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FRIENDS

Fostering Resilience-Inclusive Education and Non-Discrimination in Schools

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1. Implementation Activities

This section contains a full report of the implementation activities in the FRIENDS Projetct, related to the training of teachers and staff, training of students and learners, consolidation and follow-up activities.
Schools have been chosen with a particular attention on targeting schools and non-formal educational setting with minority students or those with disadvantaged or migrant backgrounds, in line with the objectives of the call. Contacts have been made also at higher educational level at National / regional and municipality level in order to present the programme in all the implementing countries, and they have been very supportive in promoting the up-scaling and implementation (Portugal, Spain,), looking for schools in the territory (UK), providing the authorization in order to implement the project in the schools (Belgium and Latvia as expansion), supporting the dissemination and exploitation of the project (Italy).
The evaluation and data collection activities are done by the leading evaluation partner University of Algarve (P3) Portugal, University of Bologna (P4) Italy and MF-UK (P9) (with professor Annet te Lindert and Professor Alberto Bramanti), and in close coordination with all the implementation partners, especially for the administration of tests and data collections activities.

The Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation Programme in Schools

The QT/TM programme consists of adding 10-15 minutes at the beginning and at the end of the school or working day when participants have the opportunity to practice the Transcendental Meditation (TM) technique.

Extensive research studies report an overall positive impact on decreasing stress and anxiety; increasing creativity and intelligence; improving academic performance; increasing tolerance and resilience; lowering levels of anger and hostility; and decreasing the incidence of violence across a broad spectrum of society.

The uniqueness of this approach is that it promotes inclusive education by directly addressing the psycho-physiological well-being of the student that contributes to more effective learning in the classroom and resilience to environmental stress of all types.

The implementation framework

The framework for implementation of QT/TM in a school essentially comprises four steps, that in the FRIENDS project have been interwoven with the research.

First, an agreement with the school is made, but prior to the formal agreement, information sessions are organised with the director of the school and/or the full management team. During this information session, the QT/TM programme is explained as well as any proposed research. The director receives personal training, the management team also receives training in QT/TM.

Second, the QT/TM programme is presented to the teachers, followed by the training of the teachers who wish to participate. After some time, the teachers are also trained in how to monitor the practice of the QT/TM programme in the classroom in preparation to the practice of the students. The teachers receive together with the management team a follow-up programme.

Third, QT/TM is presented to parents and students followed by the training of those students who would like to learn and for whom parental permission has been obtained. Prior to the instruction, a schedule is agreed with the school management team and information meetings are held with the parents. Parents who wish to learn can also receive training.

Fourth, students start practicing TM in their classes during the 10-15 minutes of Quiet Time that is held at the beginning and at the end of the school day. Students also receive a follow-up programme.

The research was done on a subset of students, teachers, and staff that received training. Those who participated in the research were pre-tested and after about three months, post-tested with standardized tests.

For a subset of students age 5-11, in Italy, a control group was also used following an experimental design protocol. Both groups, the intervention group and the control group were pre-tested using the same tests. Then, only the experimental group received the QT/TM training. After about three months both groups, the experimental group and the control group, were tested again and the results were researched by the evaluation team.

After about three months the intervention group as well as the control group were post-tested. The data of the pre- and post-test of the intervention and the control group were analysed statistically (see section 2 for the results). The control group could then start the QT/TM training, while the intervention group received a follow-up programme.

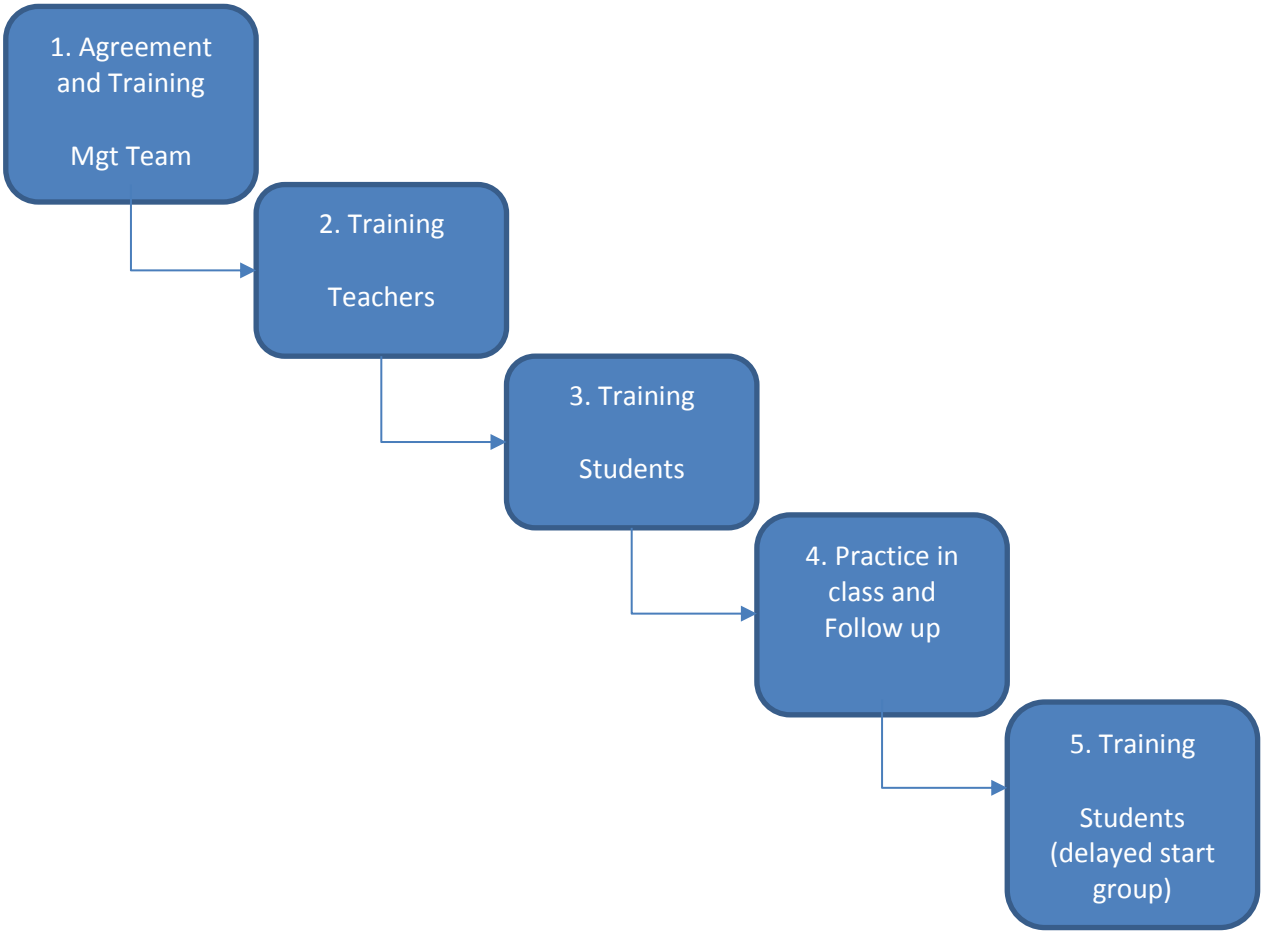


Figure 1 The main implementation phases

The implementation In Europe.

The QT/TM programme was implemented in four countries in Europe: Portugal, Italy, the UK, and Belgium with a total of about 1,800 students and learners, 900 schoolteachers and staff, 150 of which completed the monitoring training to supervise the QT/TM practice in the classroom, and 200 parents trained in the QT/TM programme. The majority of the 1,800 students and learners were children of primary schools. Other 'students/learners' included students of secondary schools, art schools, migrants with the 'House of Colours' organization in Belgium, and long-sentence prisoners with a sister project in Italy.

A total of more than 40 clusters of schools and individual schools have been actively involved in the project and in the various steps of training. Most of schools in the project had a high percentage of disadvantaged students: socially disadvantaged, or belonging to ethnic minorities or having migrant backgrounds, or, in certain cases, students that for some reason had been put out of mainstream education. As part of the scaling-up activity other organisations joined in, including the National Music Conservatory and a University in Portugal, organizations promoting sports for inclusion in the UK, an organization offering shelter to migrants in Belgium, and a long-sentence prison in Italy. The latter in co-operation with a sister project financed by a private bank in Italy.

The project involved primarily young children, aged 5 to 11. This is an interesting cohort because research on well-being and techniques such as QT/TM for young children is not as widespread for young children as for adolescents. Because of this, special attention was given to ethical aspects. Parental permission was required before the children's' experiences and impressions about QT/TM were obtained.

QT/TM implementation in Portugal

In **Portugal** alone, more than 1250 students received QT/TM training, in addition to about 500 Teachers and 90 parents. About 21 clusters of schools and schools were involved, as well as a University and a Music National Conservatory. The project expanded from the Southern region of Algarve, involving schools in Olhao, Faro, Loulé, Quarteira, Albufeira, Almancil etc; to the Northern area of Aveiro and Porto; to the central area of the capital Lisbon; Amadora; and to the Island of Madeira.

The training of the principals, teachers and staff in the QT/TM programme has been done in cooperation with 6 teacher training centres in Loulè, Faro and Olhão, Lisbon, Aveiro, Albufeira and Vila Nova de Gaia that offered QT/TM as accredited course to the teacher career. The training has been very well received by teachers and management team, with report of experiencing the training as very positive and enriching.

