

## CASE STUDIES SUBMITTED FOR THE DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

### ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF ROMA

June 17-18, Podgorica, Montenegro

Name of project	Implementer	Country	Page
Roma Income Generation And Integration Project	Land Source Of Income Foundation	Bulgaria	2
Promoting social inclusion of young people in marginalised rural communities	Center for interethnic dialog and tolerance Amalipe – Bulgaria in cooperation with Liga pro Europa – Romania and National Roma Center - Macedonia	Bulgaria	10
Social inclusion and employment of Roma through bio-dynamic/organic food production	Autonomous centre – ACT, Čakovec	Croatia	15
Gastrostart	Centar za socijalnu skrb Čakovec (Social Welfare Center Čakovec),	Croatia	20
Platform for Roma inclusion in Međimurje	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Croatia in cooperation with Međimurje county administration, Public employment service and cluster CEDRA/ NGO ACT	Croatia	23
The “ten-percent-rule”	City of Most	Czech Republic	27
Cooperation in Bag Supported by Prezi.com	BAGÁzs Public Association	Hungary	29
Supporting Social Land Programs in the Town of Szécsény	Town of Szécsény Local Government	Hungary	32
Social Shop in Homrogd	Homrog Local Government	Hungary	34
Van Helyed/You Have a Place Educational Network	Van Helyed Foundation	Hungary	36
Integrom	Autonomia Foundation, Boston Consulting Group	Hungary	38
Field social work in municipalities	Slovak Republic	Slovakia	41
„Založme spoločne ekofarmu !“ („Let's establish an eco-farm together!“)	Svatobor association	Slovakia	43
Increasing employment of residents of the village Spišský Hrhov through the development and strengthening of capacities of the municipal company	Municipality Spišský Hrhov	Slovakia	45
Social Trade Peddling project of the Riojana Association	Social Trade Riojana Association	Spain	46
Collectors of secondary raw materials for a more certain future	Yurom Centar	Serbia	48
The Empowerment and Integration of Roma in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina	CARE Serbia in partnership with RIC Kragujevac and Eurorom, B&H	Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina	50
Financial Literacy for the Roma	Development and Education Centre Novo mesto, RIC Novo mesto	Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia	53
Roma Investment Fund	Roma Initiatives Office, Open Society Foundations	Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia	59

**Implementer:**

*LAND SOURCE OF INCOME FOUNDATION*

**Status:**

*CLOSED (a new project with the same name, but different donor is ongoing)*

**Country:**

*BULGARIA*

**Location:**

*4 planning regions of Bulgaria: South Western; South Central; North Eastern and North Western planning regions*

*According to Eurostat data, the risk of poverty indicator for Bulgaria is 49 % compared to the average 24% for the EU 28, (Eurostat population 2008- 2011). Regions of Vidin and Montana depopulated faster compared to other regions. Nearly 57% of Bulgarians in low and 54% of medium populated areas and small towns live at risk of poverty and social exclusion. The largest decline in employment of people aged between 20-64 years was recorded in the South Central Region, where the employment fell by 9,7 percentage points in 2011. The situation is even worse for the Roma people.*

*The unemployment rate for Bulgaria is rising since 2009 and on 02.07.2013 approached 14%. Large businesses and the State can provide in the most optimistic scenarios not more that 40% of the employment. Therefore, further improvement in the employment and unemployment figures can be achieved by empowering people to start their own small business.*

**Partners:**

*LARGO ASSOCIATION – Town of Kjustendil – South Western planning region  
BADESTE FOUNDATION – Town of Rakitovo -South Central planning region  
INTEGRO ASSOCIATION - Town of Razgrad - North Eastern planning region  
DROM ASSOCIATION – Town of Vidin - North Western planning region*

*The NGOs franchising the model implemented 12 income generation initiatives in their regions. They provided income to 30 families and they also accumulated some financial resources to start a small micro-fund of their own.*

**Funders:**

*AMERICA FOR BULGARIA FOUNDATION  
631 100 leva from the donor  
100 100 leva own contribution*

**Targeting:**

*The Roma families are the main target group of the project. The primary goal of the Land Foundation is to support Roma and other disadvantaged groups become successful small entrepreneurs so they can support themselves, and possibly employ others. The model helps participant families to grab hold of the first rung of the economic ladder, and pull themselves into a free market environment. The investments in knowledge, skills and capital will continue to provide income for them for many years.*

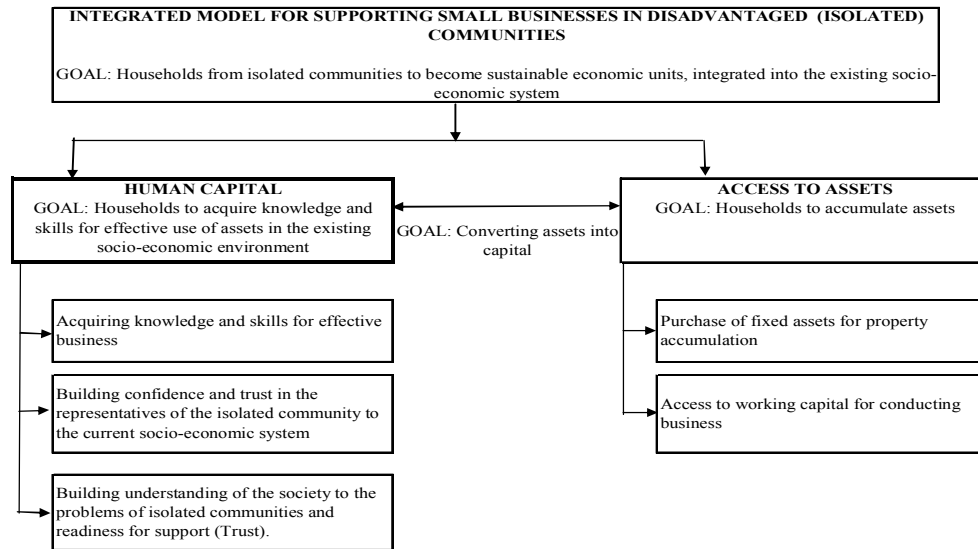
*The NGOs franchising the model were empowered to work on their own and flourish without our help. Together with them we set the beginning of national network for supporting income generation initiatives in rural areas.*

*The general public in Bulgaria is skeptical regarding Roma people being good agricultural producers. We believe that the results we achieved and the publicity contributed to the change of this public opinion.*

