

DELIVERABLE nr 1

**PUBLIC
DRAFT/FINAL**

Project Contract n°: SERD-2000-00050

**Project Title:
CHILDREN IN COMMUNICATION ABOUT MIGRATION
(CHICAM)**

**Project coordinator:
Centre for the Study of Children Youth and Media,
Institute of Education, University of London.**

Partners:

- WAC Performing Arts and Media College, London.
- Fondazione Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali (CENSIS), Rome
- Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations (CEIFO), Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden.
- Department of Media Education / Media Centre, University of Ludwigsburg, Germany
- Forum Institute of Multicultural Development, Utrecht, The Netherlands
- Greek Council for Refugees, Athens, Greece.

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Global Kids, Global Media: a review of research relating to children, media and migration in Europe

Starting date: Nov 2001 Duration: 3 years

Date of issue of this report: April 2002

Project funded by the European Community under TSER

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Children, Media and Migration

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PREFACE

Children, Media and Migration is a 'State of the Art' report prepared in the early stages of a research project entitled 'Children in Communication About Migration' (CHICAM). The project is funded by the European Commission under the Fifth Framework Programme, and is co-ordinated by the Institute of Education, University of London. The project began in November 2001 and will last for three years.

This report was jointly written by six of the project partners (listed below). Part One of the report was edited by the Swedish team, based at CEIFO (the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations) at Stockholm University. Part Two was edited by the UK team, based at the Centre for the Study of Children, Youth and Media, at the Institute of Education in London. Part Three was prepared by the Italian team, based at CENSIS (Fondazione Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali) in Rome.

The CHICAM Project

CHICAM addresses three major aspects of structural change in contemporary European society: the increase in global migration, the uses of new communication technologies, and the specific needs of children. It focuses on the social and cultural worlds of refugee and migrant children in six European countries: Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The project is primarily concerned with first generation refugees or migrants, for whom the experience of relocation is relatively recent. The project aims to explore and develop the potential uses of media and communication technologies as means of empowering these children and enabling them to realise their potential.

CHICAM's main empirical focus involves studying groups of migrant/refugee children, aged between 10 and 14, who are using new communications media in order to communicate with each other across national boundaries. In each participating country, researchers are collaborating with media artists and youth/community workers who are working directly with such children. Using the internet, we are establishing a communications network to facilitate the sharing of children's media productions, and generate ongoing dialogues between them. We intend to investigate how these children represent and express their experiences of migration into the different host countries, and how their use of new media might enable their perspectives to inform the development of European educational and cultural policies. In the process, we seek to identify how particular experiences of reception, educational practice, family re-unification and community involvement may more effectively promote social inclusion and economic and cultural integration.

CHICAM is conceived as a form of 'action research'. It will generate a range of original data that will provide new insights into the experiences and perspectives of

migrant and refugee children; and it will also provide innovative, evidence-based models of educational and cultural practice involving new media of communication.

The project aims are therefore as follows:

1. To analyse how new media and communications technologies are changing social relations within migrant communities, paying particular attention to the position of children, and their relations with the family, the peer group, the community and the school.
2. To identify how these technologies can be used to promote inclusion, both social and institutional, by building bridges between migrant/refugee children and members of the host societies.
3. By enabling such children to communicate with each other across national boundaries, to identify the potential of these media as means of intercultural communication, and to investigate how this potential can be more effectively exploited by educational and cultural organisations.
4. Through the use of these technologies, to raise the voice of migrant and refugee children in decision-making at local, national and European Community level in relation to policies that directly affect their social and economic well-being.

Aims of this report

This report seeks to summarise and collate relevant previous research in two main areas: children and migration (in Part One) and children and media (in Part Two). Obviously, these are both vast areas – although, as several of the contributors here suggest, there are some significant absences in each case. We are particularly interested in the points at which these two areas overlap – and hence in research which addresses the role of the media in the lives of migrant children in particular. Here again, there appear to be some striking absences. Broadly speaking, research on children and media has largely neglected the specific experiences of migrant children; while research on children and migration has frequently neglected the role of the media.

Within these areas, researchers have employed some diverse theoretical paradigms and empirical methods. This is perhaps particularly the case in relation to media research, a field which is subject to sometimes competing claims by sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, educationalists and many others. In the case of migration studies, the differences may derive more from national policies and histories. Terms like 'ethnic minority', 'migrant' and 'refugee' mean different things in different countries – and while these differences make life difficult for researchers, they obviously present acute dilemmas for the individuals to whom these labels are applied.

Some of these differences are also apparent in Part Three of the report. Here, we have attempted to describe and analyse a range of European policy initiatives in our two main fields, and to consider the potential overlap between them. As in so many other areas of European policy-making, there is bound to be a tension here between the need for consistency and shared understanding (on the one hand) and the need to acknowledge and respect national and cultural differences (on the other).

In this report, we have not attempted to efface or iron out these differences by insisting on a single approach. On the contrary, we have asked the contributors to identify aspects and issues that they feel are specific to their national context, and to present them in their own terms. As such, therefore, this report represents a relatively early coming together of the various traditions and practices represented in the project team. It will be the work of the project itself to fill some of the gaps we have identified in this research literature; to generate innovative models of future practice; to suggest implications for new policies; and thereby to create a common ground for ongoing communication.

Further information

A dedicated project website (www.chicam.net) will be open as this report appears. The website will contain an annotated and hyperlinked list of related projects in the six partner countries (included in the Appendix to this Report). As the project progresses, it will also include digests of the project reports, as well as samples of the children's media productions.

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