

Belonging for All Backgrounds

Development of a Digital Hub for
Greek Roma Educational Inclusion

May 7, 2025

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Development of a Digital Hub for Greek Roma Educational Inclusion

An Interactive Qualifying Project submitted to the faculty of
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ABSTRACT

The goal of this project was to create an online platform to support the educational integration of Greek Roma students at risk of school dropout. To investigate the phenomenon of school dropout, the team conducted interviews and surveys with educators working in Roma communities. Findings identified several key challenges including a gap in understanding Roma students' experiences, negative stereotypes, internalized racism, and socioeconomic barriers. These issues alienate at-risk Greek Roma students from academic spaces, causing them to deprioritize education. To address dropout, educators emphasized the need for inclusive classrooms but noted that additional support, training, tools, and resources were necessary. In response, the team created an online platform featuring educator advice, community center resources, infographics on inclusive teaching, and a resource archive. To ensure accessibility, maintainability, and usability, user-testing was conducted with both sponsor staff and the general public. Future recommendations include expanding the platform's content, developing classroom-ready materials, and building a teacher network.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Barriers such as racial discrimination and stereotypes often prevent minority populations from actively attending and participating in school (Owens & Massey, 2011).

The Roma are Europe's largest ethnic minority, with an estimated 10–12 million individuals across the continent and 300,000 in Greece (*Greece - Roma Women's Access to Justice*, 2016). Of the EU countries, Greece demonstrates significant gaps in Roma educational inclusion. For Greek Romani students in the Central Macedonian region, challenges such as discrimination, cultural tensions, and socioeconomic disadvantage obstruct their right to education (*Jaf Anglal*, n.d.).

AMKE REVMA, a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Thessaloniki, Greece, promotes school participation and social integration among Roma youth.

According to REVMA staff and Greek educator testimonies, teachers lack training and accessible resources that would increase their awareness of anti-Roma sentiment and encourage Roma students' engagement.

REVMA staff have compiled resources about inclusive teaching practices. However, these resources are unavailable to a wide audience. The goal of this project was to create an online hub to host informational and educational resources for public school educators to support Roma educational integration, participation, and engagement.

BACKGROUND

Overall, the "Greek Roma community faces persistent inequalities in all aspects of life, including access to education of Roma children, the right to housing and to other basic social goods, let alone the excessive exercise of police violence" (*Roma Women's Access to Justice*, n.d.).

The Roma's emphasis on family or community-driven knowledge can clash with the structure of formal education, creating a conflicting academic identity for Roma students. Research suggests that the majority of Roma appreciate education, but do not believe it to be compulsory (Zahova, 2016). Without the accountability of a compulsory education, both the Roma and non-Roma communities share lower academic expectations for Roma students (Obrovská, 2023). The differences between Romani and non-Romani identity also contribute to the insufficient educational integration of Roma people. For instance, a study on highly educated Roma found that they often view themselves separately from their cultural roots, aligning more with Greek identity than Roma due to being more academically involved.

Discrimination in schools widens the Romani education gap. A 2021 study found that about 20% of Romani students and guardians felt discriminated against when in contact with a school authority because of being Romani (*Roma in 10 European Countries*, 2022). Discrimination

leads to segregation of Roma students in classrooms. Systemic discrimination and segregation limit Roma academic progress and reinforce societal exclusion.

From an early age, Roma school attendance is low: in a major study of Roma education within the EU, only 20% of Roma aged 6-15 attended preschool in Greece, compared to 90% of non-Roma (*Education*, 2014). The same study found that 43% of school-aged Roma children do not attend school, compared to 3% of non-Roma. This disparity in school attendance between Greek Roma and non-Roma children is the largest gap reported across all EU countries. The lack of educational involvement and advancement is highlighted in a 2021 study, which found that only 16% of Roma aged 20-24 in Greece completed upper secondary education, compared to 95% of non-Roma (Figure 5).

A 2014 study highlights one of the clearest indicators of the educational gap for Greek Roma: 52% of Romani's aged 16 and above reported illiteracy compared to 1% of non-Romani's within the same age group (*Education*, 2014).

The educational gap is further emphasized by the frequency of Roma student dropout. The average number of years spent in school is 5.66 years for Roma girls and

6.71 years for Roma boys. The gap widens when examining non-Roma girls who average 10.7 years in school and non-Roma boys who average 10.95 years (Selander and Walter, 2020). School dropout can be linked to several factors including financial hardship and early marriages within the Roma community (*Education*, 2014; Zarokosta, 2025). An ongoing research study in countries including Greece indicates that 93.6% of Roma women were married between the ages of 12 –18, with 46.3% marrying as young as 12–15 (Zarokosta, 2025). While young girls exit institutional schooling to transition to stay-at-home motherhood, young boys may also drop out to provide for their families.

The divide between Roma and non-Roma students in the classroom is partly rooted in negative representation of Roma. Negative representation reinforces stereotypes and prevents Roma students from believing they can succeed in school (Confidential Interview, 2025).

METHODOLOGY

The goal of this project was to create an online hub to host informational and educational resources for public school educators to support Roma educational integration, participation, and engagement.

To address the project goal, the following key objectives were identified:

1. Document teachers' needs, experiences and practices teaching Roma students, along with their familiarity with and use of technology.
2. Develop an online learning platform to serve as an educational hub for primary and high school educators working with Romani students.
3. Develop a system to ensure long-term usability and maintainability of the developed online platform.

Interviews and surveys were conducted with REVMA staff members, Dendropotamos High School teachers, Pavlos Melas community center staff, and selected University of Aristotle faculty. Questions included experiences with Roma education, classroom technology use, and online resources to promote student success.

RESULTS

Survey responses were obtained from 18 teachers and 1 educational consultant. Most respondents taught in Roma communities. 17 of the 18 teachers reported being at least somewhat familiar with Romani history and everyday life, though 50% admit to never or rarely including Romani figures in their lessons. Teachers were more likely to discuss Roma history in the classroom if they had more familiarity with the subject and Roma experiences.

Interviews were conducted with educators (8) and AMKE REVMA staff (2). Teachers explained the main challenges they face include a lack of resources, professional and

Discrimination in schools widens the Romani education gap. A 2021 study found that about 20% of Romani students and guardians felt discriminated against when in contact with a school authority because of being Romani (*Roma in 10 European Countries*, 2022). Discrimination leads to segregation of Roma students in classrooms. Systemic discrimination and segregation limit Roma academic progress and reinforce societal exclusion.

Online platforms are an effective tool in advancing societal understanding of marginalized communities. Roma communities can benefit from positive representation through the use of digital resources. In the education sector, online platforms can motivate teachers' understanding of their students' challenges and encourage cultural responsiveness. One organization that is promoting resources for educators is AMKE REVMA. REVMA works to strengthen Roma communities and address stereotypes that prevent socioeconomic mobility.

To develop the online-learning platform, a mockup of the educational hub was developed and underwent an iterative process of receiving REVMA feedback and revising. This mockup guided the development of a functional prototype of the educational hub.

To ensure platform usability and maintainability, testing of usability for public users and maintainability for REVMA staff was conducted. Users were asked to complete a series of detailed tasks while explaining their thought process to ensure ease-of-use. Participants then completed the System Usability Scale (SUS) survey (Appendix D). User feedback guided alterations to platform elements as needed.

The platform's ability to be updated by the sponsor organization was assessed. The testing protocol as outlined in the above paragraph was used with a different set of tasks including adding new curriculum materials, updating information, and changing design elements. This data was used to inform the development of a user guide to support future changes to the hub.

government support, and tools to promote school participation and attendance among Roma students. Teachers also stated cultural differences and internalized anti-Roma sentiment as contributors to low parental involvement in education, poor school attendance, and school dropout rates. Interviewees noted how a lack of positive Roma representation in the media, academic spaces, and classroom lessons makes it difficult to motivate Roma students to engage in class and pursue their education. Early marriage is also a notable contributor to student dropout rates.

The Greek Roma are not officially recognized as a minority. As a result, there are no specific benefits or protections for most Roma communities, and existing policies tend to generalize their needs rather than address each communities' unique challenges.

Educators and REVMA staff advised that inclusive teaching practices should promote the perception of Roma students as integral community members, rather than as an independent group. By empowering educators to implement these suggestions and designing a platform to provide accessible resources, teachers will be better equipped to support Roma inclusion in school.

The interviews and surveys informed the design of the educational hub. The hub was created by identifying standard elements of existing educational platforms to determine the list of desired features for the platform. WordPress was decided as the optimal development platform through a trade study of popular web development platforms and discussions with REVMA staff (Appendix F). A digital mockup of the hub design was then created using the site [Figma](#) (Appendix K), ensuring all REVMA and teacher needs would be met when creating the final platform. Finally, a fully functioning prototype of the hub was developed.

User testing revealed the platforms' usability by the general public and maintainability by REVMA staff on mobile and desktop devices. When testing the hub's interface with new users, the following trends were identified:

Desktop Version:

- Unclear navigation to resource submission
- Difficulty identifying social media links
- Missing flag icons for language toggle

Mobile Version:

- Unclear interactions with resource filtering buttons
- Error when loading testimonial and resource posts

RECOMMENDATIONS

Short-Term Recommendations

1. REVMA should promote the launch of the digital hub to build visibility.

REVMA's priority should be to inform teachers of the hub's launch to begin building an active user base. Additionally, REVMA should promote the project on their Facebook page that is regularly used to highlight the organization's events.

