



## Networking the Educational World: Across Boundaries for Community-building

Written by  
**Alexia Pissa**  
SYNTHESIS Center  
for Research and Education

# REFLECTING ON THE FIRST CYCLE OF THE NEW ABC PROJECT.

### The first year of NEW ABC is already over!

Time flies so fast when you are having fun (and working hard). The SYNTHESIS team has stayed busy this past year conducting several workshops for teachers across all levels of education within the framework of **NEW ABC**, a project **funded under the EU's Horizon 2020 programme** for the period between 2021 to 2024.

The NEW ABC project (Networking the Education World: Across Boundaries for Community-building) seeks effective ways to integrate refugee and migrant children into society through education.

The need for this project was prompted by the unprecedented influx of migrants in many EU countries, which consequently has escalated the ever-growing challenges set by the inclusion of immigrants in the host countries (European Commission, 2016).

According to the UN's *International Migration Report 2015*, approximately 244 million people were migrants, a 60 per cent increase since 1990 (2016). More specifically, as stated by UNICEF, 31 million migrants were children of which 5.4 million lived in Europe (2016).



First generation immigrant students' school performance is lower than the performance of students without an immigrant background, as they encounter language, cultural, socio-economic and cultural barriers (OECD, *Helping Immigrant students to succeed at school – and beyond*, 2015).

Given the background, NEW ABC aims to develop participatory actions that can be implemented by competent bodies for the educational integration of migrant children. Moreover, the project intends to strengthen the capacity for self-action, inclusion and visibility of all stakeholders - particularly children - in different communities.

Towards the end of 2021, SYNTHESIS conducted 3 workshops. The workshops' objectives were to introduce teachers and educators to the basic methodological approaches that constitute the NEW ABC project, as well as to help them plan and create actions which will be included in the pilot action titled

---

***“The adventures of the Little Prince in the World: the co-creation of actions to support meaningful connections with peers and the community to mitigate against trauma and build resilience”.***

---

The first methodological approach that was presented in these workshops was the “whole child approach” which entails a comprehensive perspective of children’s academic development. Dependence on traditional educational structures, systems and methodologies is no longer enough to enable students to break out of the inequality cycle. In order for a migrant child to have a successful integration, we have to keep in mind the emotional impact that negative migration experiences can cause, therefore any pilot action must take into consideration the emotional, social and cultural factors.








The second approach that was examined during the workshop is the “Participatory Action Research – Co-creation” method. This approach ensures the empowerment of the target group and stakeholders, by actively engaging them through co-creation methods in the development of practices that fit the context and respond to the identified needs of the community and its participants.

These applied methodologies prepare the stakeholders to act as inspiration for social innovation even after the project ends. Through NEW ABC’s pilot activities children and young people are included as co-creators of innovation practices. These methodologies are considered to be the most ideal for the better integration and empowerment of children in education and society.

It has been a very productive first year for the NEW ABC consortium, but this is only the beginning! NEW ABC has plenty of exciting activities in store for 2022 - There will be more workshops with teachers in Pafos and Limassol, teachers will start designing and implementing their local actions with their students. Follow NEW ABC on all of their social media to stay tuned for more updates!



-  <https://www.facebook.com/newabcEU>
-  @newabc\_eu
-  @NEWABC\_EU
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/company/newabc-eu/>
-  @newabc\_eu
-  <https://newabc.eu/>