

## HEIM Work Package 6 Evaluation

In July 2017, the final stage of HEIM Work Package 6 '*Research Methodologies Training for Equality and Diversity*' took place in the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER) at the University of Sussex. This involved inviting 10 Roma doctoral scholars to attend a summer school themed around research communication, with two key aims for participants to:

- Write a reflective think piece *Equality, Diversity and Internationalisation*. These will be published on the HEIM website by the end of August.
- Present their research at a CHEER international conference *Disrupting International Discourses: Discussing Equity and Inclusion*. Photos and presentation slides can be found [here](#).

Due to issues in recruiting the required 10 early-stage researchers, we had 4 doctoral researchers and 1 member of the Roma Education Fund staff attending for the following 30-day periods:

- Imre Balong, University of Pécs, Hungary (27<sup>th</sup> June to 26<sup>th</sup> July)
- Dezso Mate, Eotvos Lorand University, Hungary (30<sup>th</sup> June to 29<sup>th</sup> July)
- Tom Bass, Communications Officer, Roma Education Fund, Hungary (27<sup>th</sup> June to 26<sup>th</sup> July)
- Radu Lacatus, Babes- Bolyai University, Romania (27<sup>th</sup> June to 26<sup>th</sup> July)
- Ion Goracel, Western University of Timisoara, Romania (27<sup>th</sup> June to 26<sup>th</sup> July)

### Programme

Full details of the programme can be found [online](#). It included participating in an Experts' Meeting on *Including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities in Higher Education*, presenting at an international CHEER conference and taking the following courses:

- *Advanced Doctoral Training Workshop: Researching Social Inclusion in Education and Social Care*
- *Equality, Diversity and Internationalisation Reading Group*
- *Introduction to Presentation and Poster Presentation Skills*
- *Presenting with Style, Flair and Presence*
- *Reflective Writing about Equality, Diversity and Internationalisation*
- *Academic Writing Workshop: Cautious Language*
- *Academic Writing Workshop: Developing Academic Style and Vocabulary*
- *Communicating your Research to the Media*
- *Using Blogs and Social Media to Promote your Research*
- *Practical Assertiveness for Researchers*

## Evaluation

Participants took part in an evaluation group discussion and completed a written evaluation form. The following comments are collated to represent the main topics raised.

Positive comments included:

*'This was very valuable time to reflect, learn from the UK experience with diversity and equality and remind myself that I'm indeed a critical thinker.'*

*'The learning infrastructure (Library) and access to online information was amazing.'*

*'Meeting with lecturers and doctoral researchers and representatives from local NGOs was really valuable.'*

*'Academic writing workshops, reading group and presentations and research communication classes – Bianca was amazing!'*

*'I met a lot of academic concepts which are not reachable in our countries.'*

*'I could develop my academic English.'*

*'Appreciated not being overloaded but given time to reflect.'*

The following were noted as things to improve:

*'Length of programme – need more time.'*

*'The rooms – old style, small.'*

*'Extended access to Library online.'*

*'More time to spend with other international students, it was isolating sometimes.'*

*'There wasn't enough time to present our perspectives at the conference.'*

*'Conference could have been less top-down and more time to intersperse expertise with voices.'*

*'More participants taking part in the programme – different perspectives.'*

In response to the question 'what change have you made/ will you make as a result of taking part?' the following responses were noted:

*'I have clarified some concepts related to my research and have improved my academic writing.'*

*'Learning from the library/readings.'*

*I will focus more on specific interests, not everything that is connected to it'.*

*'I have a new view of the academic world – really developed my knowledge'.*

*'The need to give voice to other disadvantaged groups, alongside GRT.'*

## **Summary**

The summer school was a productive space to exchange knowledge with colleagues working in different international contexts and to build participants' capacity in written and verbal research communication. Particular value was given to having time and space to reflect on research and practice in a new context with different political and policy agendas in relation to equity and inclusion. Considerable appreciation was expressed about the resources at Sussex, such as the Library.

The original project intention for participants to design and present at a conference was problematic as there were challenges and delays in recruiting 10 participants. As we only had 5 participants, they were invited to present as part of a CHEER conference, rather than in a conference of their own. This meant that they made brief presentations on a panel, which participants felt did not enable them sufficient time to communicate to the best of their abilities.

Overall, the summer school enabled participants to consolidate their research communication skills, to learn with and from international colleagues, and to reflect on both the context-specific and global similarities faced by those researching, policy making and advocating equity and inclusion for marginalised groups.

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26<sup>th</sup> July 2017