Of the 21 clusters of schools and schools many were belonging to the previous TEIP program - ***Priority Intervention Educational Territories Program-*** for disadvantaged schools, being these a main target of the FRIENDS project). One of those schools mentioned that after having experimented various strategies, the FRIENDS project was the last hope for solving the behaviour problems in the school. Implementation included also the National Music Conservatory of Lisbon and the University of Algarve (UALG) Faculty of Human and Social Science, expanding the target to higher education. The entire geographical area of Portugal has been covered by the implementation. In the north of Portugal (Canelas/Vila Nova de Gaia, Panafiel and Aveiro), in the centre (Lisbon and Amadora) and South the Algarve region (Olhão, Faro, Loule, Almancil, Albufeira, Quarteira etc.), up to the Island of Madeira.

The Teacher Training Centre do Litoral à Serra of the Escola Secundaria de Loulè (P6) has approved a set of 3 Short-Term Courses (STC), lasting 6 hours each, so that the objectives of the FRIENDS Project, with respect to its Implementation and Exploitation dimension, could be achieved. This brought the involvement in the project in Algarve of 5 school clusters associated with this Training Centre: Fr. João Coelho Cabanita – Loulé; Eng. Duarte Pacheco – Loulé; school cluster of Almancil; D. Dinis – Quarteira;

and Dr.ª Laura Ayres – Quarteira; with the possibility of offering the training courses in TM to principals teachers and administrators as professional training accredited to their careers, covering the costs of the training. While the implementation in other part of the Algarve was supported by TTC- Centro de Formação Ria Formosa (Faro and Olhão Schools) and TTC - Centro de Formação de Albufeira, Lagos e Silves , and in the other areas of the country by the TTC- Centro de Formação Calvet de Magalhães (Lisbon Schools) and in the North TTC- Centro de Formação da Associação de Escolas (Aveiro and Albergaria-a-Velha Schools) and TTC- Centro de Formação Aurélio da Paz dos Reis (Vila Nova de Gaia, Canelas School), all drawing other public supporting funds for the implementation of QT/TM. And there are other 90 TTCs interested to do the same.

This shows the growing involvement and interest of the local and regional educational institution in the implementation of the project.

The successes of the training in Teacher Training Centres during the project forms the basis for **realising the sustainability** of QT/TM training in different TTCs in the future. In fact, after the end of the project, courses of training for this first step of implementation, including schoolteachers and staff, will be covered by the TTC of Loulé and by many other TTCs that have already applied for and received supporting funds. This is in the direction of creating a sustainability model for the exploitation of the QT/TM programme implementation that can be replicated also in other countries (in line with D7.3) and that can be an element for the policy reform support/ guidelines and recommendations (D6.9 - D7.1)

The involvement of **local policy makers** in the project included Municipalities such as Barrocas, Albufeira, Quarteira, Funchal in Madeira, Loulè, Villa do Bispo etc. and in particular the Parish Councils, that have been, in many cases, instrumental to the implementation of the project in schools in areas under their supervision. Members of the Municipalities Parish Council, as well as representatives of the Algarve regional Directorate General (DGEst) of the MoE, have also directly participated in the training of the QT/TM programme and expressed great appreciation for the course:

> *"I hereby come to thank you for the opportunity given to me, to attend the Transcendental Meditation Training, promoted within the FRIENDS Project, which took place from the 6th to the 10th of January 2020 at the premises of this School Group. It was a very enriching experience, the impact of which is unequivocally manifested in the simplest, and perhaps the most profound things of life: in the rescue of tranquility, serenity, well-being and optimism. Expressing my interest in participating in future Actions, I congratulate you on the Initiative and wish you the greatest success for the Project."*

The FRIENDS project in Portugal had a close interaction with the **Ministry of Education** (DGE) - at both the national and regional levels. They gave support to the implementation of the EUROPE and FRIENDS projects from the first implementing schools belonging to a special National programme of the Portuguese MoE for schools in disadvantaged territories – TEIP (Territorio Educativo de Intervencao Prioritaria). For example, QT/TM is now recognized as a best practice within this TEIP programme.

Representative of DGE of Ministry of Education of Portugal at the Final Conference in Brussels – 4th December 2019

Important awareness-raising activities took place as part of national **UNESCO** activities. The pioneering school of the FRIENDS project in Algarve is member of the UNESCO Network of Associated Schools (ASPnet). In the context of the FRIENDS project, QT/TM has been presented in Portugal in 7 meetings of the UNESCO schools of which 1 International meeting in Porto, 2 Nationals meetings in Porto and in Almada and 4 regional meetings.

Therefore the project, supported by the networking policies of the Ministry of Education-DGE, shared the experiences of the implementation of QT/TM with **governmental programmes** such as the TEIP, which involves more than 130 schools at National level, or with networks like UNESCO Schools. The Portuguese '**Flexibility law'**, providing autonomy of the school for part of the curriculum, was instrumental for schools to overcome the 'curriculum barrier'; i.e. how to fit QT/TM into the curriculum.

The work done together with the parent association APEJAA (P10) in contacting other parent associations, another main target of the project, brought the interest of 2 schools in starting the project in the area of AVEIRO. It played also a great role in involving the TTC of Aveiro in the training of teachers and parents, and in expanding the implementation of the FRIENDS project in the whole area of Aveiro and beyond inspiring the parents association of the implementing schools to be more active in the promotion of the QT/TM approach (in Olhao, Quarteira etc.) About 90 parents have been trained in Portugal in the course of the project, many of them presidents or very active members of the schools parents associations, that have been working actively with the schools, the principals and the teachers and the TM organizations, to expand the implementation with the involvement of policy makers. In Portugal, teachers and parents were also key in involving local and regional policy makers in the training.

Parents' training

Following the training of principals, teachers and staff, the training of students and migrants started in the schools and non-formal education institutions of the partner countries. The implementation has shown great appreciation from students, as the main target group of the project, and in relation to the general objective of the project that aims at promoting inclusive learning, enabling students to succeed in education and to develop their full potential irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds. In Portugal many children and students of primary schools were involved, often the all children population of the clusters of schools (including 2 to 6 schools in general) was involved in the QT/TM programme, such us in Faro and in Quarteira clusters of schools (South, Algarve region), or in a cluster of schools in Lisbon, or in a small private cooperative school in the North/Aveiro, and the intention in many implementing school clusters is to expand the implementation to all children and students populations, continuing the expansion of the implementaiton after the official end of the FRIENDS project. Also Art school students participated in the project. The students of one class of the school Cluster in Olhao, pioneer in the project, participated in QT/TM in the context of a special Flexibility programme, including QT/TM Yoga Asanas and breathing exercises, and additional instructions, in a new subject of 50 minutes in the morning, and 15 minutes of QT/TM at the end of the school day.

After the training of principals, teachers and staff, students and learners, the implementation was and is continuing with the practice in class every day, at the beginning and at the end of the school day, of the QT/TM programme.Continued follow-up individual and/or group sessions were held by the TM teachers for all trained participants. This process was ongoing on regular basis, in order to consolidate the different phases of implementation and address any arising challenge. This is a very important part of the process in order to create a solid and stable implementation in the different schools that have started the programme.

There have been also different consolidating activities (for teachers and staff and for students and learners) fostering their involvement as local stakeholders through **local learning communities.**

In the Algarve region(South of Portugal), a **first face-to-face regional meeting** of Local Learning Communities was organized by the TTC of Loulé, together with the QT/TM charity in Portugal, and the University of Algarve.

More than thirty interested teachers gathered in order to acquire more knowledge and exchange experiences.

Principal teachers and parents were also constantly involved in meeting finalized in expanding implementation and involving more schools in the territory. They have been actively promoting the QT/TM programme in their communities also as moderators of local learning communities, and participated to European FRIENDS face to face meetings of local learning communities, held in concomitance of the FRIENDS public conference and in other conferences and events in the implementing countries but also in other countries, in which they were also speakers. This connections and face to face meetings between different schools and organizations participating in the programme and between representatives of different local learning communities, forms a lively basis in the direction of the creation of an Alliance of schools for social inclusion.