*Description of the approach:*

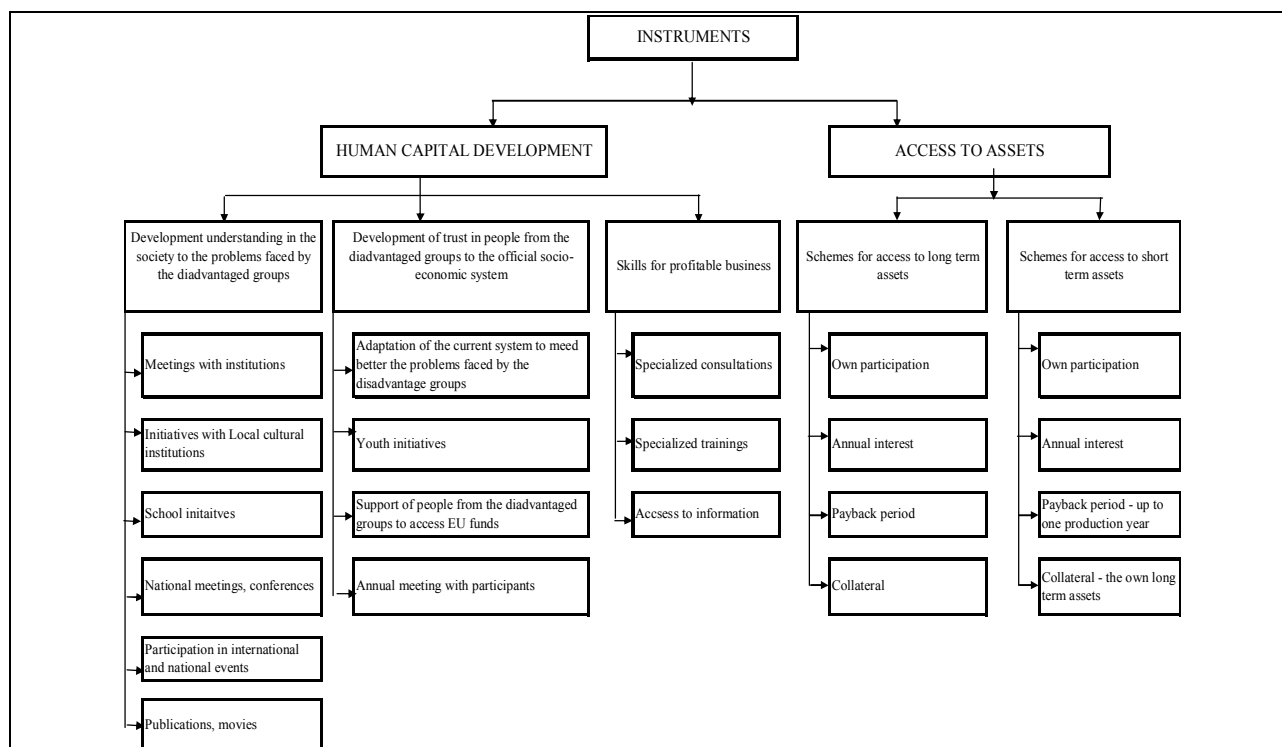
*This model mainly supports the development of economic initiatives undertaken by socially disadvantaged families. Such families have very limited access to financial resources, because they do not meet the loan requirements of regular financial institutions. The model target group includes families who: (1) do not possess sufficient assets for ensuring a stable and continuous income; (2) are willing to take risks in running their own business; (3) have a desire to become independent producers by acquiring the resources necessary for business;*

*Model components*



*The model's main objective is to empower participating families to become independent economic units by converting accumulated assets into capital, which brings consistent income. In the long term, this increases their chances for access to loans from financial institutions and access to EU programs that support business development. The model consists of two main components - development of human potential and access to tangible assets. The first component develops skills for effective use of resources, while the latter helps families to accumulate assets. The two components are applied together.*

*Model implementation tools*



Several groups of instruments are used in model implementation. Specialized expertise is necessary for the development of the human potential: (1) specialized consultations (2) specialized training, and (3) access to information. Specialized consultations on the spot (learning by doing) are the most actively used tool of the model. It allows the development of technological knowledge and skills by solving practical problems. Specialized trainings are conducted in the form of thematic workshops and seminars. They pursue longer-term goals related to introduction of new products and technologies, innovative methods and tools for business planning and management. Access to relevant information is provided by the distribution of specialized technological, economic, and legal publications. They are used mainly to support the self study of the participants.

Access to assets is organized through specially developed financial services. The funds provided should be repaid and the assisted families must secure their own initial financial contribution for the development of a certain business idea. This approach has several advantages. First, the conditions under which the support is provided are closer to the actual market situation in the country. Second, the risk is distributed between the organization providing funds and the participants. There are two main financial products: a service for long-term assets that are repeatedly used in the production process (land, machinery, buildings) and a service for short-term assets that are used only once (fertilizers, chemicals, consumables). The regular on-site consultations for the participants in the financial services provide opportunities for continuous monitoring of their progress.

The financial service for acquisition of tangible long-term assets plays a major role in the model. It is implemented with the following parameters: (1) initial personal contribution provided by the families, (2) interest rate, (3) repayment period with a maximum of 5 years, (4) purchased fixed assets are used as collateral.

The necessary condition for access to funds for short-term assets is the prior participation in the scheme for long-term assets. The main elements of access to short-term assets are: (1) initial personal contribution provided by the families of at least 30%; (2) interest rate; (3) repayment period of one production cycle, but no longer than 1 year. The loan is given usually if the family can guarantee the money through long-term assets that it already owns or has partially repaid. In the second case, the maximum amount of the financial support is equal to the value of the instalments that have already been paid back.

The interest charged aims to guard the funds from inflation, to bring the conditions of the support provided closer to the requirements of the credit market, and to cover partially or fully the running costs of the model. It is desirable for the interest to be closer to the credit markets' interest rate or at least to the level of interest charged by similar business support programs. The specific parameters of each element of the financial services can vary within certain limits. They are set depending on the type of asset, the degree of risk and the duration of its useful economic life.

## **Program overview:**

*During the past several years, the Land-Source of Income Foundation has worked to design land and farming models for Roma integration within the new market environment. The concept is to provide access to land in order to enable families to become self-sufficient farmers and help them get to the first rung of the economic ladder. In addition to land, the foundation provides participants with working capital, training and continued support from agricultural consultants. Till 2010 the focus of the program has been on rural Roma communities in the Plovdiv region and the approach has proven to be successful on a small scale.*

*During this project we helped four NGO organizations to implement income generation initiatives in their regions and expanded the activities in the Plovdiv region. In addition, together with the partners, we launched a campaign to promote the results of our project among Roma communities, professionals and government institutions.*

*Project Goal: To support Roma integration through employment opportunities & entrepreneurial development mainly in rural areas.*

### *Project Objectives:*

- 1. Demonstrate that the Land Foundation Integrated Model for Entrepreneurial Support can be expanded.*
- 2. Continue growing the current model to support future growth and integration.*
- 3. Support communities & assist in local development*
- 4. Provide examples and information to help change prejudiced attitudes inside and outside of Roma communities.*
- 5. Help develop ways to improve local, regional and national policy to create a more favorable entrepreneurial environment for Roma and other disadvantaged minorities.*

