



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ programme  
of the European Union



## **Reaching the ‘hard to reach’: Inclusive responses to diversity through child-teacher dialogue (Erasmus+, 2017-2020)**

### **The purpose of the project**

The central purpose of this three-year project (1/9/2017-31/8/2020) is to develop effective strategies for including all children in lessons, particularly those who might be seen as ‘hard to reach’. For example, these could be migrants, refugees and students with disabilities, as well as others that might not belong in a particular group that is receiving special attention. We know from research across Europe that such students, even though they are usually present in schools, are often marginalised by existing practices and attitudes.

The project will achieve this overall aim by further developing a model for the development of learning and teaching that emerged from our earlier work funded by the European Union (which was only in secondary schools) for use in primary schools. This model is intended to facilitate dialogue between children and teachers in order to develop inclusive responses to learner diversity.

A new and important innovative feature of the project is that children (especially those that are believed to be hard to reach) will be trained as researchers in order to collect and analyse the views of their classmates. This will lead them to have dialogues with their teachers and classmates in order to develop more inclusive practices.

The main research question for the project is:

*- How can we reach out to all learners, especially those that are seen as ‘hard to reach’, through the use of ‘Inclusive Inquiry’, a model for the development of learning and teaching?*

### **Project objectives**

The project aims to:

1. Respond to learner diversity in inclusive ways through the active participation of children;

2. Enhance the access, participation and learning performance of all children, ensuring that no child is marginalised;
3. Use a research-based model of teacher professional development that encourages dialogue between children and teachers;
4. Design new techniques for generating the views of younger children, including ways of involving them in carrying out research in their schools; and,
5. Measure the impact of using such approaches on teachers' thinking and practices, and on students' engagement (attitudes and behaviours)

### **The process**

The project involves the use of collaborative action research. This involves teachers and students in actively participating alongside colleagues from universities as research partners, with the aim of improving their practice.

With support from their university partners, the five partner schools will become 'hubs': that is, centres for developing and disseminating the work of the project. During the first year they will implement the teaching development model and help in refining the processes involved within their own schools. Then, during the second year, they will each lead the training of teachers from five more schools to develop a local network.