



04.2026

NEWSLETTER #5

This month, the T4I partnership highlights different ways in which research, evidence and lived experience can strengthen inclusion work in practice. From community-based storytelling and needs assessment to toolkit development, evaluation and policy-relevant data, our partners continued to show that meaningful inclusion requires more than goodwill - it requires grounded knowledge, reflection and tools that respond to real needs. In the following stories, we present what the partners did lately, as well as the wider Portuguese context, contributed to making inclusion more visible, more evidence-based and more actionable.

HDiA - Malta and Belgium turning research into practical tools

In April, HDiA's contribution to T4I reflected two connected dimensions of research-based work. First, the consortium finalized the text of the toolkit - a practical resource designed to help youth facilitators and other professionals choose activities that match children's needs, group dynamics, and session contexts. HDiA is now developing a search engine to make these materials easier to use in everyday practice.



04.2026

NEWSLETTER #5

This research engine will help peer educators, trainers, and facilitators quickly identify the games and exercises that best respond to specific challenges and circumstances.

At the same time, HDiA also contributed to research beyond the T4I project through a mini needs assessment research prepared for a future Erasmus+ initiative on family life education. The research covered three countries - Hungary, Slovakia, and Ukraine - and involved 135 respondents, generating information on 766 people.

Its findings pointed to clear knowledge gaps, strong taboos around sexuality, contraception, and family planning, and a marked difference between the reality of early parenthood and what respondents themselves considered the ideal age for becoming mothers and fathers. This kind of work strengthens HDiA's broader approach: not only producing methods, but grounding future educational action in direct evidence from vulnerable communities.

04.2026

NEWSLETTER #5

Bagázs, Hungary - community research made visible through lived experience

In April, Bagázs brought the realities of two segregated communities into a much broader public conversation through its appearance on one of Hungary's most widely read online media platforms. The feature was especially relevant for Tools4Inclusion, as many of the people appearing in the video had actively taken part in the programme. At the same time, Bagázs's own "Nálunk, a telepen" ("Here, in our settlement") video series shows that this was not a one-off media moment, but part of a wider effort to document and share lived realities from the settlement perspective.

- including questions of education, pathways to university, limited opportunities, child protection, and structural exclusion.

In this sense they proved that, research is not only about formal studies: it is also about making grounded community knowledge visible, credible, and accessible to wider society.

Here you watch the video:





04.2026

NEWSLETTER #5

Aproximar, Portugal - turning practice into research and recommendations

In April, Aproximar's contribution to T4I continued to reflect one of its key strengths: it is not only a programme implementer, but also a strongly research- and evaluation-oriented organisation. Across its wider work, Aproximar regularly combines field experience with stakeholder interviews, focus groups, literature reviews, validation processes, and the development of practical frameworks and recommendations.

This means that, within T4I as well, inclusion is not treated as a fixed concept, but as something that must be observed, tested, adapted, and improved through real work with children, youths, and communities.

Recent examples from the past two to three years illustrate this clearly. In the M4Pris initiative, Aproximar contributed to work that produced recommendations for integrating peer mentoring in prison settings, building on research, fieldwork, interviews, and focus groups.



04.2026

NEWSLETTER #5

In DigiFusE, the organisation has been involved in developing an evidence-based guideline for digital learning environments in closed institutions, supported by stakeholder interviews and literature review.

In PICTURES, Aproximar has also contributed to the validation of professional profiles and the development of a competency framework that can be used across institutional contexts. ***This makes Aproximar a partner that does not simply deliver activities, but also helps turn experience into structured knowledge and transferable guidance.***

Portugal - where research on integration is extremely important now

A broader research perspective from Portugal also shows why inclusion remains such a relevant topic for the partnership. Portugal is in a particularly important position in today's European integration debate. It is not usually seen as one of the EU's most economically dominant countries, yet it has a very large and rapidly growing foreign resident population. According to the European Commission's January 2026 update based on Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum (AIMA) 2024 annual report published in January 2026,



04.2026

NEWSLETTER #5

Portugal had 1,543,697 foreign residents, with Brazilians making up 31.4% of that population. EU country information also shows that Portugal had more than 1.3 million third-country nationals and more than 380,000 EU citizens living in the country. This makes Portugal especially relevant as a case for understanding integration in practice. Migration creates challenges for schools, language support, housing, public administration, and access to documentation, but it also brings demographic renewal, labour force potential, transnational links, and new forms of social and cultural dynamism.

In that sense, integration policy is not only about managing pressure - it is also about ensuring that migration becomes a source of strength rather than division. That is precisely why AIMA prepared a comprehensive annual report: to provide a structured evidence base on the size, composition, and characteristics of the foreign resident population, and to support better policy and practice in the field of inclusion.

Here you can read the OIMA report:





Tools4Inclusion

The T4I initiative involves the cooperation of 3 countries and 4 organizations: Bagázs Közhasznú Egyesület (Hungary), Aproximar-Cooperativa de Solidariedade Social (Portugal), Eötvös Loránd University (Hungary), and The Foundation For Global Human Dignity (Malta).



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