### *Main activities:*

- A. Develop a communications, training and "franchise" program to expand the Land Foundation success, and help other to implement this model.*
  - 1. Prepare and publish the model handbook.*
  - 2. Develop detailed and integrated training tools*
  - 3. Develop promotional tools to thoroughly explain the Land Model.*
  - 4. Identify locations and organizations interested in franchising the model.*
  - 5. Organize and conduct training for organizations interested in franchising the model.*
  - 6. Provide on-the-ground support to three expansion organizations which will implement the model.*
  - 7. Provide funding for franchising the model.*
  - 8. Publicize the model.*
- B. On-going development of the current model to improve integration & sustainability in the communities the Land Foundation currently supports.*
  - 1. Identify & select new expansion communities in the Plovdiv region*
  - 2. Provide financial support for acquiring land, short & long-term assets.*
  - 3. Provide agro-technical support in the Plovdiv region.*
  - 4. Provide economic and legal consultancy support.*
  - 5. Provide funding & support for non-agricultural small business initiatives.*
  - 6. Partner with local institutions to support initiatives & community development projects of mutual interest.*

## **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

*There are several ways the Land Foundation monitors its progress;*

- 1. The first is the detailed standard paperwork required by the government for any NGO registered in the public interest. All of the purchases, salaries, and work are documented.*
- 2. The Land Foundation provides an annual report to the Ministry of Justice documenting all yearly activities.*
- 3. The financial support of the Land Foundation is done through a Limited Liability Company (LLC), and it also has specific paperwork required for any short-term or long-term purchases. Repayment deposits are also documented and recorded according to regulations.*
- 4. The Land Foundation has regular annual auditing reports signed by a certified accountant showing all income and costs for the year.*
- 5. There are also quarterly documents showing all activities and financial reports for the project. This is done in compliance with specific project funding requirements.*

6. Currently the Land Foundation is managing a two-year project funded by the Trust for Social Achievement which requires quarterly meetings to review all aspects of the project status. This new project has the same name - Roma Income Generation and Integration- and it is a continuation of the project presented here.

#### Outcomes:

##### Roma families

- Provided regular agro technical, economic and legal consultancy to 87 Roma families in the Plovdiv region
- 284 Roma people earning income from the supported initiatives (part and full time)
- Land cultivated by Roma families in the Plovdiv region 597 decars
- Developed and implemented 3 business plans for "Young farmer" and 1 "Semi-subsistent farm" from the RDP of Bulgaria
- Informed about CAP – Schools, Municipalities, Roma communities
- Trainings for RDP and direct payments
- Direct support to develop and implement RDP

#### Summary of the funding in the Plovdiv region (period May 2010-October 2013)

N	Period	VALUE			Value of ASSETS	LLC FUNDING	LLC funding for			Number of contracts	New participants	Dca land	Number of families	Non agricultural initiatives
		Land	LTA	STA			LAND	LTA	STA					
1	04 - 07 2010		10 396,00	3 430,00	13 826,00	10 771,00		7 806,00	2965	6	3		74	1
2	08 - 10 2010		2 380,00	1 559,52	3 939,52	3 299,52		1 740,00	1559,52	4	1		75	
3	11. 2010 - 01.2011	5 000,00	7 000,00	197,00	12 197,00	7 997,00	2 500,00	4 900,00	597	4	0	2,920	75	
4	02 - 04 2011			4 009,14	4 009,14	4 009,14			4009,14	6	0		75	
5	05 - 07 2011		762,30	1 957,24	2 719,54	2 719,54		762,30	1957,24	4	0		75	
6	08 - 10 2011	2 300,00		3 557,00	5 857,00	5 167,00	1 610,00		3557	4	1	4,599	76	
7	11. 2011 - 01. 2012	820,00			820,00	570,00	570,00			1	1	1,640	77	
8	02 - 04 2012		2 329,00	1 241,06	3 570,06	2 241,06		1 000,00	1241,06	3	0		77	
9	05 - 07 2012		405,02	112,50	517,52	517,52		112,50	405,02	1	0		77	
10	08 - 10 2012	4 800,00			4 800,00	2 400,00	2 400,00			1	0	6,045	77	
11	11.2012-01.2013	3 129,00		1 587,06	4 716,06	3 778,06	2 191,00		1 587,06	5	0	5,437	77	
12	02-04.2013	0,00	1 900,00	5 571,81	7 471,81	7 091,81	1 520,00		5 571,81	9	3		80	
13	05-07.2013	8 576,50	0,00	2 047,50	10 624,00	8 566,00	6 518,50		2 047,50	6	2	15,227	82	
14	08 - 10 2013	5 568,50	9 898,41		15 466,91	14 033,91	4 135,50		9 898,41	0	7	7	8,319	89
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30 194,00</b>	<b>35 070,73</b>	<b>25 269,83</b>	<b>90 534,56</b>	<b>73 161,56</b>	<b>21 445,00</b>	<b>26 219,21</b>	<b>25 497,35</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>44,187</b>		<b>4</b>

#### Summary of the consultancy support in the Plovdiv region (period May 2010-October 2013)

Report N	Period	Type			Total
		Agro	Economic	Legal	
1	04 - 07 2010	30	29	7	66
2	08 - 10 2010	100	30	20	150
3	11. 2010 - 01.2011	52	51	4	107
4	02 - 04 2011	48	23	12	83
5	05 - 07 2011	66	55	11	132
6	08 - 10 2011	27	39	6	72
7	11. 2011 - 01. 2012	37	20	5	62
8	02 - 04 2012	31	14	10	55
9	05 - 07 2012	70	30	0	100
10	08 - 10 2012	20	20	0	40
11	11.2012 - 01.2013	20	26	3	49
12	02-04.2013	40	43	13	96
13	05-07.2013	89	80	39	208
14	08-10.2013	77	75	35	187
	<b>Total</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>1407</b>

#### Business plans developed under the Rural Development program 2007 - 2013

	Location	Measure	Status	Total support	Financing 2010	Financing 2011	Financing 2012	Financing 2013
Business plans for Roma participants								
1	Padarsko	112: Establishment of young farmers	submitted and approved	50 000	25 000		25 000	
2	Perushtitza	112: Establishment of young farmers	submitted and approved	50 000	25 000		25 000	
3	Chalakovi	112: Establishment of young farmers	submitted and approved	50 000	25 000		25 000	
4	Chalakovi	141: Support for semi- subsistence farms undergoing restructuring	submitted and approved	15 000		3 000	3 000	3 000
5	Padarsko	141: Support for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring	Developed but not submitted due to problems with documentation					
6	Perushtitza	141: Support for semi- subsistence farms undergoing restructuring	Developed but not submitted due to problems with documentation					
<b>Total</b>				165 000	75 000	3 000	78 000	3 000
Business plans for non Roma participants that live in the area where we are working								
7	Perushtitza	141: Support for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring	submitted and approved	15000		3000	3 000	3 000
8	Ustina	141: Support for semi-subsistence farms undergoing restructuring	submitted and approved	15000				3000
<b>Total</b>				30 000	0	3 000	3 000	6 000

