

Study halls in Hungary (Tanoda)

1. Need/challenge addressed

The main challenge is to enhance the educational experience of disadvantaged and Roma students with the help of extra lessons and tutoring in the afternoon, organised by study halls (known locally as 'Tanodas'). The most important aim is to help students finish primary school, progress to secondary education and finish their secondary level education.

2. Level of intervention

The study hall intervention is intended for selected prevention aimed at groups of students at moderate levels of risk/need.

3. Intensity of the intervention

The study halls provide learning support, rich extra-curricular programmes and extra support in other areas if needed. Students spend 3-5 afternoons weekly in the 'study hall' after their normal school days. In the study hall they receive help with their homework, class work and develop their learning skills and sense of community. Generally, the study halls provide a range of complex services for their students, with learning at the centre.

There is a key difference between learning in mainstream schools and learning in study halls; in study halls, students receive help in a personalised and individualised way where group work and innovative teaching methods are often used. Further, the emphasis of the teaching and learning process is more on skills development than on knowledge transmission.

4. Target group and age group

The main target groups are disadvantaged (mainly Roma) students, who attend grades 5-8 of primary schools (lower secondary level of education); and, those who study at secondary level schools (but not in VET schools) and are at risk of social exclusion and early school leaving.

5. Brief description of the measure

Study halls were established with support of EU funds, which set requirements and minimum conditions to be met, as well as common standards. Applicants could be non-profit organisations for example. Study halls have 30-60 students (a minimum 75% of students should come from a disadvantaged background) and organise afternoon lessons and tutoring possibilities for the students. A further requirement is to ensure there is an adequate physical and infrastructural environment, together with an individualised approach from mentors. The organisers are required to develop a study programme with compulsory elements (e.g. personal development, career orientation, ICT, etc.), organise contractual arrangements with the students and their parents and consult regularly with the students' parents and teachers.

Study halls offer different services. They do not address all subjects in the curriculum, but take a comprehensive approach to support young people. Key objectives of the study halls are: improving teacher-student relationships; providing learning space for disadvantaged pupils; integrating Roma parents into the community; identifying and supporting gifted children; reducing ESL, grade repetition and unemployment; developing social skills for employment; improving cultural life; providing extra-curricular activities for disadvantaged young people; offering employment for low-skilled workers; strengthening links between schools and community; providing training for future teachers; offering guidance; and providing meals.

6. Conditions and different steps necessary for the implementation of the measure

Non-profit organisations are required to develop their own rules and programme (pedagogical programme, rules of organisation and procedures, CV-s, certifications, etc.). They are also required to document their ongoing activity and the development of the students (e.g. personal development plans, personal development diary, test results).

7. Identifying the appropriate type and level of support to suit the needs of the learner

The leader of the study halls, together with the teachers and mentors, is involved in identifying the appropriate type and level of support to suit the needs of the learner. The needs of the learners are identified by considering the student's age and the needs of the parents. The requirements of the mainstream school are also taken into consideration.

8. Stakeholders involved in the delivery of the measure

The leader of the study halls, teachers, parents and primary school staff are involved in the delivery of the measures. While there is no coordination from outside, the leaders of study halls are independent in finding their potential partners. Cooperation among study halls themselves is highly recommended.

9. Overall responsibility for implementation of the measure

The leader of the study halls assumes overall responsibility for the implementation of the measure.

10. Obstacles in introducing the measure

The application procedure for EU funds tends to be bureaucratic resulting in delays to the allocation of funds. As funding for this measure was short-term, it was not possible to guarantee continuity of the study halls. At the end of a funded period, those who worked in the study halls left and moved on to alternative employment. This often resulted in the loss of expertise when funded activity recommenced.

Another obstacle is that study halls can only support teaching activities part of the time, since they also have to support students in other indirect ways.

11. Monitoring/assessing the measure

Self-assessment (on the basis of student achievement) is a requirement for all study halls. Instead of the outcome evaluation, process evaluation is more common, due to the heterogeneity of the students.

12. Results of the measure

With regards to the subjective evaluation of the leaders of the study halls, 50-75% of students could be considered to be rather successful or successful. Given the instability of financing, the fact that study halls continue to operate could also be considered a sign of success.

13. Funding/resourcing the measure

EU funds are used to finance the measure.

14. Current status of the measure

At present approximately 80-90 study halls are functioning across the country.