

PARENTable – Communicating with parents of newly migrated children

Project team: Juniorprof. Dr. Miriam Stock (project leader), Prof. Dr. Gernot Aich, Prof. Dr. Nazli Hodaie, Prof. Dr. Daniel Rellstab, Luise Schimmel, M.A.

Partner: University of Gävle, University of Muğla, University Calabria, Back on Track.e.V.

Funding: Erasmus Plus – Strategic Partnership for School Education

The project “PARENTable – communicating with parents of newly migrated children” is a transnational project together with (mediating) educators and parents in order to implement new communication formats and trainings that increase mutual understanding and build communication bridges between school facilities and families. The aim of the project is (1) to gain and share knowledge about best-practice communication in Germany, Sweden, Italy and Turkey where educators and parents can exchange their views and (2) to develop an inclusive training concept for both educators and parents in order to better support newly migrated children between new school contexts and families. Parents can thus gain a deeper understanding of the challenges their children face and at the same time, they can also make their perspectives and needs heard at school.

The concept of PARENTable is to support newly migrated children in a holistic approach considering their parents as one of the most important pillars for their successful course of education. The results of the Europe wide conducted interviews will be edited and published as a handbook. The training concept will be distributed as a manual as well as further developed into an e-learning course. The target groups of this project are educators and parents of newly migrated children aged 9-15 in Europe which will be gathered in this project.

PARENTable will provide concrete guidance material (handbook) based on interviews and hold transnational trainings in five different settings in Germany, Sweden, Italy and Turkey. The handbook will contain in-depth perspectives of parents and educators before, during and after trainings by conducting focus groups interviews. The transnational training activities will be composed equally with parents and educators and will consist of modules such as identities/self-esteem, supportive parenting, multilingualism, communication methods between school/parents and transnational families.

National and local integration politics are often focused on the immediate incorporation of newly arrived children into national schooling systems. However, educators and other actors within the school system mostly lack information about children’s family situation and their personal and educational histories. Besides, it is difficult to reach out to parents who don’t speak the local language and lack trust in school authorities.

Parents on the other hand don’t have access to knowledge about e.g. multilingualism and children’s identity formations in new settings. They might also be under immense psychological stress which prevents them from playing a positive role in supporting their children. Being in unstable positions themselves, they often put too much pressure on their children when it comes to school results. And finally, parents might feel discrimination and stereotypes from wider school contexts that prevents them from making their positions heard.

PARENTable wants to tackle these issues by offering a platform of communicating and educating both educators and parents with a transnationally developed training that is closely adopted to the needs and experiences of families and educators all over Europe alike.