- Incorrect language of infographics

To address these issues, the platform was updated to include unambiguous icons, highlights on selected resource filters, and additional pointers to the submission page in the main navigation bar.

To test maintainability, REVMA staff were given a user manual which included detailed instructions and videos about how to update different parts of the platform. They were then given a set of tasks (Appendix H) to see if they could successfully maintain each component of the backend system. Two key members of REVMA were chosen because they are responsible for maintaining the platform.

Through this testing, the following common challenges and points of confusion with the maintenance system were identified:

- Lack of interest in referencing the user manual
- Difficulty posting content in multiple languages
- Confusion about viewing updates
- Accidental hiding of key menu options
- Unclear organization of instructions

As the tasks progressed, staff members improved significantly in their ability to navigate the system. They tended to perform better at tasks when they watched the video tutorials, underscoring their importance for the hub's long-term sustainability.

After testing, the user manual was updated to address any issues. To prevent confusion, additional images and videos were added throughout the instructions and the document was reorganized to include clear headings and a table of contents. Instructions for posting in multiple languages were also rewritten for clarity. Additionally, the importance of watching the video tutorials was further highlighted throughout the instructions.

2. REVMA should add additional staff and teacher statements to the digital hub.

Populating the existing section of the platform for advice and networking will encourage more teachers to engage with the digital hub.

Mid-Term Recommendations

3. REVMA should populate the digital hub with additional resources.

REVMA should prioritize sharing interactive materials in the resource archives of the digital hub. Materials should be available for varying academic and language proficiencies while still covering the required curriculum. These lessons could be compiled by contacting teachers, searching online, and developing custom materials.

4. REVMA should host educator training sessions to promote and explain the digital hub.

Teachers should be taught how to search for and submit material to the resource archive. These gatherings can further promote the hub as a resource that helps educators foster an inclusive school culture.

5. REVMA should organize routine networking meetings for teachers of Roma students at risk of school dropout.

Casual gatherings of teachers with a REVMA moderator would encourage teachers to learn about best practices

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for teaching in multicultural classrooms. These gatherings should be kept short and held during convenient times for teachers to encourage wide participation.

Long-Term Recommendations

6. REVMA should incorporate a moderated educator networking system into the digital hub.

Teachers should be able to communicate to discuss challenges, share experiences, and give advice. Additionally, new teachers could connect with mentors who are experienced in teaching in a multicultural setting. The system may be designed in the style of an online forum, social media group, or private messaging.

7. REVMA should evaluate the efficacy of the digital hub six months to one year after launch

To best serve the target audience, teachers' long-term feedback on the digital hub should be collected. If significant changes to the platform structure is needed, additional technical expertise may be required from an outside source to edit sections of frontend code.

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The digital hub developed as part of this project can be viewed at the following link: <https://revma-hub.vercel.app/el>

AUTHORS

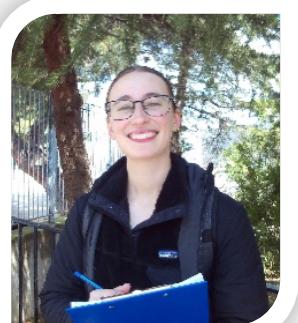


MELICA ZEKAVAT

Melica was the Editor-in-Chief. She managed all revisions and formatting of the paper and was the primary author of “Introduction,” “Education,” “AMKE REVMA,” and “Document Educators’ Perspectives.” She also co-authored “Methods” and “Develop Platform.” Additionally, she designed the figures in the paper, led 4 interviews, created infographics for the platform including “Inclusive Teaching Practices” and “Roma Communities,” and researched and designed the culturally responsive checklist.

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Anna was the Project Manager. In this role she facilitated meetings and ensured that deadlines were met. She was the primary author of “Recommendations,” “Develop an Online Learning Platform,” and “Digital Educational Resources.” She also co-authored “Roma History” and “Develop the Platform.” Additionally, she created infographics for the platform including an interactive “Timeline of Policies Affecting Greek Roma” and “Greek Romani Language.”



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Prakriti was the Research Liaison. She co-authored “Roma History” and “Methodology” and contributed to revisions across the report. In this role, she researched, designed, and implemented the interview and survey questions, data-gathering methodology, user-testing protocol, and results analysis. Prakriti participated in 6 interviews as notetaker or facilitator. For the platform, she researched additional resources and developed a pamphlet on the causes and preventions of early school dropout.

GRACE ROBINSON

Grace was the Lead Web Developer. With this role, she developed the REVMA Education Hub platform. She designed, built, and implemented a unique and visibly appealing front end interface and integrated a back end with a headless WordPress CMS for content management. She created features to populate the platform with statements, testimonials, and resources. Additionally, Grace authored a user manual for AMKE REVMA staff to ensure members can update and maintain the platform independently. For user testing, she wrote the user testing protocol and the results section for user testing. She also created an infographic comparing Roma and Non-Roma education statistics.



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Completing compulsory education is among the strongest drivers of upward socioeconomic mobility (*Quality Education: Why It Matters*, 2020). Yet, systemic barriers such as racial discrimination and stereotypes often prevent minority populations from actively attending and participating in school (Owens & Massey, 2011).

The Roma are Europe's largest ethnic minority, with an estimated 10–12 million individuals across the continent and 300,000 in Greece (*Greece - Roma Women's Access to Justice*, 2016). Of the EU countries, Greece demonstrates significant gaps in Roma educational inclusion, marked by the lowest Roma student attendance rates in both preschool and primary education (Education, 2014). For Greek Romani students in the Central Macedonian region, challenges such as discrimination, cultural tensions, and socioeconomic disadvantage obstruct their right to education (*Jaf Anglal*, n.d.).

AMKE REVMA, a non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Thessaloniki, Greece, promotes school participation and social integration among Roma youth. Some of REVMA's efforts include:

1. Contributing to the research initiative [ACADE-ME](#) to address "anti-Roma prejudice in the education sector and promote social inclusion of Roma students."
2. Creating and sharing stories that positively represent the Roma community (Figure 1) ("AMKE REVMA," 2025).
3. Guiding educators through workshops that train inclusive and supportive teaching practices ("AMKE REVMA," 2025).
4. Implementing the project Jaf Anglal! (translation: Let's move forward!) to promote the right to education for Roma communities of Central Macedonia.



Figure 1. Image of REVMA member and student dressed as butterflies in front of a poster that translates to "Ask every day... every day more."

According to REVMA staff and Greek educator testimonies, teachers lack training and resources that would increase their awareness of anti-Roma sentiment and encourage Roma student engagement. Teachers also report having difficulty finding online supplemental teaching materials for Roma students and resources that develop their understanding of the unique challenges their students may face (Confidential Interview, 2025).

REVMA staff have compiled resources about inclusive teaching practices. However, these resources are internally hosted on a Google Drive shared only with REVMA staff and therefore unavailable to a wider audience. To best support teacher development, the information collected by REVMA must be synthesized and presented in a manner that is accessible, digestible, and engaging. The goal of this project is to create an online hub to host informational and educational resources for public school educators to support Roma educational integration, participation, and engagement.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces a brief history of Roma peoples, highlighting the causes and impact of their contemporary social exclusion. A summary of the Greek education system is included as well as a description of the educational barriers that Roma students face to explain the problem of early school dropout amongst Roma students. The background also outlines the benefits of using online platforms to increase societal awareness of marginalized communities.

2.2 ROMA HISTORY

Early History

The rich and diverse history of the Roma people lends a critical perspective to their modern social structure, assets, and challenges. Migrating out of India in the 11th century, the Roma were first documented in Greece in the year 1100. While initially welcomed, in the 14th century they became a target of extreme xenophobia across Europe. (*Migrations of the Romani People*, 2012; Achim,

1998). Citing their nomadic lifestyle and “job-stealing” behaviors, Europeans labeled the Roma as witches, baby-thieves, and unproductive leeches (Sutre, 2023).

Throughout the last 10 centuries, European Roma have been relegated to the outskirts of society facing discrimination, violence, and economic hardship (Sutre, 2023; Matras, n.d; Halva, 2022). They were targeted by the Nazi Regime during WWII resulting in an estimated 250,000-500,000 Roma killed in work and death camps. With much of Roma history, the [Romani Holocaust](#), or ‘Porajmos’, has remained overlooked by the general population reinforcing their historical erasure (Sutre, 2023; Putnam, 2024). These injustices form the basis for the pervasive inequalities faced by modern Roma.

Despite these challenges, the Roma now constitute the largest ethnic minority in Europe. While all Roma communities are unique, the most notable commonality is the Romani language with many dialects that vary geographically (Matras, n.d). It is important to regard Romani people not as a unified culture, but as dynamic, hybrid individuals who may identify with aspects of Roma and European culture.

Roma in Modern Society

Since the late 20th century, the EU has promoted numerous initiatives championing the rights of Roma ([Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion](#), 2020). Additionally, there are a growing number of independent activists and non-government organizations (NGOs) working to increase social participation and economic outcomes of the Roma across Europe (Matras, n.d.; [About Us: World Roma Congress](#), 2023). These initiatives address critical disparities including political participation, racially targeted violence, and economic insecurity ([World Roma Congress - Manifesto](#), 2023).