Special events and inspirational meetings with external experts have also been organized to consolidate the practice of TM in school with students and teachers. In order to give participating children and schools a European feeling of the QT/TM Practice in the FRIENDS project, have been organized by the implementing partners **common QT/TM practice sessions** in different schools across Europe, with the schools being all together connected over video link. This TM live video conferences have been involving different age students, and the whole experience was coordinated in loco together by the responsible schoolteachers and coordinated overall and in the schools by the TM teachers. Some schools that could not organize the video connection was connected via audio, or just practicing Transcendental Meditation at the same time with their students and teachers. Children and students exchanged experiences, and songs, poems and drawings, and

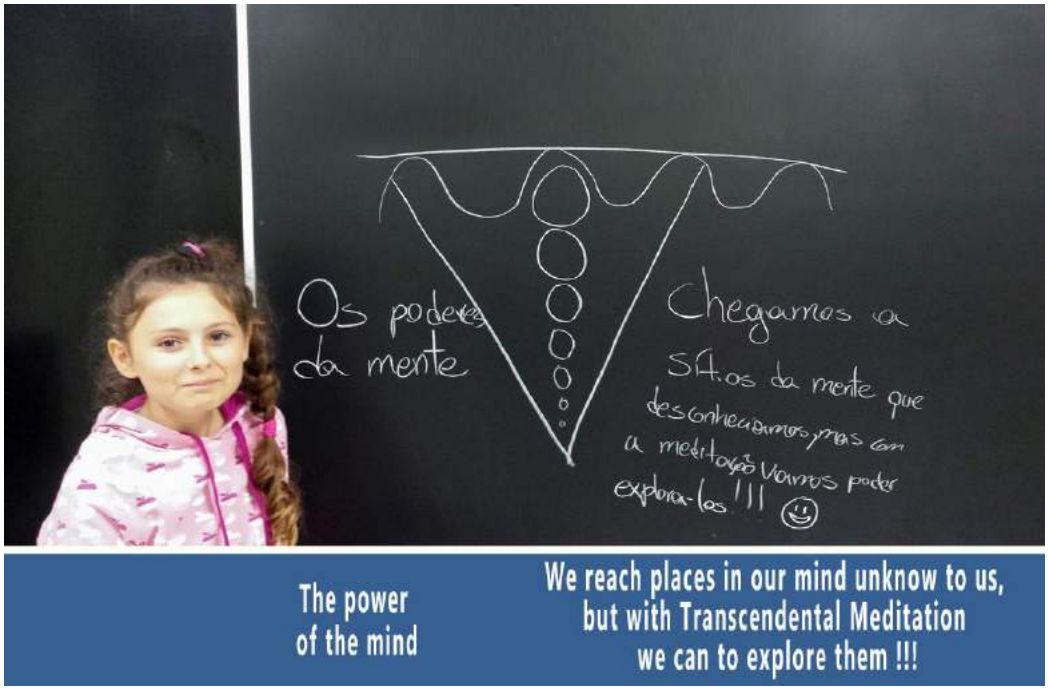
had the opportunity to exchange their experiences of the QT/TM programme with students of other countries. These sessions were great fun!... and schools reported to wanting to continue this after the end of the project.(in Portugal 7 schools participated in the connections). During the project, with the permission of the parents, children of all ages had many occasions to express their experiences with the project, in writing, in drawings and in videos, published on the Friends you tube channel. They were also often coming to the FRIENDS conferences with their teachers as speakers.

In 2018/2019, for the special class in the A.Iria participating in the special Flexibility project that allowed extra 50 minutes at the beginning of the school day for a new subject, there was a special follow up in which new instructions were given, including TM Yoga Asanas, and breathing Technique, accompanied by some additional Knowledge about the QT/TM programme.

As a consolidation activity they also made a presentation of their activities to all teachers at the end of the academic year, presenting their experiences in the programme and organized a special TM yoga asanas demonstration and class for the teachers held by them.

Two students of the class were participating also as speakers, together with their teachers and a member of the parent association, to the FRIENDS Final Conference in Brussels. According to the final evaluation, this class achieved a success rate of 93,14% – the highest of the four classes of the same grade, and the rate of transition for the next school year was of 100%.

The Dr. Alberto Iria School, our school pioneer of the project in Portugal, belonging to the TEIP programme for schools in disadvantaged territories, achieved **the best results** among TEIP schools in Olhão in national exams of **Portuguese** and **Mathematics** and one of the highest rate of the Region of Algarve among all schools. This is contributing to the general objective of promoting inclusive education and fostering the education of disadvantaged learner.



In recognition of implementing QT/TM, the FRIENDS school, Escola Alberto Iria, received the *Child Friendly School seal award*—an initiative of the National Confederation of Parents' Associations, the LeYa publishing house, and the psychologist Eduardo Sá. This award has the high sponsorship of His Excellency the President of the Republic. This seal was awarded to 17 schools out of 3000 participating schools for "extraordinary ideas, for a happier development of the child in the school environment" and resulted from the submission of the project FRIENDS implementing *Quiet Time* based on Transcendental Meditation in the category of Citizenship and / or Inclusion. The school was proposed for the award by the president of the A. Iria school parents' association *(link see table IV.1).*

QT/TM implementation in Italy

In Italy the project has attracted the interest of many schools throughout the country and was presented in schools and to high education reppresentatives, both from the very south to the extreme North, from Bolzano, involving a border be-lingual region of Italy, in which there are 2 official languages Italian and German, to the Umbria region (Center), to Naples, historic capital of the South, and Sicily.

A total of 174 teachers and staff have been trained in the course of the project in 8 schools, including schools (secundary and primary) with a high percentage of students from non-EU countries, with difficulty of integration, students with disabilities, ADHD, with learning disabilities and with problems of adaptability and interpersonal relationships. **The project has been implemented mostly in public schools**, involving one secondary school in Milano, 3 schools in Brescia and its surrounding towns, some with a high number of students (about 25%) from non-EU countries. Primary schools also participated in the area of Bolzano (a

bilingual region in Northern Italy) with a cluster of schools composed by 2 schools, both bi-lingual (Italian/German), participating into the project, one of which has regular time bilingual courses and courses with Montessori system. Being a be-lingual region, it has in it-self a challenge of integration and inclusion, for the integration of the two different communities, languages and cultures. Experiences show appreciation of the programme, supporting the general objective of the project.

The implementation expanded also in a near by town of Bolzano, Rovereto, and in Pisa (Tuscany). Project in the schools has been in many cases promoted by very interested teachers, or principals that then became the promoters of the project in the school: this was the case of the school in Leno (Brescia)and of the primary school in Bolzano. Their experiences and appreciation of the programme can be seen in 2 different videos realized in the two schools in the course of the project (see Friends youtube channel). Principal and teachers also participated as speakers at the final Conference of the FRIENDS project.

During the summer, in the area of Bolzano, was organized a face to face meeting of the local learning community in the form of a week-end residential course for all the teachers and staff of the area that had been trained in the FRIENDS project. This was a very beautiful occasion, appreciated by everyone, to deepen the Knowledge of QT/TM and discuss the experiences of the programme.

In the word of the director of the Bolzano cluster of schools: *'...Teachers started (training in QT/TM) during summer, and was **the first time** I saw my teachers coming to school during summer, they came to meditate regularly, once a week and they didn't miss it, never' 'Our school is really changing thanks to TM, and I hope this will happen to many more schools in the future'*

Interest came from many more schools, also from the south of Italy and with great support of the school principal**,** a presentation of the FRIENDS project was made to about 40 teachers in a secondary school (technical/ professional) with more than 1500 students in Arzano (Napoli), situated in a very difficult area with students coming from disadvantaged families. The teachers were very positive towards the project.

Children and students of primary and secondary schools were involved in the project. Students and children of all ages, with permission of parents, had the opportunity to express their experiences with the QT/TM programme in writing, in beautiful drawings (see animation on FRIENDS you tube channel) and in Videos, all posted on the FRIENDS you tube channel.

The research was conducted, with a control group in the primary school, involving 5 classes: 3 immediately trained in the QT/TM programme, and 2 as part of the control group (delayed start)for a total of 92 children. The positive results of the research, reported in D.5.5. and D.6.9., confirm the informally expressed experiences of the children. This research on the effects of QT/TM in primary schools is the first of its kind in Europe, and one of only a handful in the world.

As in all other implementing countries, the interest came up from many more schools than those that could be afforded with the resources of the FRIENDS project alone. This also has been an impulse in Italy and for all implementation countries to search for more institutional support, to act in synergy with other projects, to foster the application to new European and governmental grants and private grants, in order to fulfil the growing implementation demand that was also expanding in new sectors. This has been the case of the expansion in the **prisons** sector in Italy, through a **private grant**. In fact this happened in collaboration with the FRIENDS project, Carcere Senza Stress, a program based on Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation,

was implemented for guards and inmates in a **prison for long sentences** in the North of Italy within the project "S-cateniamo la mente!" funded by the call Libero Reload 2018 promoted by the Association A Buon Diritto Onlus. The project has been financed by the bank foundation “Fondazione San Paolo”. In the context of this project 16 guards and 16 inmates have been trained and pre/post -tested. The research protocol and the tests of the FRIENDS project have been used, the research has been feeding into the FRIENDS data base and the positive results are available in D.5.5. and D.6.9.

QT/TM implementation in UK

In United Kingdom have been trained in QT/TM a total of 122 principals, teachers, staff and sport trainers. The results have been very encouraging with a number of staff expressing appreciation that they have learnt a life skill which is very useful and practical on a personal level, which impacts their professional life. This is again showing how the programme is positively perceived in relation to the general objective of the call.

The programme was implemented in a total of 9 schools and has involved also a community organization which promotes sports for young people in the south London borough of Croydon, with the training of his leader, a retired marketing manager, and 8 trainers. Plans are being made for a training course for young people in the area who have come from disadvantaged backgrounds, to continue after the official conclusion of the project as an expansion of the FRIENDS, and looking for sustainability opportunities. Plans are now developing for a sports programme with a view to creating a community linking the countries where the FRIENDS project has been implemented.

In the United Kingdom an interesting aspect of the implementation has been the involvement of more than seven Alternative Provision Schools (APS) situated in Lancashire, Stoke on Trent, Liverpool and Essex—the North West and South East regions of England. These are schools highly in the target of the project, which

according to the government's website, are for pupils who are not able to attend mainstream school for a variety of reasons, such as school exclusion, behavioural issues, short- or long-term illness, school refusal or teenage pregnancy. The project so far has shown a great impact and potential on these kinds of schools, as the level of stress within the teaching profession is very high and a number of teachers have been very appreciative of this programme to help them as well as their students.