#### Local communities

- 27 local initiatives supported through the project
- Consultancy support for development of 1 project for national funding

#### NGOs in the country

- Trained 4 NGOs to implement the model in their regions
- Implemented 12 income generation initiatives by the partner NGOs in their regions
- 75 Roma people earning income from the supported initiatives by the partner NGOs in the country (part and full time)

#### Summary of the funding (period May 2010-October 2013)

Report N	Period	Land	LTA	STA	Program FUNDING	ASSETS	Number of contracts	dka
8	02 - 04 2012	2500,00	14580,35		12220,50	17080,35	1	1,600
9	05 - 07 2012		15462,00		10582,00	15462,00	3	
10	08 - 10 2012		13564,00		7795,30	13564,00	3	
11	11.2012 - 01.2013	2000,00	2500,00	1554,00	4500,00	6054,00	2	3,900
12	02-04.2013							
13	05-07.2013	2400,00			1920,00	2400,00	1	4,779
14	08-10.2013	1000,00	7900,00	500,00	4000,00	9400,00	2	0,790
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7900,00</b>	<b>54006,35</b>	<b>2054,00</b>	<b>41017,80</b>	<b>63960,35</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11,069</b>

#### General public and government institutions

- 3 Round table discussion on the challenges that small farmers face with the Plovdiv district government
- Stand on Agra exhibition
- 3 interviews transmitted on 2 TV programs
- 2 information releases on the evening news on 3 TV programs
- 1 newspaper article
- Included in the Civil Society Monitoring Report on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy and Decade Action Plan in 2012 in Bulgaria.

#### Sustainability:

The sustainability of the Roma Income Generation and Integration Project is achieved in two dimensions:

- the beneficiaries
- the organizations

The beneficiaries (the program participants) are the key element of the approach. We choose the families wisely, and empower them in ways to ensure their success. We provide the knowledge, training, funding and support they need to be successful and to set the basis for their access to the EU programs for agricultural support. By doing this they will be able to function on their own without our help.

Organizations sustainability is the second part of overall success. We support partner teams who have the passion and dedication to the goal of helping disadvantaged groups become integrated and who are willing to grow into program leaders. We also created the basis of a network of organizations that are respected in their communities and regions.

#### **Cost-Efficiency:**

We do not have exact numbers of cost effectiveness of our program. However, locally such a program can operate with about 30 000 euros per year. Therefore, it is efficient in term of economic cost/benefit .

#### **Lessons Learned:**

1. The solution of such a long lasting problem as fighting poverty through economic empowerment of people requires long-lasting and continuous efforts. The short term projects cannot bring sustainable results.
2. Financial inclusion of Roma is a complex issue. In order to be addressed properly it needs a complex approach. In that sense a complex intervention is required at least in two directions – 1/for resource acquisition and 2/for developing capacity for effective and efficient use of the resources.
3. The existing national and EU programmes are not providing opportunities for supporting long-lasting and complex projects. In general they are short term oriented and focused on results not on impact.
4. The process of Economic empowerment and the Financial inclusion requires the long-term commitment both of the beneficiaries and the organization managing the programme. They should work in partnership and that is why building trust is an important prerequisite for a successful and long-lasting cooperation.

#### **Resources:**

- [www.landsourceofincome.org](http://www.landsourceofincome.org)
- "Agro Program Helps Landless Roma Families in Bulgaria". Novinite.com . March 8, 2012.[http://www.novinite.com/view\\_news.php?id=137361](http://www.novinite.com/view_news.php?id=137361)
- Hristov, K. "Institutional problems small farmers faced when applying for assistance under the rural development program" . Trakia Journal of Sciences, Vol. 9, Suppl. 3, pp 83-87, 2011 Trakia University. [http://www.sf-conference.eu/Pubs/2nd\\_conf/Suppl3/3/K.Hristov.pdf](http://www.sf-conference.eu/Pubs/2nd_conf/Suppl3/3/K.Hristov.pdf)
- List of Participants. Poverty and Inequality in Societies of Human Rights: the paradox of democracies . 21 – 22 February / 2013 Council of Europe Strasbourg [http://rights-poverty.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Conference\\_List-of-participants\\_02042013.pdf](http://rights-poverty.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Conference_List-of-participants_02042013.pdf)
- Civil Society Monitoring Report on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy and Decade Action Plan in 2012 in Bulgaria. Prepared by a civil society coalition comprising the following organizations Open Society Institute – Sofia n Indi-Roma 97 Social Foundation n Health of the Roma People Foundation , Roma Academy for Culture and Education Association n Roma Solidarity Foundation n Integro Association, Nov Pat Association n Amalipe Centre for Intercultural Dialogue and Tolerance n World without Borders Association [http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2013/BG\\_civil%20society%20monitoring%20report\\_EN.pdf](http://osi.bg/downloads/File/2013/BG_civil%20society%20monitoring%20report_EN.pdf)
- Agricultural bookstore, **TBCAT KOM** program 14.03.2013. Interview with Ivan Penov. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwDwWJ5ihVo>
- БНТ-2, АГРА 2012 Интервю [http://bnt.bg/bg/productions/141/edition/21131/bylgarija\\_19\\_30\\_novinite\\_na\\_bnt2\\_7\\_mart\\_2012](http://bnt.bg/bg/productions/141/edition/21131/bylgarija_19_30_novinite_na_bnt2_7_mart_2012)
- Agricultural bookstore 17.10.2013. **TBCAT KOM** program. Closing meeting for the project "Roma income generation and integration. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=xqizUXHdavw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=xqizUXHdavw)
- Maritca, 28.03.2013 , interview. The high land price brings hunger
- Agro-plovdiv. The Closing meeting: <http://agroplovdiv.bg/11458/284>
- CAP communication awards-2013 [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-communication-network/awards/winners-2013/index\\_bg.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-communication-network/awards/winners-2013/index_bg.htm)

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## PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN MARGINALISED RURAL COMMUNITIES

**Project Manager:** Center for interethnic dialog and tolerance Amalipe – Bulgaria in cooperation with Liga pro Europa – Romania and National Roma Center - Macedonia

**Status:** October 2011 – September 2013

**Country:** Bulgaria

**Location:** In Bulgaria the initiative was implemented in the municipalities of Radnevo (Stara Zagora District, South-East Bulgaria), Knezha (Pleven district, North-West Bulgaria), Dolna Bania (Sofia district, South-West Bulgaria), and Strazhitsa and Lyaskovets (Veliko Turnovo district, Central North Bulgaria). In Romania it was carried out in Glodeni village (Mures county). In Macedonia it included Miladinovtzi Municipality.

