσικής παρουσίας • Δεν υπάρχει κόστος συμμετοχής.

ΗΜΕΡΙΔΑ

14 Μαΐου
Πανεπιστήμιο Θεσσαλίας

Προσβάσιμα Μουσεία
προκλήσεις, προτάσεις κι αναστοχασμοί

Προσκεκλημένα Μουσεία
Αρχαιολογικό Μουσείο Θεσσαλονίκης
Αθηνάσκειο Αρχαιολογικό Μουσείο Βόλου
Μουσείο Κυκλαδικής Τέχνης
Μουσείο Αφής Αθηνών

Αμφιθέατρο Ένερξη **ΚΟΡΔΑΤΟΣ, Βόλος**
4:00μμ

Κοινηγείται βεβαίωση παρακολούθησης
Η Ημερίδα γίνεται δια ζώσης.
Για να συμμετάσχετε ή να παρακολουθήσετε την Ημερίδα παρακαλούμε πραγματοποιήσετε την εγγραφή σας εδώ: <https://forms.gle/Fbyq1HJ1g1eqdMyl9>

Επικοινωνία: tomimeus.eu
2421074840
vassargi@uth.gr

Erasmus+ **TO MIMÉUS** UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY

The project ToMiMEUs: Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities (No. 10101-KA202-063240) has been funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union

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The Invitation and the 4-page informative leaflet which highlighted the synthesis of the ToMiMEUs project, as well as its intellectual outputs and activities, were some of the “reference points” of the multiplier event.



In the end of the event the Laboratory of Access to formal and non-formal learning for individuals with sensory disabilities of the Department of Special Education presented in an “alternative way” the Picasso's Guernica (work on microcapsule paper and presented it accompanied with music and poetry).

Έλα να σου γνωρίσω την Γκουέρνικα





Γκουέρνικα- Πάμπλο Πικάσο (1937)

Last but not least the volunteering Group which consisted of students of the Department of Special Education, volunteers did an excellent job demonstrating their awareness and empathy.

The closing ceremony of the event included songs and music of well-known Greek and foreign composers and was conducted by the Musical Ensembles of the University of Thessaly.

A characteristic photo is provided below reflecting the “atmosphere” of the artistic/cultural events of the multiplier event.



Museum of Cycladic Arts

Museums and Senses: planning for all, Scientific Forum, Tuesday 28th of June 2022
Paul & Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum (CAMU) & Museum of Cycladic Art

How has museum accessibility for visitors with hearing and visual impairments improved over the last 20 years? Which are the key takeaways from the programmes which have been implemented by museums in Greece? How can a multisensory approach contribute towards the creation of an open and inclusive museum? To what extent is it possible for museum professionals to plan for all?

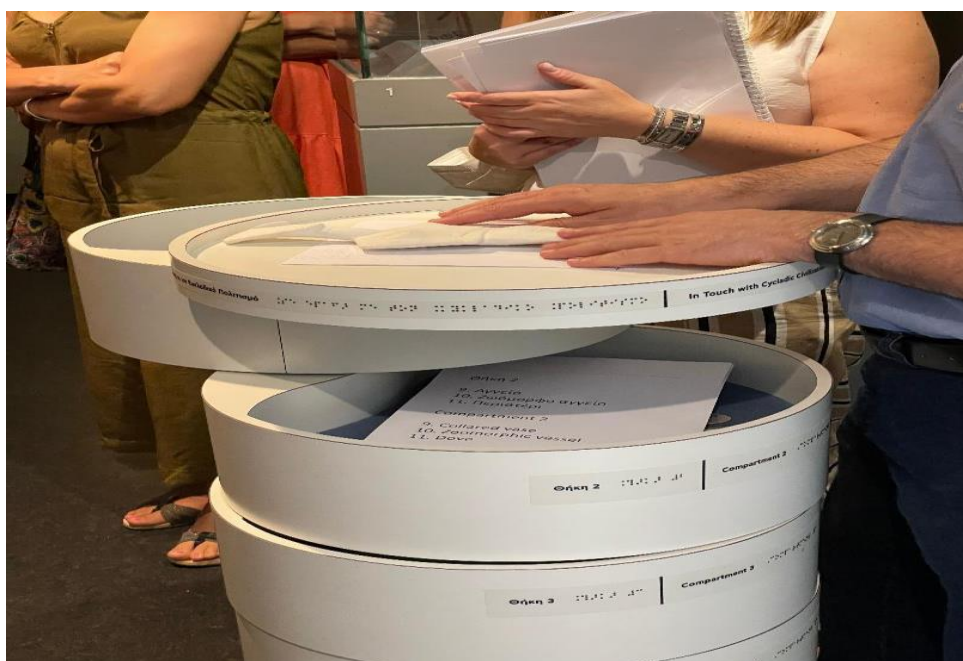
These were some of the questions that have been addressed during the scientific forum organized at the Paul & Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum (CAMU) and the Museum of Cycladic Art on Tuesday, the 28th of June 2022.

