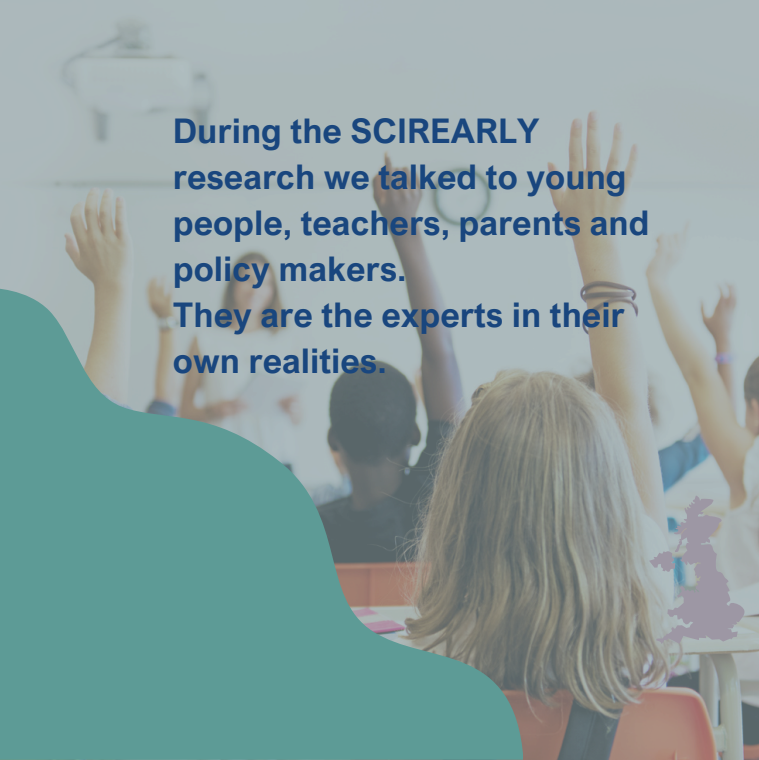


A photograph of a classroom with several children raising their hands. The image is partially obscured by a teal wavy shape on the left and a pink wavy shape on the right. A small purple map of the United Kingdom is visible in the bottom right corner of the image area.

**During the SCIREARLY
research we talked to young
people, teachers, parents and
policy makers.
They are the experts in their
own realities.**

**Here are some of the things
they had to say about
creating the best
opportunities for children
and young people to thrive
and succeed in their
educational journey**

Negative incidents at school: Integration into a new school environment and new relationships

“

There were certain teachers who, if you didn't have your homework done, would make sure you knew about it.

You'd feel like you were being reprimanded, and there was a real sense of shame attached to it... I remember dreading those classes on days when I hadn't done my history homework. I'd spend the whole day thinking, I didn't do my homework yesterday—I'm definitely going to get called out for it today. That anticipation made me anxious about attending the class.

”

Daryl

Negative incidents at school: Integration into a new school environment and new relationships

Daryl's experience highlights the potential impact of teaching approaches on student well-being. While structure and discipline are essential in education, excessive emphasis on punishment for incomplete work, and imbuing in it a sense of shame, rather than fostering an understanding of its importance, may contribute to anxiety rather than motivation.

Negative incidents at school: Facing discrimination and experiencing bullying

My mother says that when we were seven years old or so, we always used to say that we were being picked on at school.

They started to say that we (Roma people) were very bad, that we did not take showers, things like that. There was a girl in my class, and she tried to get others to join in and mess with me or she would mess with my hair because I wore it long. Well, my mother went to talk to the tutor and what she did was to separate me. He separated us from the seats in the class and that's it. What I remember is that the bullying didn't stop.

Jasmin

Negative incidents at school: Facing discrimination and experiencing bullying

Jasmin's experience highlights the need for schools and teachers to be prepared to challenge issues of racism and discrimination experienced by students actively. They should underline positive aspects that promote integration in different contexts, particularly in conflict situations.

This reflection also deserves our attention to address identity crises – as a social and relational challenge – highlighted in one of these *points*.