So I'm hoping that this shining light that I've seen on the [QT/TM children] videos will be transferred into our schools – Chief executive APS Schools

The results have been very encouraging with a number of staff expressing appreciation that they have learnt a life skill which is very useful and practical on a personal level, which impacts their professional life. This is again showing how the programme is positively perceived in relation to the general objective of the call and specifically in the effort of the FRIENDS project in supporting teachers who are challenged by the increasing diversity of the learning environment.

The APS main goal is to prepare the students to be able to come back to mainstream education as soon as possible. These schools have a greater percentage of teachers per student than regular schools therefore particular attention has been given on strengthening and supporting the teachers and staff working in a very demanding teaching environment. Teachers reported an increase in creativity, less stress, and greater problem-solving capability. The chief executive reported less incidence of illness and that "*the calm atmosphere created by the large number of staff meditating has made a big difference".* For the students, a different approach was used, in close collaboration with the school leadership and staff, to deal with the

special challenges that an APS school presents due to the more transient student population, making it necessary to have a rolling programme for teaching QT/TM.

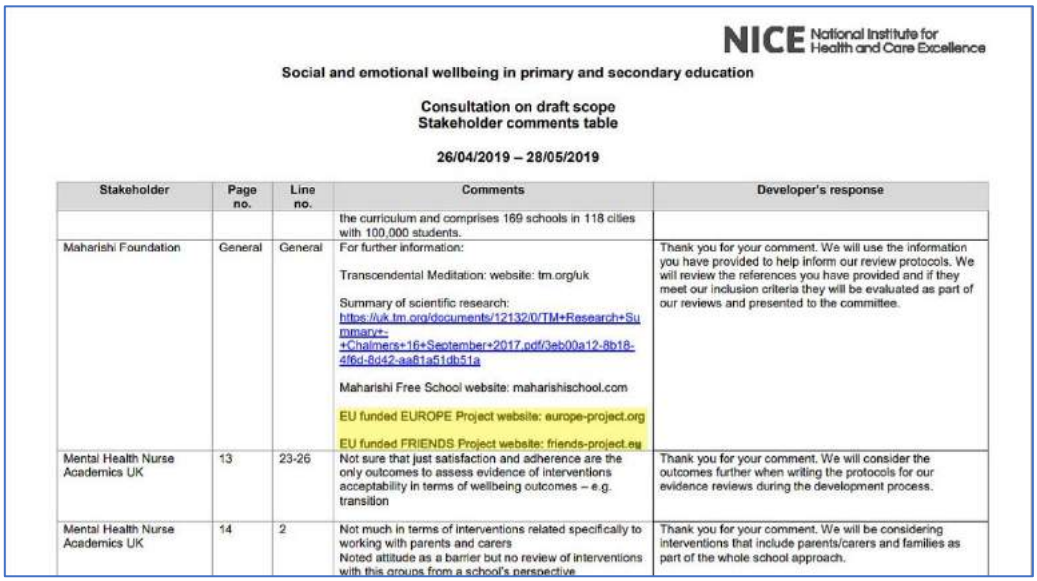
In fact, in UK, one interesting development arised from the type of school where the QT/TM programme has been introduced. Because the students were transferred from the local mainstream schools, these **Alternative Provision Schools** have links with these local schools. In time, trained students have returned to their original school. Hence, once students have been trained in QT/TM, these mainstream schools have been needing to make sure the students continue with their practice. This is favouring the exploitation of the project in mainstreaming schools, including all students (not only the most excluded one) for the well-being of all.

In UK, during the fall, a face to face meeting of the local learning community was organized in the form of a week-end residential course for educators practicing TM. At this meeting, all teachers trained in the FRIENDS project where invited. This was a very beautiful and appreciated occasion to deepen the Knowledge of QT/TM and discuss the experiences of the programme.(D.3.3.)
At a **"Wellness Day"** for all 100 staff at the two Alternative Provision schools in Colchester and Heybridge, MF-UK(P9) was giving presentations about the QT/TM programme and holding also meetings for those already participating in QT/TM.

On the 17th of July was held at APS in Heybridge an **Open Day for parents** at which the FRIENDS project with the QT/TM programme had a stand. This was the first time the school had used this informal format and had

a good attendance from the parents, while usually, according to school staff, it's not so easy, in difficult schools and especially in APS, to involve parents in schools' activities. This was the occasion to promote the project and a greater involvement of the parents in the QT/TM activities.

The education authority for Colchester and Heybridge, Essex County Council Education Department, have been very interested in seeing the developments in the two Essex schools where the programme has been implemented. The senior staff asked for a detailed presentation with a view to becoming participants themselves. This has been a seed for the expansion of the project to more schools in the area. A Presentation of the FRIENDS project to **Behaviour and Attendance Partnership** - deputy heads of 18 schools in north Essex with representatives of the Essex County Council Education Department – led to two presentations to other schools. This **committee of 18 deputy headteachers** was representing all the main schools in north Essex, and composed by the responsibles of these schools for sending the pupils to the APS where QT/TM had been implented. The meeting was chaired by the acting headteacher of Colchester APS, implementing the QT/TM programme. The aim of the committee was to review the management of students who had been transferred from mainstream education to the APS. This meeting resulted in two presentations of the FRIENDS project in mainstream schools, one at a primary school in Clacton and the other at a secondary school in Colchester.



NICE National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Social and emotional wellbeing in primary and secondary education

Consultation on draft scope
Stakeholder comments table

26/04/2019 – 28/05/2019

Stakeholder	Page no.	Line no.	Comments	Developer's response
			the curriculum and comprises 169 schools in 118 cities with 100,000 students.	
Maharishi Foundation	General	General	For further information: Transcendental Meditation: website: tm.org/uk Summary of scientific research: https://uk.tm.org/documents/12132/0/TM+Research+Summary+-+Chalmers+16+September+2017.pdf/3eb00a12-8b18-4f6d-8d42-aa61a51db51a Maharishi Free School website: maharishischool.com EU funded EUROPE Project website: europe-project.org EU funded FRIENDS Project website: friends-project.eu	Thank you for your comment. We will use the information you have provided to help inform our review protocols. We will review the references you have provided and if they meet our inclusion criteria they will be evaluated as part of our reviews and presented to the committee.
Mental Health Nurse Academics UK	13	23-26	Not sure that just satisfaction and adherence are the only outcomes to assess evidence of interventions acceptability in terms of wellbeing outcomes – e.g. transition	Thank you for your comment. We will consider the outcomes further when writing the protocols for our evidence reviews during the development process.
Mental Health Nurse Academics UK	14	2	Not much in terms of interventions related specifically to working with parents and carers Noted attitude as a barrier but no review of interventions with this groups from a school's perspective	Thank you for your comment. We will be considering interventions that include parents/carers and families as part of the whole school approach.

MF-UK (Lead Implementation partner-P9) was invited in a consultation of the **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)** in the UK and contributed the results of the FRIENDS project emphasizyng the importance to include the teachers and the well being of teachers and staff in the new national guidelines on Social and Emotional Well-Being in Primary and Secondary Schools in preparation by the NICE. At the consultation 50 educational organisations were present. Detailed written comments with reference to the FRIENDS project and the QT/TM programme were prepared and submitted. *(link table in final report IV.1).*

Now the Principals of 2 APS are looking into **sustaining** the programme in their schools with school funds. For the involvement of the schools, very Important has been in UK to have as a partner Maharishi School – Skarmersdale (P8), implementing QT/TM since more than 30 years, with its former principal constantly couching participating principals and schools, in UK, and in the other implementing countries.

QT/TM implementation in Belgium

In Belgium the implementation involved eight schools from Flanders, Brussels, and Wallonia. Various stages of implementation were achieved, ranging from the participation of just the principal and teachers, to a whole-school approach in two primary schools in Wallonia and in Flanders. In these two schools the principal, teachers, and almost all the young children learned QT/TM, with the support and permission of their parents. Many parents also received training. The type of school varied from municipality, to provincial schools, to private schools, an orphanage boarding school, and a CEFA school (school for dual learning). The implementation also included one private organization supporting schools with difficult children with its team working in the Molenbeek area of Brussels, and an organization that has been offering shelter to migrants for more than 15 years. A total of 114 principals, teachers and staff have been trained, and local educational authorities have been involved for authorization and informed about the project. 41 parents also received training.

The schools and non-formal educational institutions participating were from different parts in Belgium (Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels) and include schools from difficult areas or from rural areas.

Other schools have been a Primary School and secondary in **Flanders,** with teachers and staff. An ***Institut Médico-Pédagogique in Wallonia*** where the coordinator of the home for students has been introduced to the project and trained in QT/TM together with the coordinator of primary and secondary school. With many members of this institute interested in joining the project.

Three more schools, one also in the municipality of Molenbeek, were interested to implement the programme and a responsible of the educational department of the municipality of Anderlecht expressed his interest in the project and the possibility to implement it in schools of its municipality.

A non-formal education institution was also involved in the project: this is a large organization active in all provinces of Flanders and in Brussels that works with disadvantaged youngsters, guided by a team of educators. This organization is fully in the target of the project, dealing with many migrants, disadvantaged and difficult students that are taken away from the regular system of education, and that after a period of training together with this organization, are integrated again in regular education. The project was presented to the Leader of all the education teams, and also to the CEO of the organization. It was internally presented to all working teams and has steered the interest of the leader of a team working with youngster, that decided to start the experimentation with the team working in the area of Molenbeek, 8 educators and team leader and one staff.

Another non-formal education institution, **House of colours**, joined the FRIENDS project to support the young migrant people to get back their lives.