Despite these efforts, current policies are not sufficiently supporting Roma communities. Romani sociologist Angéla Kóczé, along with others, argues that policy frameworks focus on promoting regional economic growth rather than dealing with systemic inequalities. Lack of policy effectiveness further prohibits upward mobility (Kóczé, 2024). In Greece, the majority of Roma remain trapped in a cycle of severe intergenerational poverty. According to a 2021 report by the [European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#), 96% of Greek Roma surveyed were at risk of poverty as compared with just 18% of the general population ([Roma in 10 European Countries](#), 2022). Additionally, housing insecurity significantly contributes to Roma disenfranchisement by reinforcing cycles of poverty and limiting access to essential social services. Data suggests that 11% of Greek Roma do not have housing and 45% live in segregated housing (Alexandridis, 2001; Halva 2022; [The Civil](#)

[Monitoring Report on Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy](#), 2019).

Challenges that modern Roma face call for the participation of a growing number of Romani community activists to create a new generation of empowered Roma (Figure 2).

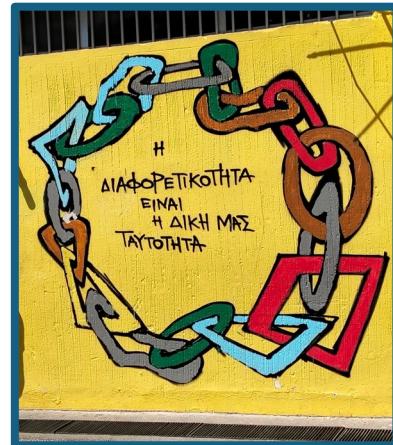


Figure 2. Street Art translating to “DIVERSITY IS OUR IDENTITY” (REVMA, 2025).

Roma in Greek Society

Roma people make up approximately 2-3% of Greece's population. Despite living in the country for centuries, efforts to recognize Greek Roma as documented citizens began as late as the 1950s. It was not until a 1979 decree that the majority of ‘stateless’ Roma were officially granted the full benefits of Greek citizenship (Alexandridis, 2001).

Coming from Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, and Romania, Greek Roma typically exist in different categorizations of Roma people. According to the Council of Europe, these groups include:

- (a) domestic nomadic Roma (albeit an extremely limited number);
- (b) very long-term settled distinct Roma communities, very poor and excluded;
- (c) very long-term settled distinct Roma communities, a number of which are almost entirely unproblematic;
- (e) recent Roma migrants from new EU Member States (mainly Bulgarian and Romanian Roma);
- (f) completely integrated/assimilated Roma who may never even identify themselves as Romani;
- (g) Roma Muslims in Thrace [protected as minorities under the Treaty of Lausanne between Greece and Turkey]” ([Roma Women’s Access to Justice](#), n.d.)

Contrary to most European countries, Greek Roma, apart from Roma Muslims in Thrace, are not recognized as a minority by the state. Greek Roma therefore have no

distinct legal protections such as the right to be educated in one's first language (Alexandridis, 2001).

Most Roma live in isolation from the larger community, enabling their social exclusion. Overall, the "Greek Roma community faces persistent inequalities in all aspects of life, including access to education of Roma children, the right to housing and to other basic social goods, let alone the excessive exercise of police violence" (*Roma Women's Access to Justice*, n.d.).

2.3 EDUCATION

Overview of Greek Education

The importance of education is embedded in Greek history as a pillar for society to produce capable soldiers and civilians (*Education - Athens, Ancient Greece, Pedagogy / Britannica*, 2025). As a result, the culture places a significant emphasis on being well-rounded and educated. In fact, a reported 95.4% of girls and 95.1% of boys completed their compulsory education in 2022 (*Greece*, 2025), indicating that it is an expected practice to attend and participate in school. The Greek Education system provides accessible and quality education to all. Public schools are funded by the state budget and the Ministry of Education and supervised by the Hellenic Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs (*Funding in Education*, 2024).

Primary and secondary school teachers are generally required to hold a bachelor's degree from a higher education institution. For specialized subjects –including foreign language, music, art, and physical education– the teacher must have a degree in the specific field (*Initial Education for Teachers Working in Early Childhood and School Education*, 2025). While the state provides free education at all levels, there is a small private sector where less than 10% of Greek students enroll (Antoninis and Tsakloglou, 2001).

The typical educational career begins with a foundation of compulsory education for children ages 4-15 to complete primary school. For their final, non-compulsory years of education, students choose between attending Technical Vocational School (TEE), or Unified Upper Secondary School (Eniaio Lykeio). TEE is for students interested in learning trade practice while Eniaio Lykeio is for students who plan to attend university (*Organisation of the Education System and of Its Structure*, 2025). To achieve higher education, students must first graduate secondary school by passing written exams on all the subjects they have studied. They, then qualify for university by completing the Panhellenic entrance exams ("Greek University Entrance Exams", 2023). Overall, the Greek education system is thorough, supports a wide range of career paths, and remains generally accessible.

Role of Education for Greek Roma

The Roma's emphasis on family or community-driven knowledge can clash with the structure of formal education, creating a conflicting academic identity for Roma students. Research suggests that the majority of Roma appreciate education, but do not believe it to be compulsory (Zahova, 2016). The disconnect between Roma families and traditional Greek schooling methods contributes to the limited educational support that they receive (Obrovská, 2023). Without the accountability of a compulsory education, both the Roma and non-Roma communities share lower academic expectations for Roma students (Obrovská, 2023).

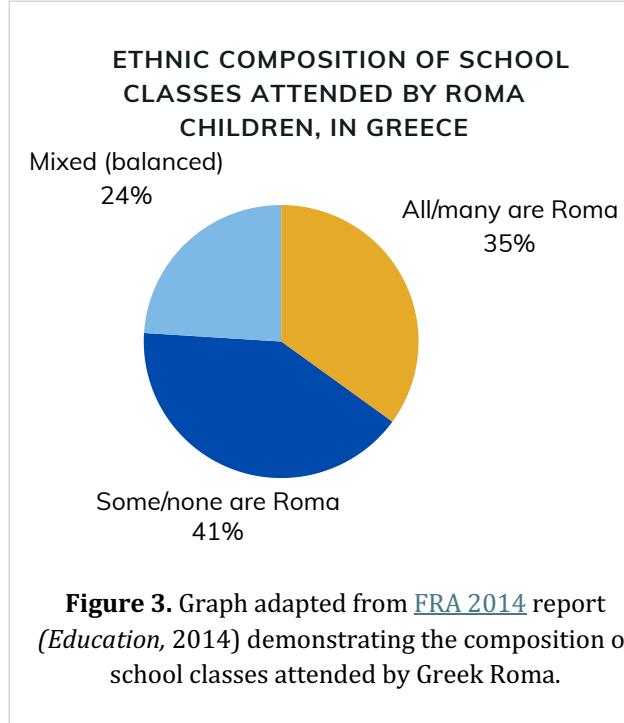
The differences between Romani and non-Romani cultural identity contribute to the insufficient educational integration of Roma people. Minority communities often resist following the systems of the surrounding dominant community to preserve their own individuality. Since educational success is typically viewed as a non-Roma priority, there is a deeper societal barrier to educational integration of Roma (Gkofa, 2017). A study of highly educated Roma found that they often view themselves separately from their cultural roots, aligning more with Greek identity than Roma. In fact, some disapproved of the term "Roma," preferring to be called "Greek Tsigganoi" to avoid a label that would promote a "minoritized mindset" (Gkofa, 2017). Educated Roma may feel inclined to seek assimilation of their identity into the dominant culture, distancing themselves from their Roma peers.

Beyond self-alienation, many Roma pursuing education experience rejection from within their Romani communities. A study interviewing educated Roma highlights how the students' academic accomplishments were perceived as a "non-Roma pursuit" and thus resulted in Roma exclusion (Gkofa, 2017). In another study, educated Roma students reported that they felt a lack of understanding from the rest of the Roma community, causing them to lose touch with their connections and pursue stronger relationships with non-Roma peers (Gkofa, 2017). Ultimately, for Romani students, the pursuit of education comes with a potential cost of ostracism.

Segregation

Discrimination in school is a primary contributor to the Romani education gap. A 2021 study confirmed that about 20% of Romani students and guardians felt discriminated against when in contact with a school authority because of being Romani (*Roma in 10 European Countries*, 2022). Discrimination can lead to segregation. A 2014 study of Roma education in EU countries found that in Greece, 35% of Roma children in school attended a class where all or many of children were Roma, 41% attended a class where

close to none were Roma, and only 24% attended a mixed class (*Education*, 2014) (Figure 3).



One Romani individual recounted how Roma students are often placed in the back of the class or separated from their other peers, resulting in a lower quality education (*Commission on Security & Cooperation in Europe*, 2019). Systemic discrimination and segregation limit Roma academic progress and reinforce societal exclusion, contributing to the educational gap between Roma and non-Roma in Greece.