**Partners:** Romania and Macedonia

**Donors:** PROGRESS Programme of the EC Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

### **Target groups:**

- Young people from marginalized Roma communities in rural areas
- Socially excluded families from marginalized Roma communities in rural areas
- Social workers, rural mayors, teachers and staff from other institutions working in rural areas
- Roma NGOs, community-based and informal activists who work in rural communities
- National authorities and officials from key national institutions

### **Overview:**

1. The project implementation plan envisaged several key set of activities starting with the establishment of a Project Steering committee. The project Steering Committee meeting was organized on December 1-2, 2011 in Sofia. Minister for management of EU funds - Tomislav Donchev, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Policy - Deyana Kostadinova, Walter Wolf and Kiril Kiryakov from DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion, European Commission, representatives of non- government organizations and experts in the field of employment from Bulgaria, Macedonia and Greece discussed how to increase levels of employment and social inclusion of young people from Roma communities in rural areas. The aim of the Steering Committee was not just to connect various stakeholders with relevant experience and interest but also to provide the support of the institutions for the sustainability of the model, as well as to make them part of the development of the model, so that they have also the ownership on the process. The Establishment of the Steering Committee was a big success because it brought together very high- level policy makers at national and European level: representatives of the European Commission, ministers and deputy-ministers. Participants also discussed the main activities to be implemented under the project.

The next meetings of the Project Steering Committee were organized together with several big events of the project: on September 27 - 28, 2012 and on September 18, 2013 when the members of the SC received direct update about project advance and were able to provide feedback and suggestions for improving project implementation. All three events included high-level policy-makers, practitioners, academics and civil society/ Roma community representatives. Therefore, we might say that they were important corner stones for the project.

2. The core range of activities directed towards establishing and testing the model of community support center as a pilot innovative internal community mechanism for social inclusion envisaged the establishment of CSC in 4 municipalities in Bulgaria and in two municipalities in Macedonia and Romania, respectively. Building the model of the Center as a community support center included also developing and strengthening the communities themselves and establishing the position of the community moderator and developing his/her capacity through a series of trainings, exchange of peer visits and supervision.

3. The second stage of building the community center model included establishing cooperation with the institutions that work in rural communities focusing both on raising their awareness about the work in Roma community, as well as strengthening the relations between the local institutions and the active Roma community. The activities in this

direction included all stakeholders: local institutions, local service providers (schools and teachers, respectively, health workers and social workers), local NGOs and Community based organizations, as well as active Roma community members. A series of discussions, meetings and trainings were envisaged with the various stakeholders, including a joint camp of officials, CSC assistants, and NGO activists for planning joint programs.

4. In order to put into practice the good cooperation between the community and the local institutions, they had to plan jointly Local Plans for Social Inclusion and after this implement the plans created. They were supposed to envisage provision of concrete social services in the pilot rural communities, the role of different actors and terms. The CSC assistants, municipal officials, other relevant officials and Roma NGO/CBO activists were to take part in the process. The Plans are to be approved by the local City Councils. The implementation will be done by the CSCs and the relevant institutions. It will provide a chance to test different kind of community based services and other activities for social inclusion of young people in Roma rural communities, for establishing community structures and developing the communities concerned. The implementation of these activities will be supported by the Community Support Task Force. Field information regarding the implementation and its effect will be collected and used for the assessment of different community based services in Roma rural communities.

5. Special activities have been planned to ensure that the model established within the project will be taken into consideration by the relevant national and European institutions when defining policies for social inclusion, human rights protection and Roma integration and that they will engage with providing sustainability and wide range application of the model. Special attention was to be paid at:

- ensuring changes in the regulations of the social services that incorporate Community Support Center as recognized community based service with state financing
- incorporating the main activities from the model into the calls for proposals announced within Human Resources Development Operational Program and Regional Development OP since this provides financial sustainability of the model

6. Participation of AMALIPE representatives in the working groups that prepare the Human Resources Development OP (Deyan Kolev), Science and Education OP (Deyan Kolev) and Rural Areas Development Program (Julia Grigorova): they attended all the sessions of these working groups and became one of the most active participants. As a result their suggestions are completely included in HRD OP and SEOP. We expect that soon AMALIPE suggestions will be included also in RADP;

7. National campaign for incorporating CDCs in the Municipal strategies for social services: this planned in the proposal activity was changed into National campaigns for incorporating the CDCs in the Municipal Roma Integration Plans.

8. National advocacy events were organized in Bulgaria with teachers, local authorities, active parents, Roma medical students, etc They were attended by high-level political figures, Roma NGOs and activists. The events were used for achieving recognition of the main elements from the know-how established within the project.

9. Presentations during international conferences: the model of CDCs and the know-how created within the project was presented during several international conferences organized by European Commission, OSCE, UNDP and OSF. Deyan Kolev, Teodora Krumova, Silvia Boyanova, Asmet Elezovski used these conferences in order to make the model popular and to advocate at international level for establishing preconditions for the model sustainability.

10. The last type of activities planned exchange of experience between Bulgaria, Romania and Macedonia. The exchange of good practices accumulated within the project implementation, preparing theoretical model on the basis of the project experience and disseminating it at national and European level was one of the main accents. The following activities have been planned:

- ☐ Organizing national conferences: in every partner country (Bulgaria, Romania and Macedonia) conference for presenting the achievements and main conclusions from the project implementation was to be organized.
- ☐ Organizing final Concluding conference for sharing experience

#### **Monitoring and evaluation of the program:**

Experts from DG EMPL of the European Commission, deputy-ministers on labor and representatives of the governments of Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania, representatives of municipal authorities and Roma NGOs took part in the workshop "Social inclusion in rural areas". It took place in Sofia on September 27 and 28. The workshop served as mid-term review of the project. The first day of the workshop brought together Bulgarian decision makers

from the national and local level with representatives of Roma NGOs, community moderators from the Community Support Centers (CDCs) and social partners. They discussed the implementation of the project in Bulgaria with emphasis on the work of CDCs and community moderators, forecasts for the demand side of the Bulgarian labor market and ways the new Human Resources Development OP and Rural Areas Development Program could answer the identified needs.

The morning of the second day was dedicated to the state of the art of the Macedonian and Romanian partners. Mr. Ibrahim Ibrahimi, Deputy Minister of labor and social policy presented the situation with Roma inclusion in Macedonia. Mr. Asmet Elezovski, Chair of the National Roma Centrum explained about the project implementation in Ilinden Municipality. His observations were supported by the community moderators and the school principal of Miladinovtzi School. The project implementation in Romania was presented by Katalin Szikszai from Liga pro Europa and by Rodica Sardu, community moderator in Glodene. Their main conclusions stressed the importance of community work at grass-root level for the entire process of Roma integration.