The 'House of Colours' in Turnhout - **Belgium**, is an associated partner that has been offering shelter to migrants for more the 15 years. It operates in support of, and in coordination with, the local public authorities. House of Colours joined the implementation of the project starting with the training of its founder and the staff members that have also been participating in 2 FRIENDS public conferences as speakers. The FRIENDS project partners also collaborated with the House of Colours in the context of their "Together We Stand" project, inspired by the FRIENDS project and co-funded by the **EU solidarity corps.** Collaboration will further continue within the context of the "Tools for Living" project that is organizing a conference addressing approaches to trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which include QT/TM.

Beside the QT/TM group practices organized in the residential house itself, follow up with migrants of House of Colours, with individual and group meetings of practice together and additional knowledge about the QT/TM programme were organized in synergy with the 'Together we stand project' (co-funded by the EU Solidarity Corps) of House of Colours, during the gatherings, week end camps, and the summer camps organized in the context of this project to re-connect with the migrants that over time had been in contact with House of Colours, involving also the local youth, and to offer them training in QT/TM through FRIENDS, and also to do follow up and group meditations with the ones already trained.

In this context a beautiful video has been made by 'Together We Stand' in collaboration with the FRIENDS project reporting the experiences of the participants of House of Colours with QT/TM, visible on the FRIENDS project you tube channel. Migrants and staff of House of Colours appreciated the unifying experience to find inner peace, together with all participants of so many countries, but also felt more creative and supported from inside.

Many interested principals and educators from Belgium, including the leading staff members of House of colours, had met together at the first face-to-face dissemination meeting of local learning communities and stakeholders held in Brussels on the 29th of November for allowing the different local communities interested in the implementation of the Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation programme in schools to connect at European level and exchange experiences on the implementation, dissemination and scaling up of the QT/TM approach in order to fostering social inclusion and exploring new possibilities of expansion, in new countries and new field, like health and sport. This reinforced their commitment and enthusiasm for the project, and the good practice.

Many of them and more were also present at the Final Conference of the FRIENDS project in Brussels and at the following Networking event with 130 participants from more then 15 countries.

A full Documentation of the FRIENDS project was presented via email, and hand delivered to the Flemish Ministry of Education and to the Francophone Ministry of Education. Both Ministries acknowledged with interest the reception of the documentation and, being a moment of change of government in Belgium, they warmly encouraged to contact the new ministries after elections.

Expansion of the implementation in new countries

The project from Belgium, in collaboration with House of Colours, has expanded also in Ireland, where contacts has been taken with the coordinators of the SUNNY CENTRES around the world offering Yoga to exonerated people and with the director of Conflict Trauma Relief Centre of Belfast, both interested into the FRIENDS project.
News of the project has spread as far as **Iceland**. The head of the Arts Department in a school near Reykjavik, has followed the progress of the FRIENDS project and started implementing it into his own school by teaching 50 staff (half the total number at the school) including four board members, and 65 students. There are, at this time of writing, plans for teaching more students next term.

The principal of the implementing school reported in a TV interview that costs for sickness among teachers and staff in the school (which *had been increasing steadily* year by year for several years) had suddenly dropped from being around 45 million kronas (2017) to 15 million in the year in which most of the teachers have been trained in QT/TM (2018). He said he couldn't explain this sudden drop except for QT/TM!

As an expantion of the project schools were also implementing QT/TM in **Spain, Germany, Romania, Ireland**.

Contribution of parents

In the project, in the 4 implementing countries, were trained in total **200** parents, including: presidents of parents associations that have been very involved in the project, business experts, members of the Town *Parish* councils, all promoters, together with various school principals and teachers, of the expansion of the

project in the territory with the existing parents Associations and/or fostering the creation of parents committees for the promotion of QT/TM in the schools and across schools.

Parents enjoyed the QT/TM training and expressed great support for the FRIENDS project, as we can see in the speach of the vice-president of D.Dinis cluster of schools parent association, and message of the president of A.Iria parent association at the FRIENDS final Conference in Brussels:

- *It has been very refreshing for me as a parents, to hear in this conference so many people speaking of our children education not just in terms of 'Curriculum, curriculum, curriculum', but with an attention to their wellbeing...In a world where we are always running around, it's very important, for me and my daughter, to have a moment with our own, to stop and be with ourselves.(...) This is a wonderful tool that we can leave to our children, so they can move in their life with more strength to face any difficulties, stress and frustrations, all that is mentioned in the research … it is good to give them this tool to safeguard their future. This peace starts as a drop from us, but step by step we can increase the effect and it will take it to the all community. (vice-president of parent association, D.Dinis cluster of schools, and member of the Parish council of Quarteira, PT)*

- *I learned this simple but effective technique that has helped me so much as a mother and professionally (…) Along the way many parents have been seeing significant changes in their children: they are more focused, aware, happy. The Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation Programme in education must be taken very seriously by the entire educational community. The results speak for themself. It is time for change, it is time for us to realize that it is possible to change mindsets and prioritise the silent time at home and at school. For thius it is necessary that all: parents, students, teachers, schools work in this direction. Rispecting and prioritising TM. Together we are stronger (president of parent Association- Olhao, PT).*

And from the principal of the D. Dinis cluster of schools in Quarteira:

- *I would like to ask to the European Union and the government to invest in Education and to invest in TM. We see that studies have results, I think it's good for everyone... I was thinking: what is the European Union? How it became the European Union? We need peace and we need to be together, and TM does it.*

The implementation included also the pre/post-test of the trained teachers and staff, that has been organized in collaboration with the University of Algarve (P3), University of Bologna (P4) and MF-UK (P9). A total of 241

adults, teachers and staff from schools where QT/TM was implemented, were answering to pre/post-test questionnaires.

For students/learners a total of 188 questionnaires were submitted and collected in the 4 countries for both moments: pre and post-test. (Testing was different for children 5-11, and students 12-18)

For the research in the prison, with the aim to examine the efficacy of Transcendental Meditation in a prison setting by applying the QT/TM intervention, the tests collected were 32 in total, including 16 inmates and 16 prison officers.

While accessibility of data from school statistics for data on suspensions, bullying and violence episodes, drop-out rate etc. was made difficult by actual rules of school privacy, many principals, teachers and students/learners mentioned that the atmosphere at school is more peaceful, calmer: the Chief executive of 2 APS schools implementing in the project mentions: *'**It's noticeable** when people come to visit, the **calm nature** of the **school**, particularly as this is a school for children who have lost their place in mainstream school - generally because of their behaviour'*, while a teacher of Bolzano school mentions: '*children are kinder to each other'*; students mention that they feel '*more sociable, self-confident* ' at ease with each other, and also report better capacity to study, understanding, better results at school, greater motivation to study as also migrants of House of colours. Inmates report greater calmness, less impulsivity, less anger, a new insight and vision of their life.

Conclusions

The FRIENDS project trained more than three times the number of students, teachers and staff than envisaged at the outset of the project. While the project resources were stretched to its limits, the demand for implementation in schools and other areas was even bigger. This however, has also been an impulse for all implementation partners to search for institutional support, to act in synergy with other projects, to obtaining new governmental and private funds, in order to fulfil as much as possible the growing number of implementation requests also expanding in new sectors, as has been the case for the expansion in prisons in Italy, through a private foundation grant, and in the field of youth and migrants in Belgium.

The implementation of QT/TM in the FRIENDS project:

- has shown to be well received by all stakeholders, including teachers and staff, students, parents, and policy makers.
- has provided a wealth of experiences confirming the benefits as well as the effectiveness of the implementation method and its critical success factors.
- has shown its great potential for being adaptable to different systems of education (e.g. children of a young age as well as adolescents) and non-formal learning settings, such as prisons, migrants, and sports.
- has demonstrated the potential of scaling up the approach into other geographical areas.
- has revealed the self-selling quality of QT/TM, if a critical mass is achieved and the boundary conditions such as curriculum flexibility are met.

The implementation of QT/TM in the FRIENDS project, as well as earlier research, provides evidence not only of improvements in well-being, a required ingredient of an inclusive learning environment, but also shows the positive impact on the very goals of inclusive education, including higher academic achievement, lower early school leaving, and improved well-being and social inclusion in adult life, showing the potential to

contribute to National Policies and to the European/International Agenda for the promotion of inclusion through Education.

2. Involvement of policy makers and further expansions

Policy makers have been informed and involved in the process of implementation of the FRIENDS project from the beginning. The project has been focusing on the policy making process during the different phases of the implementation, aiming at fulfilling the FRIENDS general objective in "…*contributing to improving the role of the Education Training and Youth system in promoting equality, social cohesion, nurturing mutual respect and intercultural dialogue, combating discrimination on all grounds and contributing to establishing a solid evidence leading to a mainstreaming roadmap for effective policy-making at European and National level, as a key factor for promoting continued improvement in education systems across Europe*".

For this reason, attention has been given to this aspect, and different cooperation has started so far at local, regional and National level, including:

- One Representative from the **Ministry of Education Directorate General for Education (DGE)** from Portugal, participating to the first face to face dissemination meeting in Brussels (PT-BE). In Portugal, the representative of the Ministry of Education - Directorate General for Education, has been very supportive and expressed the will of further cooperating with the project and participated in the first face-to-face dissemination meeting in Brussels aimed at exchanging experiences with interested stakeholders and further discussing how to expand the programme in different countries and on a larger scale.
- One Representative from the **Ministry of Education Directorate General for Education (DGE),** Monitoring Team and Curriculum Development (Portugal) Dr. Nadia Ferreira, participated as speaker to the final conference of the FRIENDS project

She presented: *"How to make possible innovation in a public educational system: the case of Portugal".* In the previous day, partners had the opportunity to discuss with her on different possibilities of expansion and sustainability of the project.

