**ISSA members work towards inclusion of Romani children into quality early childhood programs**

ISSA members from Czech Republic, Latvia, Slovakia and Slovenia commenced European project:

KHETAUN (TOGETHER): WITH KEY STEPS TO INCLUDE ROMANI CHILDREN INTO QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS,

implemented under Erasmus+, funded by the European Commission.

The aim of the project is based on the past experiences of partner organizations to develop a comprehensive model that includes: work with children; parents and the local community and awareness raising among educators of implicit theories, which can be an obstacle for the successful implementation of innovations. Through an exchange of good practice, experience, development of new competences and implementing new knowledge, practice and values into local environments, the partnership aims to increase the enrollment rate of Romani children in quality preschool programs.

The project is based on various research-supported results and the partner organizations’ direct findings from the field: quality early childhood education and the inclusion of children from disadvantaged groups in high-quality preschool programs is one of the key protective factors that predicts the success of children in further education and in later life.

On October 28-30, 2015 a kick-off meeting was organized by the coordinator of the project, Developmental Research Center for Pedagogical Initiatives Step by Step, Slovenia and included representatives from all partner organizations.

We are all looking forward to the making the first steps for greater inclusion of Romani children into quality early childhood programs.