#### **Results:**

- 13 schools are included in the educational program of Amalipe;
- Assistance to access medical and social services - conducting preventive measures – 186 persons;
- Identifying groups willing to finish their educational studies- 60 persons, 19 of them to raise their educational level;
- Organization of craftsmen to participate in the exhibition - 18 persons, internet marketing;
- Cooperation with local authorities to provide more than 220 jobs;
- Participation in 10 public and charitable events with more than 500 participants;
- Assistance in registering in Labour Office - over 100 persons and subsequent inclusion in courses and temporary employment;
- Contacts and working along with local initiative groups with more than 3000 persons;
- Assistance in obtaining a grant of Roma students - 15 person;

#### **Sustainability:**

The key project activities will continue in two main directions:

I. In the municipalities where the project was implemented: In most of the municipalities the main activities (including the work of the community moderators and the Community Development Centers) will continue owing to the project partners and the cooperation with the respective municipal administration:

- Center Amalipe will maintain the CDCs in Dolna banya, Kneja, Strajitza and Lyaskovetz. The activities will be even extended with community monitoring of the services delivered at grass-root level. Local Community Development Clubs will be established in several big villages in the municipalities in order to help the work of the CDCs;
- National Roma Centrum will continue the work of the community moderator in Miladinovtzi Municipality

II. At national level in Bulgaria certain advocacy activities for ensuring the further extension of the model will be undertaken: In order to ensure the extension of this model (i.e. establishing CDCs in bigger number of municipalities following the huge needs and interest) as well as its sustainability two important preconditions are necessary:

1. The first one is the model standardizing. This means that clear methodology as well as financial standard should be prepared in order to outline the necessary elements and the minimum amount necessary for establishing CDC and successful work of the community moderators. In the field of Roma integration the standardized interventions are exception: health and other types of mediators are the only example in this direction. That is why it is necessary certain standardized Integration interventions to be defined (with their methodologies and financial standards) The Community center should be one of them.

2. The second necessary precondition is the financial resources provision. The CDCs need relatively modest amount for maintaining their work (salaries for community moderators, materials for activities, etc.). Although huge interest for hosting CDCs exists among many municipalities, the lack of resources remains big barrier before the extension and sustainability of the model. The necessary financial resources could be provided at central / national level. The European funds (distributed through programs financed by European Social Fund or / and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) are one of the possible (and most probable) source that could provide the necessary financing.

2.1. Inclusion of investment priorities "Integration of marginalized communities such as the Roma" in the ESF funded programs in Bulgaria and Romania: The specified priority is to provide resources and tools for implementing the National Roma Integration Strategies in both countries. It should therefore be a key investment on priority axis "Reducing poverty and promoting social inclusion" or be defined as a separate priority axis.

2.2. Create conditions for the participation of the most vulnerable regions and groups: it could be achieved through various means such as setting specific schemes aimed exclusively at the most vulnerable regions and micro-regions, providing technical assistance to increase the absorption capacity of European funds, etc. This should be regulated in the text of the ESF funded programs;

2.3. Create conditions for the inclusion of organizations working in the Roma community as a beneficiary under some of the schemes

AMALIPE Center is continually working for achieving these goals through its representatives in the working groups that prepare the next Human Resources Development OP, Science and Education OP and Rural Areas Development Program. More information see in the Concept paper "Roma social exclusion in the rural areas - a barrier before the inclusive and sustainable growth".

### **Cost Effectiveness:**

High efficiency

- 13 schools are included in the educational program of Amalipe;
- Assistance to access medical and social services - conducting preventive measures – 186 persons;
- Identifying groups willing to finish their educational studies- 60 persons, 19 of them to raise their educational level;
- Organization of craftsmen to participate in the exhibition - 18 persons, internet marketing;
- Cooperation with local authorities to provide more than 220 jobs;
- Participation in 10 public and charitable events with more than 500 participants;
- Assistance in registering in Labour Office - over 100 persons and subsequent inclusion in courses and temporary employment;
- Contacts and working along with local initiative groups with more than 3000 persons;
- Assistance in obtaining a grant of Roma students - 15 person;

### **Outcomes and lesson learnt:**

For 2 years the project achieved significant results. Some of them were linked mainly with the local contexts, some of the others formed the basis for certain strategic ideas and conclusions regarding the social inclusion and integration of young people from the rural Roma communities. Among them we could outline:

1. Regarding the reasons for social exclusion of Roma in the rural areas: The project implementation proved that two important factors stay behind and maintain the exclusion patterns in the rural areas: namely the extreme poverty and the absence of democratic traditions. Both of them define and preserve the exclusion making the rural societies more exclusive compared to the urban ones. They relate to the rural population as a whole. Among the rural Roma communities these factors have additional strong negative impact that makes impossible to break the vicious circle or social exclusion since:

- the poverty and lack of democratic traditions are completed with the absence of social structures within the local Roma communities. The mainstream social structures (such as cultural centers , pensioners clubs, etc.) usually do not reach Roma. The community based services could be a way to support establishing community social structures but the mainstream services are significantly less developed and rare in the rural areas, they also seldom reach the Roma communities. That is why developing community based services for fostering the activation of Roma and establishing inner-community structures is a must;

- social exclusion of rural Roma is linked not only with the high unemployment (widespread also among the majority of rural population in Eastern Europe) but also with the low level of education, vocational training and the quality / existence of services provided. It needs complex approach of intervention that focuses on all these areas;

2. Regarding the approach for overcoming the social exclusion of Roma in rural areas: Breaking the vicious circle of social exclusion of Roma could not be done only through efforts outside the Roma community neither only inside the community. Coordinated efforts of all stakeholders: the local Roma communities, Roma activists and authorities, mainstream institutions, local business and NGOs are necessary. That is why the main approach for overcoming the social exclusion of Roma should contain three elements:

Fostering community development at grass-root level of the local Roma communities;

Raising the capacity (including changing the stereotypes) of the mainstream institutions and the local business to work with Roma;

Establishing better coordination among the institutions and cooperation with the local communities (Roma and majority ones)

3. Regarding the main tools for overcoming the social exclusion of Roma in rural areas: The project built its success on two crucial tools that were established and tested during the project implementation: the Community Development Centers as well as the work of the community moderators. They appeared as strong structures for mobilizing the local communities, establishing inner-community structures, fostering the process of modernization at grass-root level as well as for empowering the local communities.

The Community Development Centers are innovative framework for developing community based services that reach and activate the Roma community at grass- root level. They work for both – the single individual and family and for the entire local community. The main engine in their functioning is the idea of activating the entire community: from the youngest child in the neighborhood, village, town and municipality, adolescents to the oldest local resident. The work focus of the Centers and community moderators is not the individuals themselves but the community as a whole. The community moderators are in constant contact with the community, with its problems and successes.