Roma Education in Greece Data Review

Greek-Romani students exhibit notably lower levels of educational involvement compared to their non-Roma peers. From an early age, Roma school attendance is low: in a major study of Roma education within the EU, only 20% of Roma aged 6-15 attended preschool in Greece, compared to 90% of non-Roma (*Education*, 2014). The same study found that 43% of school-aged Roma children do not attend school, compared to 3% of non-Roma. This disparity in school attendance between Greek Roma and non-Roma children is the largest gap reported across all EU countries. The lack of educational involvement and advancement is highlighted in a 2021 study, which reveals that only 16% of Roma aged 20-24 in Greece completed upper secondary education, compared to 95% of non-Roma (Figure 4)

Comparative Analysis: Roma Discrimination in Education

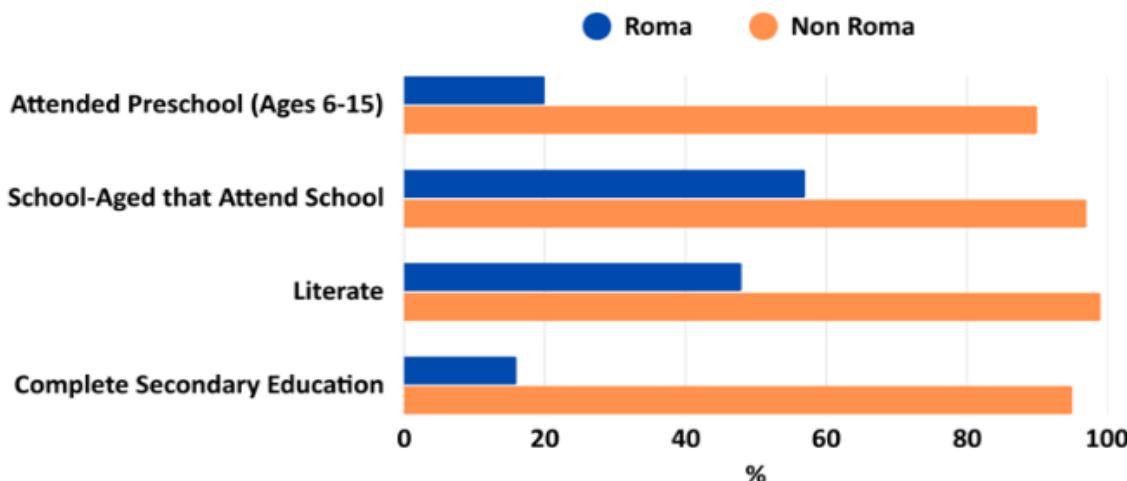


Figure 4. Comparative Analysis of Grecian Roma VS Non-Roma in Education (*Roma in 10 European Countries*, 2022; *Education*, 2014).

A 2014 study highlights one of the clearest indicators of the educational gap for Greek Roma: 52% of Romani's aged 16 and above reported illiteracy compared to 1% of non-Romani's within the same age group (*Education*, 2014). The high illiteracy rate among Roma adults underscores the long-term consequences of educational exclusion, limiting their access to employment opportunities and full participation in society.

The educational gap is further emphasized by the frequency of Roma student dropout. The average number of years spent in school is 5.66 years for Roma girls and 6.71 years for Roma boys. The gap widens when examining non-Roma girls who average 10.7 years in school and non-Roma boys who average 10.95 years (Selander and Walter, 2020). School dropout can be linked to several factors including financial hardship and early marriages within the Roma community (*Education*, 2014; Zarokosta, 2025). An ongoing research study in countries including Greece indicates that 93.6% of Roma women were married between the ages of 12 –18, with 46.3% marrying as young as 12–15 (Zarokosta, 2025). While young girls exit institutional schooling to transition to stay-at-home motherhood, young boys may also drop out to provide for their families.

Lack of Roma Representation

Academic role models play a crucial role for supporting educational success in disadvantaged groups, offering inspiration and student engagement. A 2021 study on negative Romani representation in society, mentions that “undoubtedly, one-sided social coverage of Roma perpetuates inequalities and builds higher walls among Greek Roma and Greek non-Roma” (Kalpazidou, Ladopoulos, Papakonstantinou, 2021). The divide between Roma and non-Roma students in the classroom is partly rooted in negative representation of Roma. Negative representation reinforces stereotypes and prevents Roma students from believing they can succeed in school (Confidential Interview, 2025). A 2018 study about the effect of positive influence on Roma activity in education notes that when students had educated relatives or were surrounded by Roma community members in an educational institution, their academic encouragement and motivation amplified (Gkofa, 2022). The same 2021 study notes that storytelling and interactive conversation about positive Roma role-models, in Romani language, significantly engaged and inspired Roma students (Figure 5, Figure 6). Ultimately, however, positive Romani representation in education remains scarce due to the exclusion of Roma communities in academic spaces.



Figure 5. REVMA engaging elementary school students with a story of positive representation (REVMA, 2025).



Figure 6. Students in front of the cover for REVMA's storybook (REVMA, 2025).

2.4 DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Online Platforms for Marginalized Communities

Online platforms are an effective tool in advancing societal understanding of marginalized communities. A study in the Social Innovations Journal examined how digital access plays a crucial role in sharing knowledge and encouraging social participation. The researchers found that “digital tools can enhance civic engagement and accountability, allowing citizens to voice concerns, monitor government initiatives, and participate in decision-making processes” (Aryal, 2024). These widely distributed resources can inform people about marginalized communities by allowing representatives to share their experiences, thereby discouraging harmful stereotypes.

Roma communities can particularly benefit from positive representation through digital resources. According to Liégeois and the [Council of Europe](#), “the absence of Roma even today from history books, especially school

textbooks, has made it impossible to inculcate knowledge leading to understanding and respect in a context of interpersonal relations" (Liégeois & Council of Europe, 2011).

The site [RomaReact](#) is a notable platform that bridges the gap between Roma and non-Roma communities. Young Roma use the platform to share their experiences and culture to contest anti-gypsyism. The Council of Europe notes that "the primary function of the platform is to map, through the reports and testimonies of the young people, the perspectives, views and something of the collective experience of Roma in Europe" (*Youth Reacting and Participating Online*, n.d.). Digital platforms like RomaReact encourage the civic participation of Roma communities and promote public support of marginalized populations.

In the education sector, online platforms can motivate teachers' understanding of their students' challenges and encourage cultural responsiveness. The global organization [Roma Education Fund](#) uses their website to publish research, news, and educational resources tailored for Roma communities. They advertise workshops for students and teachers on subjects including leadership and technical literacy. The site also encourages teachers' active participation through their Educators Network. Digital tools like these are continuing to grow as a powerful source of information to encourage cultural awareness of Roma communities.

2.5 AMKE REVMA

One organization that is promoting resources for educators is AMKE REVMA. REVMA, which stands for

"Roma Educational Vocational and Sustainable Assistance" is a non-government and non-profit organization that promotes Roma education in Greece. Founded in 2021 under the leadership of four Roma women and supported by ongoing volunteer involvement, REVMA works to strengthen Roma communities and address stereotypes that prevent socioeconomic mobility. REVMA collaborates with key partners –including the EU, SolidarityNow (Figure 7), UNICEF Greece, and Alternative Innovative Development (AID)– to conduct research on Roma student dropout, promote social and educational integration, and organize discussions and workshops. While REVMA has collected educational resources through these efforts, they currently lack an online space to effectively distribute them.



Figure 7. REVMA and Pavlos Melas community center volunteers meeting with SolidarityNow (REVMA, 2025).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The goal of this project was to create an online hub to host informational and educational resources for public school educators to support Roma educational integration, participation, and engagement.

To address the project goal, the following key objectives were identified:

1. Document teachers' needs, experiences and practices teaching Roma students, along with their familiarity with and use of technology.
2. Develop an online learning platform to serve as an educational hub for primary and high school educators working with Romani students.
3. Develop a system to ensure long-term usability and maintainability of the developed online platform.

3.1 DOCUMENT EDUCATOR EXPERIENCES

To meet this objective, surveys and interviews were conducted with REVMA staff members, Dendropotamos High School teachers, Pavlos Melas community center staff, and selected [University of Aristotle](#) faculty. Interviews were recorded for future reference, and those conducted in Greek were later translated to English. Participants were asked to consent to having their responses recorded (Appendix E).

Teachers were surveyed about their experiences with Roma education and classroom technology use. Topics included student enrollment data, dropout rates, success rates, technology use, and languages used in the classroom (Appendix A).

The interviews featured semi-structured questions (Appendix B & C) about barriers to Roma educational integration and resources that promote Roma student success. Additionally, the questions were designed to collect information about teachers' use of online educational tools to deliver classroom materials.

3.2 DEVELOP AN ONLINE-LEARNING PLATFORM

To address this objective, the following steps were taken:

Research Existing Educational Platforms

Online educational platforms were reviewed, including those for Roma communities, marginalized groups, and general education to determine standard elements of educational platforms. The elements of successful educational platforms were then presented to REVMA staff for feedback on features and aesthetics. This feedback was used to compile a list of desired features for the platform.

Determine Optimal Development Platform

A trade study was conducted to assess some of the most popular web development platforms using metrics such as cost, ease of maintenance, and accessibility. Each platform was scored on how effectively it accomplished each metric. The highest scoring options were presented to REVMA staff for feedback. With REVMA's input, the hosting platform was selected.