- On behalf of the **Directorate General of the Portuguese Ministry of Education (DGE),** Dr. Vítor Figueiredo participated as a speaker on the opening session of the the 1st FRIENDS Free Seminar Education for Inclusion through Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation taking place at the Lusófona University in Lisbon, and in some following works. Dr. Vítor Figuereido is also member for Portugal of the **EU Education and Training (ET) 2020 working groups on schools and inclusive education.**

- The project in Portugal, supported by the networking policies of the Ministry of Education-DGE, shared the experiences of the implementation of QT/TM with **governmental programmes** such as the TEIP, which involves more than 130 schools at National level, or with networks like UNESCO Schools.
- The **Teacher Training Centre** (TTC) of Loulé - Escola Secundária de Loulé / Centro de Formação Do Litoral à Serra, (a Regional Public institution **directly dependent from the Ministry of Education**) which is an official partner in the project, organized professional training in QT/TM for teachers and staff participating in the FRIENDS project that was accredited for their profession, and financially covered by the funds of the FRIENDS project. This initiative was followed by other 5 TTCs drawing other public supporting funds for the implementation of QT/TM in the course of the project:
  - Centro de Formação Do Litoral à Serra (Loulé and São Brás de Alportel Schools)(P6)
  - Centro de Formação Ria Formosa (Faro and Olhão Schools)
  - Centro de Formação Calvet de Magalhães (Lisbon Schools)
  - Centro de Formação da Associação de Escolas (Aveiro and Albergaria-a-Velha Schools)
  - Centro de Formação Aurélio da Paz dos Reis (Vila Nova de Gaia, Canelas School)
  - Centro de Formação de Albufeira, Lagos e Silves

  And there are other 90 TTC interested to do the same if extra funds would be provided.
- Members of the **Municipalities Parish Council**, as well as representatives of the **Algarve regional Directorate General (DGEst) of the MoE**, have also directly participated in the training of the QT/TM programme and expressed great appreciation for the course.
- Involvement of **local policy makers** including Municipalities such as Barrocas, Albufeira, Quarteira, Funchal in Madeira, Loulè, Villa do Bispo, Valladolid, Leno etc. instrumental in the implementation of the project in schools in areas under their supervision.
- The **Municipality of Valongo** (**Porto district)- Division of Education, Health and Social Action** contacted the implementation partners in Portugal, towards the end of the project, with the interest in the implementation of the programme and partnership for new projects.
- President of the parents association in Quarteira school, as a member of the **Parish council of Quarteira town**, together with the principal of the implementing school, presented the project to the Parish council

discussing the expansion of the implementation in new schools in Quarteira and involving the Parish council also directly in the training of QT/TM.

- A **new implementation** came out **starting in Madeira Island** with the approval of the Regional Council of Madeira, and the financial support, for TM Teachers travel expenses, from the Municipality of Funchal.
- In *Oedeghien & Buissenal (BE),* local educational authorities have been involved and informed about the project since the beginning of the project. This gave visibility of the project at a higher level of education, and local policy makers.
- In Belgium, the responsible of the educational department of the **municipality of Anderlecht** was present during the face to face dissemination meeting in Brussels in November and expressed his strong interest in the project and in the possibility of finding schools where to implement the programme.
- One of our UK partners (MF-UK) participated to a **NICE** (**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence)** consultation meeting with 50 policy makers, educators, researchers, and academics, and wrote comments, contributing the results of the FRIENDS project, on their draft scope for the guidelines on Emotional and Social Wellbeing for Students in Primary and Secondary School, published now on NICE website. *(link in table IV.1).* These comments had to be in summary form as there will be an opportunity to give fuller comments at the full consultation in November 2020
- Experimenting the FRIENDS project approach as part of the **flexibility programme in Portugal**, a new governmental legislative order that provides schools with the necessary conditions to manage more autonomously the curriculum while also integrating practices that promote well-being and better learning.
- Participation of the school Alberto Iria (associated partner implementing in the FRIENDS project) in coordination with CCCTMV (P11) and presentation of the FRIENDS project on National and Regional Meeting of **UNESCO Network Schools**, by invitation of the Portuguese UNESCO coordinator of UNESCO network schools, with the presence of different stakeholder in the educational field including the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal.
- Representatives of **Regione Lombardia** (IT) (4th Commission for Productive Activities, Education, Training and Employment) participating to the conference held in Leno, Brescia, where the project has been presented. At the same conference were present also the Mayor of Leno, the deputy mayor and councillor for education.
- **Essex County Council in UK**, which is the second largest education authority in England and oversees all schools in the county of Essex including Colchester and Heybridge, have been very interested in seeing the developments in the two Essex schools where the programme has been implemented. The senior staff of the Education Department have asked for a detailed presentation with a view to becoming participants themselves. This is a seed for the expansion of the project to more schools in the area. Prior to the FRIENDS project, the Department for Education provided support with the then Under Secretary of State for Education, Lord Hill, stating "*I am sure that the Maharishi Free School will improve choice and raise standards, and will become recognised as a flagship of the Free School Programme".*
- Presentation of the FRIENDS project to a Green Party County Councillor in **Kent**, that has been expressing interest in the project and publishing an article in the smarter Facebook community: https://smartercommunities.media/the-potential-benefits-of-transcendental-meditation-in-education/ , brought also to the attention of the KCC's head of education, and of the Kent Youth County Council, that has at a moment a Curriculum for Life campaign. He is planning to visit the Maharishi School in Skelmersdale (P8) and meet the former principal and coordinator in the project.

- Two representatives of the **Essex County Council Education Department** were also attending a presentation of the FRIENDS project developments given to a committee of 18 deputy headteachers **representing all the main schools in north Essex**, chaired by the acting headteacher of Colchester APS.
- The dissemination of QT/TM in schools in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region in Italy has been facilitated by the municipality of Città di Sacile. This came to the attention of the **Città Sane (Healthy Cities)** network of the **World Health Organization** who published an article about QT/TM.

- The **Municipality of Città di Sacile** had a great role in the dissemination of the FRIENDS including publishing articles on the regional newspaper the *Gazzettino del Friuli,* involving in the FRIENDS project the **youth council.** The project saw the presence at the first partner meeting in Città di Castello of the **deputy mayor** for Health, social services, inclusion and family policies of Città di Sacile and the presence of the **vice-mayor** at the FRIENDS public Conference in Lisbon and also as a speaker at the FRIENDS final conference in Brussels
- Presentation of the project to the senior staff of the **MERIT Pupil Referral Unit (UK)** (the term PRU is another name for the same type of school as the APS
- In **Spain** (partner for dissemination), as an expansion of the implementation of the FRIENDS project, through the instrumentality of the **Municipality of Valladolid**, a school started the first steps of implementation of the QT/TM programme with the training of teachers and staff.
- In **Germany**, The FRIENDS Project was presented by Maharishi School UK, in coordination with MF-UK, in a meeting organized by the National TM charity of Germany, with the involvement also of the German Education Ministry, to teachers and local authority as part of a programme of continuing professional development (organized by the local Teacher Training Centres). Contacts with Ministries of Education in the different German regions have been made, and the idea is to connect with the most difficult and in need schools and, following the model of Portugal, to involve teachers and local authorities as part of a programme of continuing professional development organized by the local Teacher Training Centres.
- In **Latvia, a**fter negotiations and meetings with representatives of the Education, Youth, and Sports Department of ***Riga City Council***, they approved the implementation of the QT/TM program. As further exploitation, the project has been presented by a latvian parent to a Latvian **MEP**, and he has expressed his willingness to help in finding schools interested to participate in the project (LV).
- An International Conference on Education and presenting experiences and research of the FRIENDS project, was organized in Cluj, **Romania**, entitled "Education Without Stress". The conference was

attended by 200 experts in the field of education, including school professionals, educators, **policy makers**, school principals, public and private sector, teachers, students and parents. After the conference three schools started with the initial steps of the implementation of QT/TM

The project has steered the interest in the Quiet Time / Transcendental Meditation approach also in countries not involved in the project implementation. Interest has come from schools, policy makers and organizations working with disadvantaged population from Iceland, Germany, France, Latvia, Ireland, Romania, and Sweden. Further expansion plans consider to continue including data from those schools in the FRIENDS research, with pre/post-test of teachers and students, including the data coming from those new countries in/to the FRIENDS research/evaluation, for the creation and continuus building up, after the official conclusion of the project, of an European FRIENDS DATA BASE.

3. Summary of Dissemination activities

Presentations in relevant events and conferences are done by all the partner of the FRIENDS project, including also QT/TM experts. These activities seek to raise awareness of the Quiet Time with TM programme, focusing on the benefits of Quiet Time with TM in relation to the reduction of risk factors associated with disadvantaged learners and social exclusion.

Face to face dissemination meetings include:

Face to face dissemination meetings and European Public Conferences organized in combination with Consortium meetings in order to ensure the participation and contribution of all partners (in Italy, Portugal, Belgium and UK).

