

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

# Support for Children of Migrant Families

## *PUMO Experience in the Baltic States*

A consortium of educationalists from six EU states have collaborated to produce a series of teacher training courses enabling participants to offer much needed educational support to pupils temporarily away from their home countries. Typically such pupils need continuous help to develop their knowledge and understanding of the language and cultural background of their homelands.

The consortium developed four training modules designed to assist teachers to understand the special requirements of the migrant children and to learn the necessary skills to deliver the materials. They have adopted the name PUMO (PUpils on the MOve) to describe this project.

### **Pilot Trials in Lithuania Attract Great Interest**

In April 2014, a PUMO pilot course was held at the Revuona primary school in Lithuania. It was attended by a number of teachers from Lithuanian schools. There was particular interest shown in the range of contemporary distance education tools. A questionnaire was circulated after the course was held, which revealed that the teachers attending found the materials very useful in extending their knowledge of distance education and gave them confidence in using the tools described.

A further practical workshop was held in the same location in May. This extended the range of distance learning techniques covered and, in particular, introduced the participants to the 'Miksike' learning environment - a tool for teachers to create and use forms of distance learning based on the learner solving problems posed to them in the environment. The best tasks created during this workshop were then used in a pilot programme in September 2014.

### **PUMO Grows from Experience in Latvia**

Two events were organised in Latvia on August 28 and 29, 2014. The first of these took place in Allaži, Latvia. This focused on distance teaching of the Latvian language. It was attended by sixteen leading specialists from Riga Education and Information Centre - a research body specialising in teaching methodology. Following a presentation of the PUMO project and its findings, participants shared their experience in designing learning methods for language teaching. Further discussions centred on the adaptation of these methods for use with Skype and other distance learning communication tools.

The event on August 29 took place in Sigulda. Thirty teachers from Riga Secondary School Number 28 took part. There were extensive discussions on the findings of the PUMO project and of the teachers' other experiences in language learning and distance learning technology. An outcome of this meeting was the creation of an educational programme: "Latvian Language and Culture Learning in an E-environment". This will be available for teachers to use in conjunction with distance learning environments such as Skype.

### **Estonian and Latvian Cooperative Event in Saaremaa**

In early September, the Estonian and Latvian partners held a joint seminar on the beautiful Estonian island of Saaremaa. Thirty three teachers from Estonia and Latvia met to listen to a presentation of the training courses and to discuss how best to use the materials to help the children of migrant families. Following the group sessions they broke up into small discussion groups and, together with the consortium partners, planned how best to form communities of interest to facilitate the implementation of the lessons.

### **Other PUMO Events throughout Europe**

Valuable experience was gained in Greece following extensive work by the Ellinogermaniki Agogi School in Athens. This has been fed back to all PUMO partners. Details are available in a separate press release.

A further such event is taking place in Lviv, Ukraine in mid-September. The partners will introduce the developed courses to teachers and to the educational authorities of Lviv Oblast.

### **The PUMO Project**

PUMO is an important development, and is being implemented in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Germany and Greece. It is also planned to implement the project in countries hosting significant numbers of migrants from these states, including Brazil, where a seminar has been held.

The courses are available in English, Portuguese and Russian as well as in the languages of the consortium. They are freely available for use by teachers and educational authorities throughout Europe and beyond.

Further details can be found on the project web site ([www.pumo.info](http://www.pumo.info)) or by contacting any of the partners. Photographs of the events may also be available on request and partners are also available for interview if desired.

## About the European project

### PUMO:



PUMO is the European COMENIUS project for the development of a course for teachers to equip them to support, using e-learning, pupils who have temporarily left their school to be with their parents in other countries. It will focus on fostering their knowledge of their mother tongue and “homeland specific” subjects.

The aim of the project is to create a system to enable pupils away from their home country to maintain their progress in subject areas specific to their countries of origin, as well as to monitor their progress in other subjects, to ensure that they can re-integrate with their original cohort when they return home. As part of the system, PUMO will provide a unique teacher training programme to help teachers to support pupils who have left their classes and are living and studying in a different culture and language.

The PUMO course will equip teachers with the necessary skills, attitudes and knowledge to assist students develop their knowledge of the culture and language of their ‘home’ countries alongside the education that they are receiving abroad. This will assist the pupils to develop into active citizens both at home and abroad.

More information about PUMO is available online at [www.pumo.info](http://www.pumo.info)

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