Develop Educational Hub

A mockup of the educational hub was created and presented to REVMA staff for feedback. The mockup

included an outline of the pages and content to be hosted on the platform. The platform content featured resources about Roma language, history, and experiences as well as specialized curriculum materials for a variety of grades and Greek-speaking abilities. Consideration was also given to compatibility with both mobile and desktop devices to increase accessibility. Staff feedback then guided the development of a functional educational hub.

3.3 USABILITY AND MAINTAINABILITY

To meet this objective, testing of usability for platform visitors and maintainability for REVMA staff was conducted.

General users were asked to complete a series of detailed tasks while explaining their thought process to ensure ease-of-use. Tasks included searching for curriculum materials, exploring interactive elements, and navigating between different sections of the platform. Immediately following the task, participants completed the System Usability Scale (SUS) survey (Appendix D) which provided data on users' experience with the task. User feedback was used to alter platform elements as needed.

Additionally, the platform's ability to be updated by the sponsor organization was assessed. The testing protocol, as outlined for the usability assessment, was used with a different set of tasks including adding new curriculum materials, updating information, and changing design elements. This data was used to inform the development of a user guide to support future changes to the hub

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section will discuss the outcomes of the project objectives and completion of the project goal. Data from teacher surveys (Appendix A) and interviews (Appendix B & C) was analyzed to guide the process for developing the online digital platform. After the platform was developed, it was evaluated on its usability and maintainability.

4.1 DOCUMENT EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES

Teachers from a range of primary and high schools were asked to participate in interviews and to complete surveys that detailed their experience with teaching Roma students and use of technology in the classroom.

4.1.1 KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

Survey responses were obtained from 18 teachers and 1 educational consultant. Of these educators, 11 taught in Roma communities, suggesting that findings will

primarily represent experiences of teachers in predominantly Greek Roma classrooms. Results were analyzed using Qualtrics' distributions and data analysis features to identify key trends.

Teacher Experiences

The survey responses indicated that most teachers have been teaching for 20+ years overall (9 responses, ~50%), 5 teachers have been teaching at the same location for 10+ years (~25%), and 5 teachers have been teaching at that location for 0-2 years (~25%). The teachers that were surveyed mostly maintained their positions once obtaining a few years of experience, indicating that they often remain committed to their students.

The survey also demonstrated that Roma students tend to be segregated in schools or classes. 8 teachers (almost 50%) reported having classes with all Roma students and 5 (~29%) reported having classes with mostly Roma students (Figure 8).

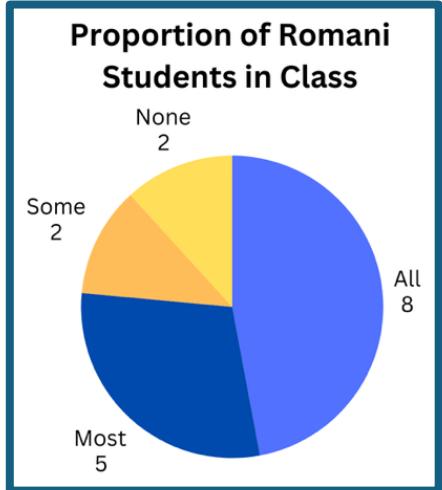


Figure 8. Pie chart demonstrating the proportion of Romani students in teachers' classrooms.

Of the respondents, 71% indicated that “none” (1) or “few” (11) of their Roma students meet the expectations required to pass their class (Figure 9).

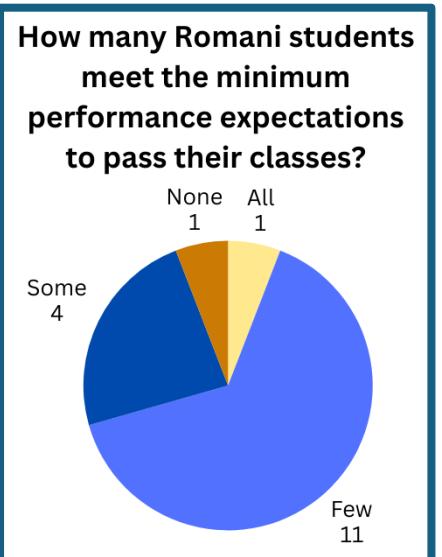


Figure 9. Chart demonstrating respondents' perception of Romani students' performance.

Supplementally, 14 of 17 teachers reported that “few” or “some” of their Roma students are meeting attendance standards (Figure 10), standing out as a critical issue that stifles Roma educational progress.

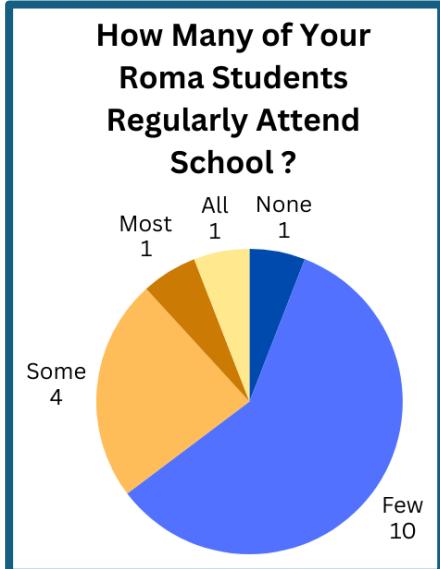


Figure 10. Chart demonstrating respondents' Roma students' school attendance.

All teachers reported somewhat or strongly agreeing with often using online lesson materials, and 16 confirmed being somewhat or strongly comfortable with digital tools. In these findings, the teachers' comfort with and use of digital tools and resources makes the platform a workable choice as a resource for teachers. Some respondents, however, identified the lack of a high-functioning device as a barrier to using digital tools in the classroom, so the platform was designed to be lightweight and functional on slower devices.

Lastly, most teachers (16) said they used at least one digital method of connecting (such as social media, email, or instant messaging) with other educators. This demonstrates that it could be useful to implement an online networking component on the website that further promotes teacher connections and communication.

While 17 of the 18 teachers responded that they were at least somewhat familiar with Romani history and everyday life, 9 (50%) report to never or rarely including Romani figures in their lessons (Table 1). Teachers were more likely to discuss Roma history in the classroom if they had more familiarity with the subject and Roma experiences; however, this gap in awareness and inclusion of Roma experience in the classroom is indicative of a lack of sufficient resources and motivation.

Technology Use

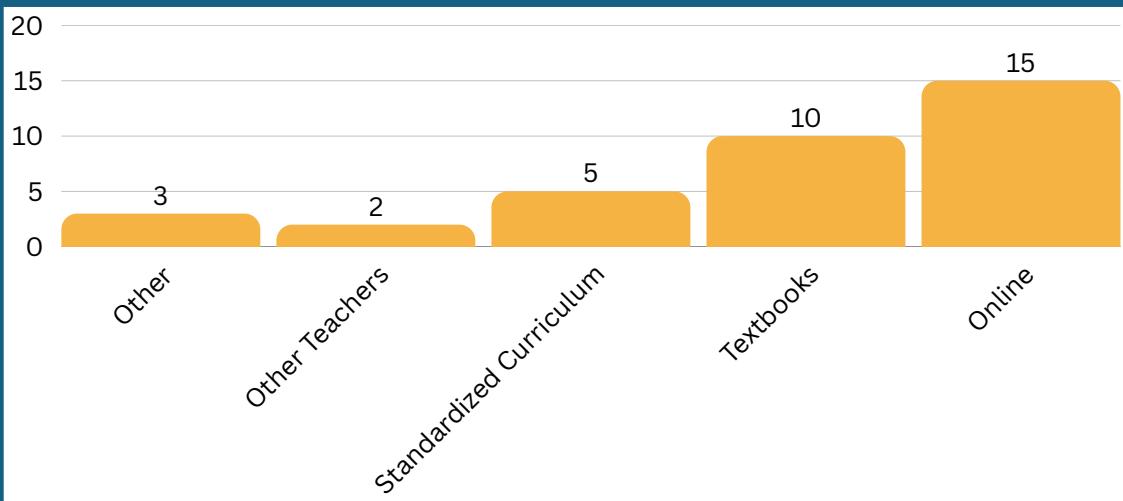
Teachers reported that they rely on technology for classroom activities and material. 64% indicated that they often or always use technology in the classroom in the form of computers and smartboards. 15 teachers reported finding supplemental lesson materials online (Figure 11).

Table 1. Frequency of Discussion vs. Familiarity with Roma Experiences,

n = 18

Classroom Discussion of Roma Experiences	Familiarity with Roma Experiences				
	Not Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Familiar	More Familiar	Very Familiar
Never	0	3	2	1	0
Rarely	1	2	0	0	0
Sometimes	0	1	2	0	0
Often	0	0	0	1	4
Always	0	0	0	0	1

Where do teachers find lesson materials?

**Figure 11.** Bar chart showing distribution of where teachers reported finding lesson material, n=16.

4.1.2 KEY INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Interviews were conducted with educators (8) and AMKE REVMA staff (2). Interviews were recorded via Apple Recordings, transcribed using OpenAI's [Whisper](#) library, and translated with interpreter assistance. Transcripts were then analyzed using [Dedoose](#), a qualitative analysis platform. The analysis was completed by creating a [codebook](#) containing the most common themes discussed during each interview. The transcripts were reviewed to highlight segments that contained a specific theme (Appendix J).