The 1° face-to-face European dissemination meeting of Local Learning Communities: On 29th November 2018 in Brussels, in occasion of the final conference of the previously EU funded EUROPE project and of the 2° FRIENDS partners' transnational meeting at the Royal Library of Brussels, more than 40 stakeholders of the training and education field including many schools' representatives, educational leaders, educators, associations, institutions and Key stakeholders coming from different EU countries, also not directly involved in the FRIENDS project, such as Spain, Sweden, France, Latvia and Germany, met in Brussels to participate to the 1° FRIENDS European face-to-face meeting, with the aim of connecting at European level the different local learning communities for exchanging experiences on the implementation, dissemination and scaling up of the QT/TM approach for fostering social inclusion and exploring new possibilities of expansion, in new countries and new field, like health and sport. The meeting was held between partners and participating schools and institutions of the FRIENDS project, interested schools of other European countries, together also with partners and schools of another EU funded Erasmus+ project implementing the same approach (The EUROPE project) of which the final conference had been held in the morning. Main contacts were shared among schools and institutions already participating in the project in order to provide their direct experiences and make other stakeholders part of the different learning communities across partners countries.

On 9th May 2019, the ***1° FRIENDS free seminar 'Education for Social Inclusion'*** was held at the Lusofona University of Lisbon where several local stakeholders participated and got acquainted with the scientific evidences and impact of the Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation programme.

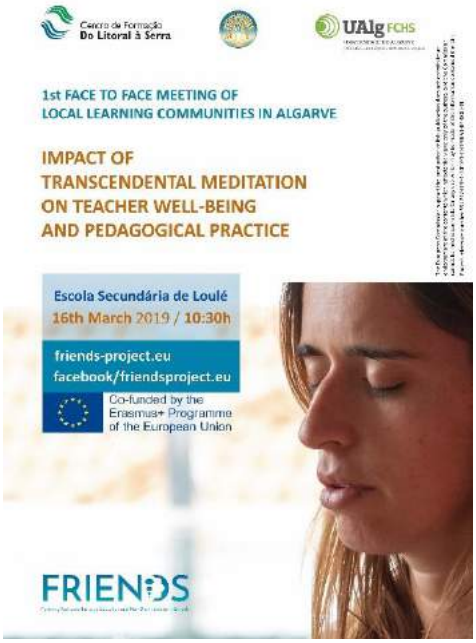
Following the 1° free seminar, **the 2nd FRIENDS face to face European dissemination meeting** was held at the same venue, involving also many local stakeholders implementing the FRIENDS project in the schools of Portugal. Several testimonies and feedback were shared among the participants and also the students had the opportunity to share their point of view and experience. The agenda for the 2° FRIENDS dissemination meeting and the 1° free seminar was prepared and shared on the FRIENDS website (available at: https://friends-project.eu/media/agenda-9th-May-Conference-rev.pdf).

Also an article for the invitation to the same event was prepared and published in the section News of the website (https://friends-project.eu/1-free-seminar-of-the-friends-project/). The news on the upcoming

dissemination meeting was shared on the same section available at https://friends-project.eu/2-face-to-face-dissemination-meeting-in-lisbon/.

In March 16th, took place at the Escola Secundária de Loulé / Centro de Formação *Do Litoral à Serra*, the **3rd Face to face FRIENDS regional meeting of local learning communities of Algarve – Portugal**.

The event, organized under **the FRIENDS** project by the Centro de Formação *Do Litoral à Serra (TTC Loule)*, Cooperativa Cultural Ciência e Tecnologia Védica Maharishi - CCCTVM and the University of the Algarve, counted on the participation **of more than thirty teachers** from several schools in the Algarve region participating in the FRIENDS project. The initiative was welcomed with great enthusiasm by the teaching community, which saw in this an excellent opportunity to deepen their knowledge about the FRIENDS project and the innovative approach *Quiet Time* based on *Transcendental Meditation*, as well as to practice the technique together. In both moments of collective practice, in everyone's opinion, a unique climate of peace was generated. Announcement on the FRIENDS face to face dissemination meeting in Algarve was published on the website available at the following link: https://montescalearning.com/MFTP/mod/folder/view.php?id=224



The panel of speakers of this first meeting had the following speakers and presentations:

- *The Current challenges of pedagogical practice,* Dr. Manuel Nora, director of Centro de Formação do Litoral à Serra;
- *The impact of TM on teachers well-being in pedagogical practice,* PhD Luís Sérgio Vieira, Universidade do Algarve (UALG);
- *A new paradigm in Education,* Dr. Teresa Palaré, Escola Dr. Alberto Iria;
- *The implementation of FRIENDS project in Portugal,* Dr. Paulo Côrte-Real (national implementation manager)
- *Transforming Education,* Dr. Eduardo Espírito Santo, Cooperativa Cultural Ciência e Tecnologia Védica Maharishi (CCCTVM);

- *The action in Portugal of* Cooperativa Cultural Ciência e Tecnologia Védica Maharishi (CCCTVM), Dr. António Pedro Gonçalves;
- *ASPnet Schools and a culture of Peace,* Dr. Fátima Claudino, responsible for the Education Area at the Portuguese National Commission for UNESCO.

The participating teachers, who are waiting with great expectation for the next event, expressed in the end words like: Excellent, Unique, Peace, Serenity, Very good

On 26th September 2019, in the morning session it was organized the ***2° Free conference 'Education for social inclusion'*** in UK, involving local stakeholders and school members implementing the project. The related article is also available both in English and in Italian version on the CESIE's website at https://cesie.org/en/school/friends-quite-time-seminar-uk/.

In the beginning of September, announcement on the FRIENDS face to face dissemination meeting in UK was published on the website available at the following link: https://friends-project.eu/next-face-to-face-dissemination-meeting-in-uk/, together with the news on *the* ***Free conference 'Social Inclusion through education'*** held on 26th September 2019 (https://friends-project.eu/free-conference-social-inclusion-through-education-uk/).

In the afternoon session, **the 4° face to face European dissemination meeting of the local learning communities** has been held at the Maharishi Peace Palace, sharing experiences and feedback from the implementation of the FRIENDS project. The article elaborated has been published both in English and in Italian on the CESIE's website https://cesie.org/en/school/friends-trascendental-meditation-dissemination/. For the registration of the participants to the Free conference of UK, it was created a registration form through eventbrite.it (the link created is the following one: https://www.eventbrite.it/e/friends-project-free-conference-social-inclusion-through-education-registration-71348155253).

FRIENDS project Final European Conference in Brussels and networking event.

On the 4th of December 2019, the **FRIENDS project Final Conference:** *"Promoting Inclusive Education through Wellbeing" An innovative approach to promote social inclusion, equality and non-discrimination in the learning environment - The Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation programme in Education,* took place in Brussels at the Royal Library, with the active participations of about 130 people, including principals, teachers, students, parents, policy makers (at local and National level: DGE of MoE Portugal,

Municipalities), European Commission representative, University professors (from Portugal, Italy, The Netherlands, Luxemburg, UK and India), Ngo, business sector, non - formal education representatives and TM providers, and all those interested in the Quiet Time with Transcendental Meditation approach and inclusive education, from more than 15 European countries including countries outside the project, such as Iceland, Denmark, Germany, France, The Netherland, India, South Africa, Luxembourg, Romania and Sweden, followed by a networking buffet/event which was an occasion to exchange contacts and experiences between the different stakeholders and moderators of local learning communities participating. Announcement of the conference was published on the FRIENDS website, available at the following link: https://friends-project.eu/final-conference-registration/. The video of the conference is available on the FRIENDS Youtube page https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE06ndM2ISrhdDhPwkKODnA

Partners in the FRIENDS project contributed to **conferences** and **networking activities**, including **scientific presentation** at **universities**, (also on other sectors such as health and business) in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, and the UK. These conferences have seen the participation of Policy makers at local, regional and National level, education responsible, researchers, principals and teachers and the presentation of the project has been always well received. Moreover implementing partners during the project lifetime held several project presentations mostly in national and local schools where FRIENDS project was implemented, after receiving positive feedback by local authorities and head teachers of primary and secondary schools.

The FRIENDS project has been presented in the partner countries and beyond during the:

- On 19th May 2018, P12 Associazione Meditazione Trascendentale Maharishi in partnership with the school Capirola, Fondazione Dominato Leonense and the municipality of Leno created a local event called 'Via lo stress, via il bullismo. Arriva il momento di quiete in classe' (No more stress and bullying: the QT/TM programme is implemented in the classrooms), where the FRIENDS project was presented to the municiaplity, school community /students, teachers, etc.) and to other relevant stakeholders.
- Presentation of aims and outcomes of the FRIENDS project during the meeting of the Strategic Partnership KA2 held at INDIRE in Lucca, P1 Fondazione Villa Montesca (100 people participating).
- Meeting with the Upper Tiber Valley Educating Community in order to give visibility to the project FRIENDS within the school sector, P1 Fondazione Villa Montesca (almost 70 people participating)

