

Closing conference Erasmus+ project *Social Inclusion, Education and Urban Policy for Young Children*, May 23 and 24, 2019

Welcome by dr. Ramon Puras, dean Faculty of Education, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS)

In the past three years, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) and her international partners have been involved in the Erasmus+-project *Social Inclusion, Education and Urban Policy for Young Children*. This is a very special international project, based on:

- building strategic partnerships for higher education;
- cooperation for innovation;
- the exchange of good practices.

The aim of this project is to develop education and training, supporting social inclusive, intercultural competences and to create an inclusive education in an urban environment, and urban policy supporting this. It is about creating strong educational institutions and educating professionals who can educate children and guide parents. From September 2016 until now, experts from various professional backgrounds have been working together:

- universities of applied sciences;
- expert centers on early childhood education and care, and;
- city councils

from Germany (Berlin), Slovenia (Ljubjana), Denmark (Copenhagen), Belgium (Ghent) and the Netherlands (Amsterdam and Rotterdam). **RAMON: if you like, please elaborate on your own experiences with social inclusion in Berlin and/or Amsterdam**

The themes of social inclusion and urban education are at the heart of our work at the Faculty of Education of Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS). In this faculty, we educate our students to be the teachers in the near future, and as such we would like them to be professionals in the classroom that can create an environment in which social inclusive education can thrive, where intercultural competences are valued and where discrimination and segregation are combatted.

Social inclusion and urban education are two central themes in our education and in our research. Within pedagogy, nowadays the implementation of social inclusion is one of the national competences. And after this project, a module of social inclusion will start within pedagogy.

As with regard to research, at the international level, this Faculty is developing several new proposals for project on these topics (f.i. new Erasmus+-application and Sprong Educatief application).

For the new Erasmus+-application, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) aims to collaborate with the University College of Copenhagen, the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the University of Sarajevo in which the main objective is to improve social inclusion in preschools, primary schools and organized afterschool settings.

RAMON: the following paragraph can be done by Ruben as well, as he is the chairman of the conference, so you may skip this

At this closing conference *Social Inclusion, Education and Urban Policy for Young Children*:

- the results of the Erasmus+ project will be presented and discussed;
- international keynote speakers will reflect on social inclusion with regard to practice, policy and organization;
- experts on inclusion of young children will give inspiring presentations and workshops;
- on Friday morning participants will have the opportunity to join field visits to childcare centers and primary schools.

With the various results of this project, the partners in our project – including the AUAS – will develop new educational material and curricula to teach our students an international and inclusive perspective in their important work with young children and their parents.

A word of thanks to:

- Nuffic/Erasmus+-organization in The Hague for making this project financially possible;
- Kirsten Nohr (retired) and Odette Spee (successor of Kirsten Nohr) of Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS), the project managers;
- Miranda Roskosch, Wanda de Wit and her team of students for the organization of the conference;
- National and international partners that cannot be mentioned by name, as there are too many to mention: a big thank you to all of you!