Main Challenges

Interview responses outlined significant setbacks and potential solutions for improving Roma student success

and engagement. Teachers explained the main challenges they face include a lack of resources, professional and government support, and tools to promote school participation and attendance among Roma students. Teachers also stated cultural differences and internalized anti-Roma sentiment as contributors to low parental involvement in education, poor school attendance, and school dropout rates.

“These children, they have inside them an internalized racism. They think they are inferior”
-Principal, 2025

Teachers also discussed how a lack of positive Roma representation in the media, academic spaces, and classroom lessons makes it difficult to motivate Roma students to engage in class and pursue their education. Ultimately, negative associations with their identities hinder Roma personal and academic growth.

Early marriage is also a notable contributor to student dropout rates. Many teachers mentioned that there is often pressure for young Roma girls to marry.

“For girls, they think they should get married. For boys, they think that education will not provide them with the necessary supplies for life”
-Principal, 2025

As a result of these early marriages, young women remain at home to pursue motherhood while the young men seek ways to earn a living to support their families.

Teachers also reported that it is not easy to find classroom resources that promote inclusive teaching practices and support their students. Interviews expressed that a major challenge they face is the difficulty in locating specific classroom materials and activities, largely due to a lack of organized resources and limited search features or functionality.

Lastly, interviewees discussed insufficient support from the government because Greek Roma are not officially recognized as a minority. As a result, there are no specific benefits or protections for most Roma communities, and existing policies tend to generalize their needs rather than address each communities' unique challenges.

Conclusions

For educators to be responsive to the challenges faced by their Roma students, it is key that inclusive and uplifting teaching methods are practiced.

“I think that even if the teacher have their stereotypes, have their biases, if they incorporate these tools in their classroom ... their teaching becomes more easy, it will help reduce all these biases”
-Teacher, 2025

Interviewees noted how having successful Romani role models can boost Roma students' confidence and promote acceptance of their identity.

Additionally, teachers outlined the success of different teaching practices, such as storytelling, to engage students and encourage participation. To build trust with the students, teachers also reported accepting the use of Romani language in the classroom, learning Roma history, and having one-on-one conversations with students about their experiences.

It was further advised that inclusive teaching practices should promote the perception of Roma students as integral community members, rather than as an independent group. By empowering educators to implement these suggestions and designing a platform to provide accessible resources, teachers will be more equipped to support Roma inclusion in school.

“When they say Roma students, the first day I walked in, I thought that I would be confronted with people who are completely different. But they are exactly the same as the rest of the kids.

And they have the same needs.”

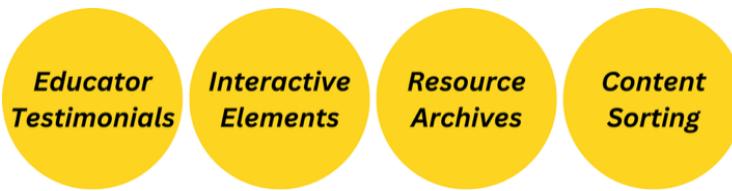
- Principal, 2025

4.2 DEVELOP THE PLATFORM

The second objective was to develop an online learning platform to serve as an educational hub for primary and high school teachers working with Romani students. Interviews, surveys, and conversations with REVMA staff determined that the best terminology for this platform would be a digital hub for inclusive teaching. To achieve this goal, the following steps were taken:

Identify Standard Elements of Educational Platforms

Platforms such as [826 Digital](#) and [National Education Association](#) were used to determine potentially desirable features for the website. After discussion of different features with REVMA staff, the following list was determined:



Determine Optimal Development Platform

To determine the optimal website hosting platform, a decision matrix was created to assess the most popular web development sites against weighted metrics demonstrated in the selection criteria column (Appendix F). After scoring each platform and considering the cost of hosting, the top-scoring platforms were discussed with REVMA for feedback. [WordPress](#) was the most compatible with REVMA's existing digital infrastructure and was subsequently chosen as the optimal hosting platform.

Create Hub Design and Layout

An understanding of both the current landscape of Roma education in Thessaloniki and technology use in Greek classrooms informed the platform design. Teachers recommended the platform include diverse educational materials, inclusive resources, and digital accessibility. REVMA's needs consisted of standardization of the platform with the REVMA website and hosting inclusive resources.

To address these needs, the following design elements were created:

- Interactive website elements
- Mobile and desktop accessibility
- Ease of navigation
- Language accessibility: Greek and English
- Resource Filtering/Searching
- Cultural Responsiveness (Appendix F)
- Similar branding as the REVMA website

Using the [Figma](#) digital tool, a mockup of the website pages was created to outline and visualize the platform. This design was presented to the REVMA team for feedback and adjusted to create the final platform (Appendix K). The digital hub consists of four primary pages:

- *Home page*: showcases the project's mission and statements from educators and REVMA staff about how the platform can be used.
- *Supporting Teaching*: implements the organizations' support of teachers; especially those who are new to teaching Roma students, and features a space for educators to post testimonials and stories about their experiences. Additionally, an interactive map of local community centers with Roma branches was included to promote this support network.
- *Learn More*: addresses one of the hub's primary goals, to deepen educators' cultural responsiveness to their students. This page hosts infographics about topics such as inclusive teaching, Greek Roma legal

policies, and an introduction to the Greek Romani language.

- *Resource Archive*: responds to educators' need for a centralized database of materials to foster inclusive classroom environments. The archive includes research reports, classroom activities, and links to other projects collected by REVMA and local educators. The page also includes a space for users to submit resources that staff can curate and post to expand the database.

After solidifying the design, a functional prototype of the hub was developed. The front end of the website, which contains the layout and aesthetic elements, was custom built using the [Next.js](#) programming language. The back end of the website, which hosts the website content, was created as a content management system (CMS) using the WordPress software as determined in step two.

4.3 USER TESTING AND MAINTENANCE

Usability and maintainability testing was conducted on the general public and REVMA staff respectively. These results informed updates to the platform and revisions to the maintenance user guide.

Usability Testing

To test usability, participants were given a set of tasks (Appendix I) to complete to evaluate their ability to navigate the platform. Members of the public were selected through convenience sampling. Participants with no prior experience using the platform were chosen to test the site's navigability for first-time users. Tests were divided between the desktop and mobile versions at random.

Through observations from the tests, the following common issues with the hub were identified:

Desktop Version:

- Unclear navigation to resource submission
- Difficulty identifying social media links
- Missing flag icons for language toggle

Mobile Version:

- Unclear interactions with resource filtering buttons
- Error when loading testimonial and resource posts
- Incorrect language of infographics

To address these issues, the platform was updated to include clear icons, highlights on selected resource filters, and additional pointers to the submission page in the main navigation bar.

In general, public feedback described the hub as aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate (Figure 12).

"I Think This System is Simple and Easy to Use"

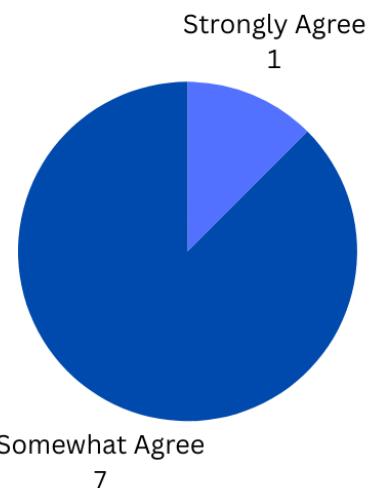


Figure 12. User testing survey results across all participants.

Maintainability Testing

To test maintainability, REVMA staff were given a user manual which included detailed instructions and videos about how to update different parts of the platform. They were then given a set of tasks (Appendix H) to see if they could successfully maintain each component of the backend system. Two key members of REVMA were chosen because they are responsible for maintaining the platform.

Through this testing, the following common challenges and points of confusion with the maintenance system were identified:

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this project, the following recommendations are made for REVMA's future development of both the platform and general programs. Short-term recommendations can be implemented immediately, mid-term can be addressed within the next six months, and long-term are future goals with no specific time frame.

Short-Term Recommendations

1. REVMA should promote the launch of the digital hub to build visibility.

REVMA's first priority should be to inform teachers of the hub's launch to begin building an active user base. The organization can leverage their existing teacher networks through school contacts and mailing lists to direct users to the hub and provide information about

- Lack of interest in referencing the user manual
- Difficulty posting content in multiple languages
- Confusion about viewing updates
- Accidental hiding of key menu options
- Unclear organization of instructions

As the tasks progressed, staff members improved significantly in their ability to navigate the system. They tended to perform better at tasks when they watched the video tutorials, underscoring their importance for the hub's long-term sustainability.

After testing, the user manual was updated to address any issues. To prevent confusion, additional images and videos were added throughout the instructions and the document was reorganized to include clear headings and a table of contents. Instructions for posting in multiple languages were also rewritten for clarity. Additionally, the importance of watching the video tutorials was further emphasized throughout the instructions.