- On 25th March 2019, the first face-to-face local dissemination meeting was organized in Portugal, in the city of Algarve were almost 40 people participated.
- **17th National Meeting** of **UNESCO Network Schools** in **Porto** by invitation of the Portuguese UNESCO coordinator. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal was attending the open session and the Meeting was organized by the National Commission of UNESCO in collaboration with the Luso International College of Porto (CLIP) and was sponsored by the Porto City Council.
- Presentation on **International Day of Human Rights**, December 10th, **Porto**
- **3rd Regional Meeting** of the UNESCO Network of Associated Schools in **Faro**
- ***4th Intercalary Regional Meeting*** of UNESCO Network Associated Schools- **International Day of Tolerance**, at Secondary School, **Loulé**
- **International Day of Human Rights,** December 10th, **Porto** – Participation on ***the 5th Intercalary Regional Meeting*** of UNESCO Network Associated Schools, at Escola do Cerco, Porto, by invitation of the Portuguese UNESCO coordinator of UNESCO network schools.
- **Regional Meeting of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network - "*Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*".** Participation on **the International Day of Tolerance**, Funchal**, Madeira Island**. Presentation of FRIENDS project and its developments in the Island. Participants from 10 schools from Madeira Island, Azores Island and from the Continent.
- **Regional Meeting of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network** - "***Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".*** Agrupamento de Escolas Dr. Mário Sacramento, **Aveiro –** Participation on the **International Day of Human Rights** with participants from 21 schools.
- **21st of February - International Mother Tongue Day**, participation (and presentation of the FRIENDS Project and its developments) in the Regional Meeting of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) at Centro Cultural **Casapiano, in Lisbon**, in representation of Escola Dr. Alberto Iria - UNESCO school.
- **18th National Meeting of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network "2030 Agenda – Ensuring Quality Lifelong Learning for All"**, in Almada, with the participation in the working group session "**Education for Peace – Peace is built everyday**". The Meeting welcomed also participants from Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde and Guinea Equatorial which shared their educational experiences and projects
- **V Congresso Ibero-Americano e Luso-Brasileiro de Psicologia da Saúde / I Congresso Promoção da Saúde e do Bem-Estar no Ensino Superior -** On 11 May, Paulo Côrte-Real and Teresa Palaré made a presentation titled *An innovative approach to health promotion in schools* in the "V Ibero-American and Luso-Brazilian Congress of Health Psychology" and "I Congress Promotion of Health and Welfare in Higher Education", held at the **University of the Algarve**, from 9 to 11 May 2019.

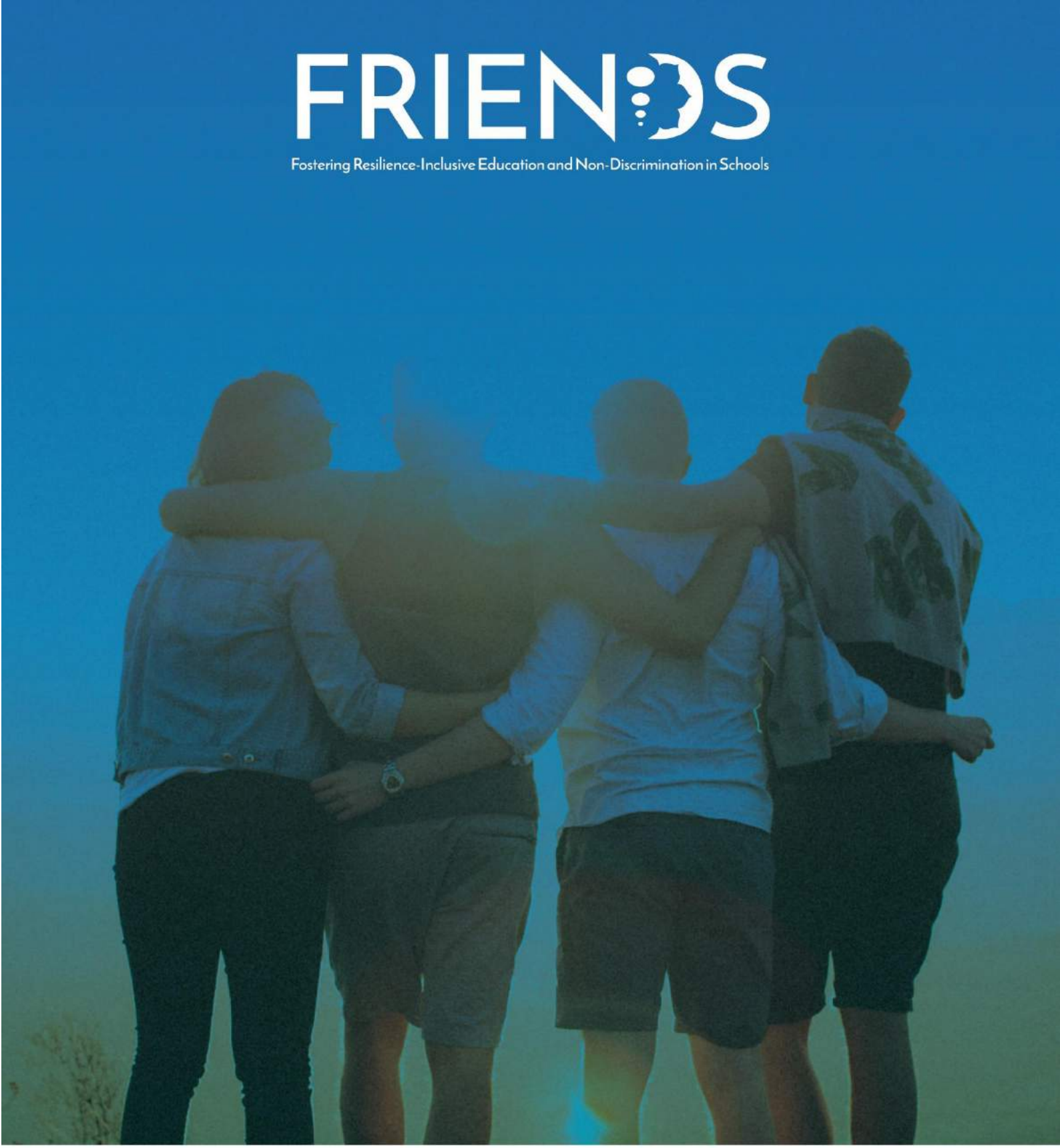
- **Birdwatching Festival, Sagres (PT) –** On Friday 10th October a TM teacher together with 2 researchers of the University of Algarve and 2 teachers of the A. Iria school, coordinators of the project in Algarve, presented the FRIENDS project.
- Presentation of the project to the **youth council of Citta' di Sacile (IT),** representatives of students elected by students, a perfect replica of the actual council of the City. The presentation of the FRIENDS project to the youth council was very well received: the youth council liked it very much and decided to disseminate and expand the FRIENDS project in their schools.
- Particularly interesting in **Italy** has been the expansion in the **prison sector**, inspired by the FRIENDS project, through a new private grant additional funds. The director of the prison has been very supportive and two conferences have been organized to present the project: the first one within the implementing prison for long sentences, with the participation of the director, about 50 inmates, guards and a representative of the province - prison sector;
- The second conference was organised at the **prison** for short sentences, in the same area, with the participation of the director and inmates, guards and school teachers of the area to expand the project to the other nearby prison for short sentences. Both conferences were followed by a press release resulting in many articles in the press.(*see table IV.1*)
- **(Italian Trainers Association**) – Presentation of the FRIENDS project at a conference for "Associazione Italiana Formatori" (AIF) in **Bolzano (IT),** which is a national association with focus on training for business. The group had various employees of HR departments. One of the objectives of the conference was the expansion of the FRIENDS project in a new sector introducing QT/TM into trainings for businesses, and also the possibility to apply for new additional funding and support for the expansion.
- Presentation of the project in a conference in **Ragusa (IT)**, for **Health professionals**, organized by AMTM with the objective to look for national and regional funding for the expansion of the FRIENDS project approach in the Health sector.
- Presentation of the project by Maharishi School UK (P8) in a meeting organized by the National TM charity of **Germany**, with the involvement also of the German Education Ministry, to teachers and local authority in Northern Germany as part of a programme of continuing professional development. The presentations were well received and have resulted in expressions of interest about becoming involved in the FRIENDS Project.
- The FRIENDS project inspired and was presented at an **International Conference on Education** organized in **Cluj (RO)**, entitled**: *Education Without Stress***.

The Conference, co-organized by the Romanian TM Association, together with the Transylvania College Foundation (linked to one of the most prestigious private schools of the country),the David Lynch Foundation, the Skilled Little Hands Association, (actively working with schools with workshops for classes) and the Leaders Foundation, was attended by 200 experts in the field of education, including school professionals, educators, policy makers, school principals, public and private sector, teachers, students and parents.

- After the final conference of the FRIENDS project in Brussels, presentation of the FRIENDS project during a 1 day Conference on **HEALTH and Well Being: Addressing today's Global Paradox,** organized, at the Department of Sport Science, Leopold-Franzens of the University of Innsbruck, **Austria**, together with the University College of Teacher Education Tyrol & Leopold-Franzens University and with 31 researchers present from Austrian Universities. The presentation took place via skype connection during the session 2 of the conference, with the title: **FRIENDS – Inclusive Education through Well-being: An EU-funded project to promote social inclusion in the learning environment.**
- Presentation to the AMU, Aix-Marseille Université, **France,** through a zoom connection to the Chargée de mission pôle pilote chez ESPE - Aix-Marseille Université,. Interest was expressed about the participation to new possible EU calls.
- Participation to the **Final event of together we stand**: The FRIENDS partners participated at the final event of the Together we stand project of the EU/social funds, for youth/migrants with which the FRIENDS project collaborated. New possibilities of mobility of students and young people came up involving institutions and schools participating in the FRIENDS project, such as Portugal schools and House of Colour in Belgium, and Sweden, and new possible EU social funds grant applications.

FRIENDS

Fostering Resilience-Inclusive Education and Non-Discrimination in Schools



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