

**Project title:** PLAY AND LEARN

**Project leader:** Roma Resource Center

**Partner:** Faculty of Education

**Project implementation period:** September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023

**Project total value:** 29.921,76 €

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**Link to relevant internet pages:** <https://www.rrc-darda.hr/>

**Project summary:**

The aim of the project is to raise awareness about the importance of including children in preschool and kindergarten programs, highlight the need to ensure opportunities for children to participate in existing programs or create alternative options, and strengthen civil society in Darda in the areas of education and advocacy. According to the National Roma Inclusion Strategy for the period 2021-2027, a high percentage of children do not attend preschool, which has negative consequences on their intellectual, socio-emotional, motor, and life skills when they enter primary school, as well as lower success in further education.

The project will enable the inclusion of children from marginalized groups in an alternative preschool program for six months, ensuring they acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. At the same time, an evaluation will be conducted, and a case study document will be developed to serve as evidence for key local stakeholders regarding the importance of including children in preschool programs, regardless of the employment status of their parents.

By evaluating and analyzing the methodology, a more effective implementation will be enabled in other locations where children are not enrolled in preschool. A partner organization will be responsible for mentoring professionals working with the children. Members of the RRC, with the help of a consultant, will be trained to take a more active role in advocacy activities at the local level, and by the end of the project, the RRC's Advocacy Strategy will be developed. The case study document will trigger advocacy activities to include children in existing preschool programs or find alternative solutions at the local level.

The project aims to ensure equal access to education for all children, particularly those from marginalized groups, contributing to their social inclusion and better preparation for further education.