4.4 SUMMARY

Overall, the following conclusions were made:

- Racism and socioeconomic disadvantage create setbacks that obstruct Roma right to education.
- Teachers tend to use the internet to find and make classroom materials.
- Greek Roma students often have insufficient attendance and poor school performance.
- Teachers typically want to support students, but they need accessible and inclusive classroom resources.
- Teachers expect the platform to include information on Greek Roma experiences, language, communities, and history as well as inclusive teaching practices.
- The hub is usable by the public and maintainable by REVMA.

its purpose. Additionally, REVMA should promote the project on their Facebook page that is regularly used to highlight the organization's events.

2. REVMA should add additional staff and teacher statements to the digital hub.

Populating the existing section of the platform for advice and networking will encourage more teachers to engage with the digital hub. This can be accomplished by reaching out to REVMA's existing educator contacts and soliciting statements.

Mid-Term Recommendations

3. REVMA should populate the digital hub with additional resources.

Interviews revealed that primary teachers often encourage active school participation by implementing interactive lessons. Therefore, REVMA should prioritize sharing interactive materials in the resource archives of the digital hub. Based on feedback from educators, materials should be available for varying academic and language proficiencies while still covering the required curriculum. These lessons could be compiled by contacting teachers, searching online, and developing custom materials.

4. REVMA should host educator training sessions to promote and explain the digital hub.

These sessions could be hosted in-person or virtually and should include a demonstration of the features available on the digital hub. Teachers should be taught how to search for and submit material to the resource archive. These gatherings can further promote the hub as a resource that helps educators foster an inclusive school culture.

5. REVMA should organize routine networking meetings for teachers of Roma students at risk of school dropout.

Interview data indicated that teachers value community guidance but were at times misguided on where to search for advice. Casual gatherings of teachers with a REVMA moderator would encourage teachers to learn about best practices for teaching in multicultural classrooms. These gatherings should be kept short and held during convenient times for teachers to encourage wide participation.

Long-Term Recommendations

6. REVMA should incorporate a moderated educator networking system into the digital hub.

Interviews indicated that educators who were new to schools with Roma students sought guidance from experienced teachers. While the digital hub has a place for teachers to post advice, this should be expanded to a more comprehensive networking system. Teachers should be able to communicate to discuss challenges, share experiences, and give advice. Additionally, new teachers could connect with mentors who are experienced in teaching in a multicultural setting. The system may be designed from scratch in the style of an online forum or could utilize existing platforms such as Slack or Facebook. This project may require substantial technical additions to the platform in both the front end and back end as well as research into best practices for moderating the network.

7. REVMA should evaluate the efficacy of the digital hub six months to one year after launch

To best serve the target audience, teachers' long-term feedback on the digital hub should be collected. This data can be obtained through surveys or informal discussions with educators and should be used to make any necessary changes to the platform content. If significant changes to the platform structure is needed, additional technical expertise may be required from an outside source to edit sections of frontend code.

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APPENDIX A: SURVEY QUESTIONS

The research team will use the following questions for surveys with educators at Dendropotamos High School, the Pavlos Menas Roma community center, and the University of Aristotle to compile standardized data on the teacher viewpoint of Roma students in different populations and the digital landscape of Greek classrooms. A disclaimer (Appendix E) emphasizing privacy and consent rights was read prior to the survey. The survey was administered on Qualtrics (online) or in-person through paper copies.

Demographics

Collecting general information about teaching experience.

- What is your age?
- What grade(s) do you currently teach?
 - Pre-primary school, 1st, 2nd, etc., 12th
- How long have you been teaching?
- How long have you been teaching at your current position?

Roma in Education

Collecting information about the Romani students in the classroom: academic performance, attendance, and representation in the curriculum.

- How many Romani students are in your class?
 - Likert Scale: None, Few, Some, Most, All, N/A
- How many Romani students meet the minimum performance expectations to pass their classes?
 - Likert Scale: None, Few, Some, Most, All, N/A
- How many Romani students exceed the performance expectations to pass their classes?
 - Likert Scale: None, Few, Some, Most, All, N/A
- How many Romani students are meeting attendance standards?
 - Likert Scale: None, Few, Some, Most, All, N/A
- How familiar are you with Roma history and culture?
 - Likert Scale: Not Familiar, Somewhat Familiar, Familiar, Moderately Familiar Very Familiar
- How often do you teach Roma history or feature Romani figures in lessons?
 - Likert Scale: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always, N/A
- What languages are your classroom lessons taught in?
 - Checklist: Greek, Romani, English, Other: Fill in the Blank, N/A

Technology/Website

Collecting information about how technology is integrated into your teaching and learning about the resources you use for teaching.

- How often do you and your students use technology (desktop, smartphone, smart board, etc.) in the classroom for lessons?
 - Likert Scale: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always, N/A
- What types of technology are used in your classroom?
 - Checklist: computers (desktops or laptops), phones, tablets, none, other (please specify), N/A
- Where do you find lesson materials?
 - Checklist: Other teachers, online, standardized curriculum, textbooks, other (please specify), N/A
- I often use online lesson materials.
 - Likert Scale: Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree, N/A
- I am comfortable with digital tools, ex. Google Classroom.
 - Likert Scale: Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree
- What prevents you from using digital tools?

- o Checklist: Digital tools are too complicated, Digital tools are not useful, I do not have internet access. I do not have an adequate device, I am not prevented from using digital tools, Other: Fill in the Blank.
- How do you connect with other educators?
 - o Checklist: Social media, in person at work, email, instant messaging, community events, I do not connect with other educators, other (please specify)

APPENDIX B: SPONSOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The research team will use the following questions for interviews with staff of the sponsoring organization, AMKE REVMA to understand the sponsor perspective of the problems present in the Roma education sector. The consent form (Appendix E) was read to ensure an understanding of privacy and consent rights.

Warm-Up

- Introductions
- What is your role in REVMA? How did you get involved?
- What education or experience do you hold relevant to the Roma Educational Hub Project?

REVMA and Education

- What characterizes the Roma educational experience in the target schools?
- From your experience, what are some of the primary barriers to Romani students' education?
- What are some barriers to teachers' understanding of Roma students, parents, and culture?
- Are there any resources/accommodations that help Roma students succeed in school?
- Are there any other resources on Roma education that teachers should be aware of? Any other successful projects?

Technology/Website

- Are there any examples of educational websites, features, or tools that you have seen success with? If so, what makes them stand out? Are there any others that you would like to test?
- What opportunities would you like to see on this platform? (i.e. fundraising, teacher meet-and-greets, volunteering, blogging, news feed)
- What information would you like to see highlighted on the platform? (teacher training, Roma history, modern issues, etc.)
- How often do you use technology and for what purposes? How would you rate your digital literacy?
- Do you think you would be able to make changes and updates to the platform if necessary? If not, what solutions are you willing to consider?

Bonus Questions if Time Permits

- What types of educational outreach events does REVMA host? What are the goals of these events?

APPENDIX C: EDUCATOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The research team will use the following questions for interviews with educators at Dendropotamos High School, the Pavlos Menas Roma community center, and the University of Aristotle to document personal experiences and nuanced reflections of those teaching and interacting with Roma students. The consent form in Appendix E was read and acknowledged prior to each interview.

Warm-Up

- What grade(s) and subject(s) do you teach?
- How long have you been teaching? Why did you choose this profession?
- What proportion of the students in your class are Roma?

Roma in Education

- What are your perceptions of Roma students and the Roma community?
- If you were to give advice to a new teacher who was working with Roma students for the first time, what would you tell them?
 - Did you receive any training in these skills while earning your teaching degree? If not, how did you learn them?
- What barriers exist for your Roma students both within and outside the classroom that may prevent them from a successful educational experience?
 - Are there any common misconceptions or stereotypes about Roma that you see in an educational setting? Are there any misconceptions that you yourself have corrected or challenged in the course of teaching?
 - Is there anything that you think educators should do to help students facing these challenges?
- Are there any resources or accommodations that have helped assist Roma students in your class?
- Are there any aspects of Romani culture, history, or general representation that you think is key to highlight in the classroom? How would you integrate this information into your lessons?

Technology/Website

- How do you develop lesson plans and materials?
- Do you get outside lesson materials and activities that are used in your classroom? If so, from where?
- Are there any examples of educational websites, features, or tools that you use consistently? If so, what makes them stand out?
- What challenges do you encounter when searching for or creating educational materials?

APPENDIX D: SUCCESS TESTING QUESTIONS

The following System Usability Scale was used to assess users' experience with the platform. These questions measure from 1 to 5 where 1 corresponds to 'strongly disagree' and 5 to 'strongly agree.'

- I like to use this system frequently.
- I find this system to be more complicated than it should be.
- I think the system is simple and easy to use.
- I need technical support to use this system.
- I find the system functioning smoothly and is well-integrated.
- I think there are a lot of irregularities in the system.
- I think most people can learn this system quickly.
- I find this system to be time-consuming.
- I feel confident while using this system.
- I think there are a lot of things to learn before I can start using this system.

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM

The following is the consent form participants of the study were required to acknowledge to contribute to the study.