Archaeologists, museologists, educators with expertise in special education, architects-designers and cultural heritage experts gathered to present the progress made so far in Greek museums, present apps that have been used (e.g. tactile copies, tactile guides, audio tours etc.) and discuss how museums will plan in the future taking into consideration the needs of people with multisensory disorders. Almost all speakers pointed out the need to explore the possibilities of other senses beyond vision which can contribute towards the perception of objects and the interaction of visitors with the museum space. They stressed the importance of sound in museum experience and explained that every sense functions in a different way (e.g. vision starts from the general image and then analyses the details while touch starts from the details and then creates a synthesis of things). Eventually, they discussed the importance of awareness raising through the development of websites which are accessible by users with hearing or visual impairment. Throughout the scientific forum that took place at the Paul & Alexandra Canellopoulos Museum (CAMU), there was simultaneous interpreting in sign language. After that, a presentation of the museum applications for visitors with visual and hearing impairments at the Museum of Cycladic Art followed. The scientific forum took place in the framework of the European project "ToMiMEUs: Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities", in which the Museum of Cycladic Art participates as partner (<https://tomimeus.eu/>). It was the first time that a scientific forum dedicated to museum accessibility for people with hearing or visual impairment took place in

Greece. The scientific forum contributed towards the collection and recording of the experience of previous years and set the basis for future collaborations.

All speeches were recorded and will be uploaded onto the websites of the two museums shortly. A great part of the scientific forum was recorded by the BLOD platform of the Bodossaki Foundation and will be available shortly on the website <https://www.blod.gr/>.





ROMANIA

On July 20, the Day Center for the Elderly no. 2 of DASM (The Social and Medical Services Directorate) Cluj-Napoca hosted the second part of the "Museum for all: accessible and inclusive" dissemination workshop within the TOMIMEUS project. In front of 28 participants, MET specialists Teodora Sas and Maria Tonca presented, from the perspective of beneficiaries of training courses, the experience gained in the courses organized in the project. The project coordinator, Tudor Sălăgean, presented the objectives of the Erasmus+ program, the

achievements and experience of the Transylvanian Museum of Ethnography in the field of making museum spaces accessible and the perspectives for the future.



On the 5th of July 2022 Babes-Bolyai University, the Special Education Department organized the multiplier event in the Erasmus+ Tomimeus project. There were participants representing educational authorities, museums, cultural centers, social agencies, teachers, journalists. The programme of the conference reflected in detail all the intellectual outputs and results of the project. Members of the partner consortium presented their activities and events

which they organized and the impact of these on direct beneficiaries and implications on further activities.



TURKEY

Istanbul Medeniyet University/Türkiye organized the multiplier event on 26th of March 2022.

In order to share the work performed within the scope of the EU Erasmus KA2 project, with the stakeholders and the general public, a conference (multiplier event) was held at Istanbul Medeniyet University Göztepe South Campus Aşık Paşa Conference Hall from 09:30 to 13:30.

The opening ceremony for the multiplier event was started by Vice-Rector of Istanbul Medeniyet University and legal representative of the project Prof. Dr. Yaşar BÜLBÜL. Afterwards, Dean of the Faculty of Educational Sciences Prof. Dr. Ahmet AKIN, TCDD 1st Deputy Director Mr. Ali BAŞPINAR, İstanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education Special Education and Guidance Services Branch Manager Mrs. Gülşen ÖZER, and 22nd Term İstanbul Deputy and President of the Türkiye Beyazay Association Mr. Lokman AYVA to deliver their opening remarks.

Istanbul Medeniyet University and TCDD employees, as well as people from the museums in Istanbul, different universities, various NGOs, and other organizations interested in the subject, attended the conference named Towards Accessible and Inclusive Museums

Conference (M 1-Museums 4 All: Making Them Accessible and Inclusive), held as a requirement of the project. Simultaneous sign language translation was provided throughout the conference.

First, as the project coordinator of our university, Asst. Prof. Dr. Emine AYYILDIZ talked about the purpose of the ToMiMEUs project, the activities carried out with partner countries, and the project outputs, while Asst. Prof. Dr. Işık KAMARAJ from Marmara University Atatürk Education Faculty delivered a speech titled "Museums as Learning Environments" accompanied by a hands-on activity.

Next, Ruhan ÇELEBİ, retired director of Istanbul Railway Museum, provided information about the adjustments made to ensure the accessibility of Istanbul Railway Museum and to maximize the benefits gained by all visitors from the museum. She was followed by Res. Asst. H. Sümeyra BİLİCİ ALBAYRAK, who introduced the activities carried out in museums for individuals with visual and hearing impairment in particular and individuals with disabilities in general, along with the basic concepts and relevant examples.

Finally, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Özcan Erkan AKGÜN and Asst. Prof. Dr. Ayşe Tuğba ÖNER, collaboratively delivered a speech titled 'Design of Learning Activities at the Museum and Learning Activities', in which they introduced the inclusive events carried out for the project, the first of which was held on January 16, 2022, to join together children aged 6-16 with visual and hearing impairment and typical development at Istanbul Railway Museum.





Conclusions

All the outcomes of Erasmus+ ToMIMEUS Project were essential to professionals, partners involved, and direct beneficiaries, proving the involvement of all the partners, their desire to understand and to support the needs of individuals with sensory impairments and so these outcomes could be collected in a Guide of Best Practices. These examples of best practices can also give new ideas for new projects to be developed with the same partners or with the inclusion of some others, projects that could be focused on some more specific issues of museums in their interaction with the diversity of visitors.