Social and relational challenges: Crisis of belonging

There was a landmark event for Sofia in terms of her identity as a Roma and this process of acceptance: she had a teacher with whom she felt a lot of trust from the very first lesson and at that moment she decided to share her ethnicity with him. The teacher challenged her to search and better understand her origins, the influence of the Roma ethnic group in the world and her history and this ended up being important for her to resolve her identity crisis.

Social and relation challenges: Integration of migrants

“

I had to repeat middle school mainly because of the language, but I did not know everything, I just wanted to go to school because I wanted to study. For this reason, I tried many times to get enrolled in school in 2016. it was a bit difficult, especially on the islands, many schools did not accept me. But I insisted until I managed to get enrolled in the evening school. Normally, the evening school was for 18 year olds, for those who work. But because I did not manage to enrol in the morning school, I found a way to enrol in the evening one

Omar

”



SCIENCELY

Families as a pillar for inclusion and belonging in educational contexts

“ —

My parents wanted me to be a great student. My parents are smart people. Yes. The gypsies are generally smart people. You will see that from now on, in the next 50 years, more and more gypsies will graduate from school.

— ”

Panos

Families as a pillar for inclusion and belonging in educational contexts

“ —

One thing that really stood out to me was a phrase my dad always used: ‘Play the game.’ He saw school as a game in a way, and he would explain it to me like that. He’d say that there’s a certain way teachers expect you to behave and a particular way to succeed. Every morning when he dropped me off at school, or when I was heading out the door, he’d remind me: ‘Play the game’

Sean”

Families as a pillar for inclusion and belonging in educational contexts

Sofia stayed in school with the support of her parents (both Roma), and the position and activism of her father was pivotal for this encouragement and motivation for school attendance and success. Sofia mentions at different times that her father always wanted his children to study at university and complete a degree. This contributed to Sofia feeling estranged from the extended family - which saw the role of the school as limiting the continuity of the cultural traditions of the Roma ethnic group, and did not understand the school as a place of inclusion in the lives of young Roma.

Educators as developers of positive interpersonal relationships and emotional support

The special bonds with teachers were mentioned by several participants as something that made them continue, that boosted their self-esteem or inspired them to become engaged. Audra remembers her first-class teacher as being especially supportive:

“
She was like Miss Honey. She would always give us books to read because she knew I was a bit of a book nerd. She had kids just a few years older than me, so she'd bring in books from home and let me take them.
”

Audra

Educators as developers of positive interpersonal relationships and emotional support

In the case of Diogo, the school being perceived as a place that helped him to think critically about the world motivated him to continue his educational path and succeed. The existence of other educational projects in school, such as those related to music, sport or theatre, was also crucial, as they were, in other cases, to other participants by providing positive and motivating experiences they recognize as important in their educational trajectories.

Importance of peer and colleague relationships

Participating in other educational activities, like we saw in some cases, often had a positive contribution to inclusion of these students, and to bringing them other ways of feeling competent and building positive relationships with others. That was also the case for Anonimo. Together with his classmates, he participated in various social and educational activities, including peace education, intercultural projects or charity initiatives. This helped him build strong friendships, particularly with one or two classmates who became close friends and supported him throughout his school journey. An encouraging group of classmates helped Anonimo feel more included and motivated to stay in school.

Importance of peer and colleague relationships

“

That has also made me grow up in a circle with people who already had guaranteed success in school, my non-Roma friends. In the end, what I have achieved is to grow up in an environment with a positive influence and not a negative one. That has made me, within my own neighbourhood, to have the support of going to my friends' house to study, because there was a space to study in my house. So, I have lived in a context of privilege. Maybe my cousins haven't been able to have that opportunity.

”

Paula

Resilience, resourcefulness and commitment as characteristics of young people

When I was preparing for the panhellenic exams to enter university in Thessaloniki, I saw this position in Athens asking for a mentor for under-aged migrants [at the Ministry of Migration], and I applied there. After my exams I was offered to do an interview for the job and I was accepted for a job. I decided to thus leave Thessaloniki and move to Athens. I also passed my exams for university, and I got in my first choice, which was International European Economics. So now I am working and studying at the same time.

Omar



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