At least two community moderators work in every CDC. They are representatives of the local Roma community. Secondary education and skills for community work as well as strong confidence from the local Roma community are necessary for a person to fulfill the role / occupy the position of community moderator.

During the project implementation the Community Development Centers and the community moderators concentrated their efforts on raising the level of employment and other social inclusion activities among the young Roma in rural areas. The effect of their work was recognized by the respected state institutions (especially in Bulgaria) and first steps for their institutionalization were undertaken

As pointed above, the key result from the project was the model of Community Development Centers and community moderators who work for raising the employment level and other social inclusion activities in rural Roma communities. In order to ensure the extension of this model (i.e. establishing CDCs in bigger number of municipalities following the huge needs and interest) as well as its sustainability two important preconditions are necessary. Both of them have implications to diverse set of stakeholders as follow:

Ensuring model standardizing: this means that clear methodology as well as financial standard should be prepared in order to outline the necessary elements

**Resources:**

<http://romaprogress.org/index.php/bg>

<http://amalipe.com/files/publications/brochure%20PROGRES.pdf>

<http://amalipe.com/index.php?nav=projects&id=58&lang=1>

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**Implementer:** Autonomous centre – ACT, Čakovec

**Status:** 01.08.2013. – 31.07.2014. – ongoing

**Country:** Croatia

**Location:** Medimurje County, Croatia.

**Partners:** Social Welfare Centre Čakovec, Croatian Employment Service – Regional Office Čakovec, Rainbow Plus Association, civil society association for the development

**Funders:** The project is partially financed by the European Union under IV. Component of the instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) – Human Resources Development and the Office for Cooperation with NGOs at the Government of the Republic of Croatia. Total value of the project is 132.818,57€

**Targeting:** Project beneficiaries are members of Roma minority, long – term unemployed and social care and assistance beneficiaries, at least 50 people from the registry CES and Social Welfare Centre Čakovec. The Roma minority is one of the most marginalized groups in Croatia and has limited and insufficient access to the labor market. They are in rather unfavorable position due to the poor education level, lack of work experience and high share of long – term unemployment.

### **Program overview: The main activities of the project**

1. Evaluation of the target group and the presentation of the project through local motivational meetings with the participants – over 100 participants
2. Three curricula were made for the purpose of implementation of three educational programmes – training in bio-dynamic vegetable growers (160 hours), in bio-dynamic fruit growers (120 hours) and collectors and growers of medicinal herbs (120 hours).
3. Training program implementation – 32 people participated; 21 successfully finished program
4. Implementation of training program for personal development that increased level of skills and capabilities for self-employment and entrepreneurial activities of target group. Career development workshops that target four main areas: teamwork, self-empowerment, communication and management skills will be held. Also, users will be educated and trained for establishment and management of family farms and cooperatives. 12 people participated.
5. Motivated users are enabled to gain work experience in local bio-dynamic farms or agricultural land owned by the cooperative for the period of 3 months
6. After strategic and business planning, members of the target group and two partner organizations established Social agricultural co-operative Domači vrt and three family run farms. These organizations are equipped with all the necessary materials and tools for a successful business start.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

To assure efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, appropriate impact and sustainability of the action, PM will carry out continuous monitoring and internal evaluation of the proposed action, and will also monitor the implementation of all project activities (using LF and indicators as main monitor tool). PM will meet at least once a month to discuss progress of the project and will make reports on the previous phases of the project and prepare implementation of the following activities. Evaluation of the project will focus on examining whether the indicators set at the project level are achieved and whether the deadlines have been met. The final meeting of project partners and social cooperative founders will provide space to assess the project results, their quality and impact and also to jointly discuss and agree upon future follow up of the project. The minutes taken during final meeting, together with conclusions and recommendations, will be shared among all project stakeholders.

Target group and final beneficiaries will be involved in the evaluation of the project by filling out evaluation questionnaires on conference and each training.

PM will contract external evaluator for start, mid and final evaluation. Different methods will be used such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and reports.

Furthermore, the financial flows will be monitored by the external auditor which will check the accounts and accounting reports produced by the financial manager and financial administrator, thanks to the support by all the project partners. This will ensure the correct use of funds, according to the Commission provisions on eligibility of costs. The external auditor will be appointed by the PM team during the first meeting.

Social auditor will be also subcontracted. Social auditing provides an assessment of the impact of an organisation's non-financial objectives through systematically and regularly monitoring its performance and the views of its stakeholders. Social auditing requires the

## **Outcomes:**

### 1. Target group members estimated and identified, enrolled in project activities.

Although basic needs assessment research was made in the process of preparation of this action, a more in depth research was done in the first phase through analysis of Personal cardboards from CES and SWCC register and semi-structured telephone interviews with target group. In order to motivate target group members to participate in project activities, those who are identified in the first phase of assessment were be invited to local workshops organized by CES & SWCC where project activities and expected results were be presented and additional motivational talks with target group was done.

*Output(s): Assessment of the target group was conducted on whole sample of long-term unemployed and social care and assistance beneficiaries, who are at the same time members of Roma minority in Međimurje County. 10 project presentations in different municipalities in Međimurje County organised. Over 100 members of Roma minority participated at workshops, 60 were motivated to participate in project educational activities.*

### 2. Increased opportunities to acquire new knowledge in non-formal education.

In Croatia there is no formal education for biodynamic/organic vegetable growers, fruit growers and collectors/growers of medicinal herbs. There are some sporadic examples of non-structured education/trainings. Therefore a team of experts will be engaged in order to write curricula for non-formal education for professions mentioned, which are highly needed on organic farming market.

*Output(s): 3 training curricula for biodynamic/organic farming in non-formal education developed: for vegetable growers, fruit growers, collectors/growers of medicinal herbs.*

### 3. Target group members increased their level of knowledge and are ready for (self-) employment.

Professional trainings for various farmers' professions will be implemented, in order to improve the educational level of the unemployed, which is very important for their professional mobility and possibility of being employed. RPA will carry out 3 trainings of target group for the following professions: biodynamic/organic vegetable growers, fruit growers and collectors/growers of medicinal herbs. Trainings will consist of theoretical and practical parts. Additional one/half-day soft skills trainings will be organised in order to enhance group and individual development and skills (team work, self-empowerment, communication, leadership). At the end, those participants who will be interested and motivated for self-employment will be trained furthermore. 2 connected trainings will be organized: one day training "Establishment of social cooperative/family run farms" and two-days training "Social enterprises management".

*Output(s): 3 training programs with 32 participants were held: 9 Roma people educated for biodynamic vegetable growers, 4 Roma people for biodynamic fruit growers, 8 Roma people for collectors and growers of medicinal herbs. 12 Roma people who successfully finished education strengthened through soft skills trainings. Biodynamic vegetable growers, fruit growers and collectors/growers of medicinal herbs trained for establishment and*

### 4. Target group members increased their work experience and skills.

From candidates that compete for employment, it is expected to have more or less work and practical experience. RPA will arrange work practice for retrained target group on local biodynamic/organic farms or on social cooperative

land if till then will be obtained and functional. Work practice will last 2-3 months.