Informed Consent Agreement for Participation in a Research Study

Investigators: Anna Kelley, Prakriti Pragya, Grace Robinson, Melica Zekavat

Contact Information: gr-roma-gr25@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Roma Education Digital Hub

Sponsor: AMKE REVMA

Introduction

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, however, you must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of your participation. This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding your participation.

Purpose of the study:

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the experiences and challenges that educators encounter when teaching Romani students. This data will inform the development of a digital platform that hosts educational materials about the Roma community.

Procedures to be followed:

This interview should last approximately 45 minutes. You will be asked a series of questions relating to technology, education, and Roma students.

Risks to study participants:

This is a minimal risk study, which means the harms or discomforts that you may experience are not greater than you would ordinarily encounter in daily life. However, there may be some topics that you may not feel comfortable discussing. You may choose not to answer any question for any reason.

Benefits to research participants and others:

Participation in this study may benefit the academic experiences of Roma students by finding the most effective ways to inform educators about inclusive teaching practices.

Record keeping and confidentiality:

This interview will be audio recorded. If you do not wish to be audio recorded, you will still be able to participate. The researcher will just take hand-notes. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor or its designee and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

Compensation or treatment in the event of injury:

This study involves minimal risk of injury or harm. As such, there is no compensation or medical treatment available in the event of injury. You do not give up any of your legal rights by signing this statement.

For more information about this research or about the rights of research participants, or in case of research-related injury, contact:

Anna Kelley, Prakriti Pragya, Grace Robinson, Melica Zekavat, Email: gr-roma-gr25@wpi.edu

Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831- 6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu

Gabriel Johnson, Tel. 508-831-4989, Email: gjohnson@wpi.edu

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will not result in any penalty to you or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits. The project investigators retain the right to cancel or postpone the experimental procedures at any time they see fit.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

Date: _____

Study Participant Signature

Study Participant Name (Please print)

APPENDIX F: PLATFORM HOSTING DECISION MATRIX

The following decision matrix was developed to assist in selecting a software for developing and hosting the digital hub. Five software popular web design softwares were scored in metrics that were identified as important to the project including cost, ease of maintenance, and accessibility. [WordPress](#) was chosen as the development platform because of its high score and compatibility with REVMA's existing infrastructure.

			Wordpress		Django + Custom Code		Webflow		Wix		Joomla	
Selection Criteria	Weight	Multiply	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score	Score	Weighted Score
Cost (custom domain)	0.8	x	4	3.20	4	3.2	1	0.8	1	0.8	4	3.2
Ease of customization	0.6	x	4	2.40	5	3	4.5	2.7	2	1.2	4	2.4
Ease of maintainance	0.9	x	4	3.60	2	1.8	4	3.6	4	3.6	3	2.7
Aesthetic design	0.6	x	3	1.80	3.5	2.1	4	2.4	3	1.8	3.5	2.1
Performance and speed	0.4	x	3.5	1.40	4	1.6	3.5	1.4	3.5	1.4	3.5	1.4
Scalability	0.4	x	5	2.00	2	0.8	5	2	5	2	4	1.6
Mobile compatability	0.8	x	4	3.20	3.5	2.8	5	4	4	3.2	4	3.2
Integration with other tools/plugins	0.3	x	4	1.20	3	0.9	3.5	1.05	2.5	0.75	3.5	1.05
Collaboration features	0.5	x	2	1.00	5	2.5	2	1	2	1	2	1
Ease of hosting	0.7	x	5	3.50	3	2.1	4	2.8	4	2.8	4	2.8
Accessibility Features	0.8	x	4	3.20	4	3.2	4	3.2	4	3.2	4	3.2
			Total Score	26.50	24		24.95		21.75		24.65	

APPENDIX G: CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CHECKLIST

Cultural responsiveness is a pedagogy that emphasizes teaching with an awareness of the communities being served, acknowledging systemic privileges or disadvantages, and fostering inclusive education that ensures equal learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their background (Richards et al., 2005). This platform embraces a culturally responsive approach by promoting the following:

1. UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. PROMOTE STUDENT UNDERSTANDING	<input type="checkbox"/>
The platform clearly portrays how race, ethnicity, culture, language and social class interact to influence student engagement.			
3. ROMA REPRESENTATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>
The site promotes Roma representation that fosters respectful and positive attitudes towards Roma.			
5. RECOGNIZING THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF ROMA STUDENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. RESOURCES FOR ROMA EDUCATIONAL INTEGRATION	<input type="checkbox"/>
The site emphasizes the importance of understanding the diversity of Roma student experiences, acknowledging that each student faces unique challenges.			
7. EMPHASIZING EQUAL EXPECTATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. CULTURALLY ACCURATE VERIFIED CONTENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
The platform emphasizes the positive impact of having high expectations for all students regardless of background.			
9. VISUAL REPRESENTATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	10. PLATFORM ACCESSIBILITY & USABILITY	<input type="checkbox"/>
The platform features visuals to visually represent diverse perspectives, experiences, and current conditions of Roma communities in Thessaloniki.			
The site promotes learning about Roma communities by presenting information in a clear, accessible, and user-friendly format.			

APPENDIX H: AMKE REVMA MAINTENANCE TESTING TASKS

The following tasks were given to REVMA staff who participated in platform maintenance user testing. The tasks are representative of the most common actions for staff to update and sustain the hub's features.

Task	Scenario
1	Sign in to WordPress
2	Post a statement for the Homepage.
3	Add an image to the image slideshow.
4	Post a testimonial to the Supporting Teaching page.
5	Post a new resource to the Resource Archive page. Title: EPALE - Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe Description: Adult learning in Europe Link: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en Category: Teaching Platform
6	Update an image on the Supporting Teaching page.

APPENDIX I: USABILITY TESTING TASKS

The following tasks were given to participants of general usability testing. The tasks are representative of the most common actions that users will attempt to interact with the hub's key features. Participants were asked to envision themselves as a teacher in each scenario detailed below.

Task	Scenario
1	Change the language of the platform to your desired language.
2	Where can you find educational materials for teaching inclusive practices to Roma?
3	You want to know what advice other teachers have about teaching, where can you find them?
4	Find AMKE REVMA's Facebook.
5	You are interested in seeing where Roma community centers are located in Thessaloniki, where can you find it?
6	Where can you find AMKE REVMA's mission?
7	You have advice to share, where can you submit it?
8	How can you get back to the home page?
9	Navigate to the educational resources, filter to find classroom activities.
10	You have another educational resource that would be beneficial to the platform, what can you do to get the material posted on the platform.
11	You want to contact the AMKE REVMA team, how can you do that?

APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS CODEBOOK

The following list of codes was used to thematically analyze interview transcripts. Parent Codes in the leftmost column are general categories that are broken down into sub-codes in the corresponding columns to the right.

Parent Code	Sub-Code 1	Sub-Code 2
Challenges		
	Lack of Representation	
	Expectations of Early Adulthood	
	Family Challenges	
	Financial Barrier	
	Lack of Resources or Support	
	Cultural Divide	
	Language Barriers	
	School Attendance	
	Stereotypes	
	Teachers' Challenges with Students	
	Violence and Trauma	
Solutions		
	Community Engagement	
		Parental Involvement and Support
		Partnerships with Organizations
		Teacher Professional Development
	Teaching Strategies	
		Interactive Tools
		Culturally Sensitive Teaching
		Emotional Appeal
		Inclusive Classrooms
		Active Teaching and Learning
		Other Teaching Strategies
		Self-esteem
		Storytelling and Theater
		Student's Autonomous Learning
Teacher Experiences		
	Teacher Successes	
	Teachers' Perceptions of Roma Students	
Website		
	Teacher Needs	
	Tools and Resources	

APPENDIX K: VISUAL PLATFORM MOCKUP

The following images show the platform mockup used to ensure a clean, aesthetically pleasing graphic design of the digital hub.

Main Page

Resource Archive Page

Submit Resource Page

Learn More Page

Teaching Roma Page

 Amka Revma

Teaching Roma Resource Archive Information Roma Community Map Contact Us

Supporting Teachers of Roma Students

Revma is here to support educators with meaningful tools, resources, and real advice from teachers who have worked with Roma students across different communities.

Teacher Advice & Testimonials

-Teacher 1 -Teacher 2
-Teacher 3 -Teacher 4

[Load More](#)

Want to Share Your Experience?

If you're a teacher of Roma students, we'd love to hear your story or advice for others.

[Submit Your Advice or Testimonial](#)

Community Centers Supporting Roma Education

These centers offer valuable resources and support to teachers working with Roma students.



New to Teaching Roma Students?

If you're a new teacher of Roma students, or simply looking for helpful educational materials and resources to better support your class, we've got you covered.

[Resource Archive](#)

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 <https://www.revmafacebook.org>



Submit Advice/Testimonials Page

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Teaching Roma Resource Archive Information Roma Community Map Contact Us

Supporting Teachers of Roma Students

Revma is here to support educators with meaningful tools, resources, and real advice from teachers who have worked with Roma students across different communities.

Teacher Advice & Testimonials

-Teacher 2
-Teacher 4

[Clear](#) [Cancel](#) [Submit](#)

[Submit Your Advice or Testimonial](#)

New to Teaching Roma Students?

If you're a new teacher of Roma students, or simply looking for helpful educational materials and resources to better support your class, we've got you covered.

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