*Output(s): At least 12 Roma gained work experience through work practice. Diaries of a practitioner, evaluation questionnaires.*

#### 5. Social cooperative fully functional, cooperative members are employed. – in progress

When first trainings will start, PM will work on meetings with local authorities in order to secure land for social cooperative and family run farms. Long-term agreements will be signed with local authorities interested and those in which training participants live for the moment. Hopefully, local authorities will provide at least 1/2 hectare of land for family run farms and at least 1 hectare of land for social cooperative. Both social cooperative and family run farms will be equipped.

Strategic and business planning processes were provided by subcontractors. Social cooperative founders will manage social cooperative. Cooperative employees will be at the same time managers of cooperative. Family run farms will be co-operators (also can be a members) of social cooperative. In the first phase of work, cooperative will employ at least 4 and family run farms at least 6 trained Roma.

*Output(s): Newly established or reactivated social cooperative (formal establishment acts developed) for biodynamic/organic food production fully functional, at least 4 Roma people employed in cooperative. At least 3 newly established family run farms for biodynamic/organic food production fully functional (as co-operators/members of social cooperative). Those family run farms employed at least 6 Roma people. Both cooperative and family run farms equipped with greenhouses, gardening tools, etc. Strategic and business plan developed. Visual identity and social coop. website developed/functional. Participation lists, minutes.*

#### 6. The project, its outcomes and the EU project contribution are visible.

In order to represent the project, activities, objectives and final results and outputs of project implementation, opening and closing conference will be organised. Also various publications will be developed and produced, including a documentary of project activities.

*Output(s): Project visual identity, leaflets, brochures, roll-ups, notebooks, pens, other promotional materisl, project web site, documentary developed and distributed/promoted/broadcasted.*

#### Improvement/benefits of target groups/final beneficiaries situation:

Long-term unemployed and social care and assistance beneficiaries, who are at the same time members of Roma minority: they will increase their level of knowledge and will be ready for (self-) employment like biodynamic/organic vegetable growers, fruit growers and collectors/growers of medicinal herbs. Some of them will increase their work experience, some will establish and be employed in social cooperative or family run farms.

Roma families - some families of long-term unemployed and social care and assistance beneficiaries will benefit from persons professional retraining, some will benefit from target group members being work experienced or directly employed.

Roma in Međimurje County - they will benefit from public understanding of all issues relevant to employment of Roma and will have a chance to participate in future projects regarding employment. They also will be motivated seeing good practice examples (social cooperative, family run farms).

Međimurje County population - they will benefit from public understanding of all issues relevant to employment of Roma and will have a chance to directly support development of social cooperative and family run farms.

Policy decision makers - they will have adequate data that facilitates facts based decision making, are better informed about all issues relevant to employment of Roma minority, are in position to better respond on needs, priorities and requirements of target group described in various strategic documents.

Employers - they will be better informed about possibilities and benefits of employment of Roma minority representatives.

Citizens in general - they will be better informed about all issues relevant to employment of Roma minority representatives.

#### Improvement/benefits of project partners:

Project partners will increase their skills and knowledge on project cycle management, team work, communication, development of educational programs for specific target groups, development and implementation of employment projects, programs and models, will have more skills and knowledge for monitoring and evaluation of project activities. Project partners will be promoted and recognized on different levels and by different stakeholders which will eventually benefit in future partnerships and cooperations.

#### **Sustainability:**

There will be significant impact of the action on several levels. Firstly, project activities are directed to capacity building of target group members, Roma minority in Međimurje County, who are facing social exclusion for decades. New skills and knowledge, new work practice will help them to be more employable, help them to see opportunity in using new skills and knowledge in entrepreneurial manner. Secondly, action will generate establishment, furnishing and functionality of social cooperative and several family run farms for biodynamic/organic food production. This is employment model that was recognised as self-sustainable, efficient and will provide permanent employment to at least 10 Roma people. Regular, monthly incomes will have impact on at least two levels: their families will benefit in improved quality of life and Roma from their and other Roma villages will see some examples of good practice what should motivate them for pro-activeness (as well as other employers in the region). This should lead to decreased number of the unemployed Roma people in the CES register (this project will decrease unemployment for 1%, it is expected that it will be decreased by 5% in the year following the completeness of this action due to replication of employment model in different economic activities). It is also expected that number of initiatives related to (self)employment of Roma people will increase by 100% in 3 year period after completeness of this action, also due to replication of employment model in different economic activities. ACT has experience in establishment of social cooperatives/enterprises which are generally used as examples of good practice and replicated in different parts of Croatia and region.

This action will also have great impact on further improvement of the institutional and legislative framework for the social economy/entrepreneurship development.

ACT and project partners have established various income generating activities providing funds for the operational costs and program development. All partners have know-how and HR to develop new funding opportunities to support action activities and follow up activities.

Social cooperative will be classical social enterprise, entirely owned by founders and employees. Sources of incomes of social cooperative at the beginning of work will be diversified: grants, subsidies, but majority from sales of services and products (there is secured market for organic/biodynamic products through health food restaurant, local stores, schools/kindergartens and spa/wellness resorts (one existing and one in establishment). Available funds will be used also through grants, e.g.. Ministry of entrepreneurship annually publishes 2 Calls for proposals for interested cooperatives: Competition for social cooperatives projects and Call for proposals for entrepreneur beginners.

#### **Cost-Efficiency:**

Troughout project 32 members of the target group were educated in different field of bio-dynamic farming of which 21 finished education completely, out of which 10 will be employed in co-operative after successfully finishing work practice. It is planned that in following year employment capacity of cooperative grows, employing even more interested Roma people.

26500,00€ invested in education / 32 people educated in bio-dynamic/organic farming thus improving their eating habits influencing in healthier lifestyle of their families in general.

26000,00€ invested in co-operative start-up costs / co-operative established /10 people employed till the end of the project directly influencing financial and economical status of their families.

#### **Resources:**

<http://actnow.hr/domacivrt/hr/o-projektu/opci-podaci>

[www.domaci-vrt.hr](http://www.domaci-vrt.hr)

**Contact person:**

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## GASTROSTART

**Implementer:** Centar za socijalnu skrb Čakovec (Social Welfare Center Čakovec),

**Status:** Ongoing

**Country:** Croatia

**Location:** Međimurje County, Čakovec, Orehovica

Target area: In Croatia in 2009, 2,14% of population were beneficiaries of permanent social assistance. In Međimurje County the percentage is higher and amounts 4,42% (Yearbook of Croatian SWC 2009.). More accurate figures has SWC Čakovec, and by that there was 5232 beneficiaries of this aid in Međimurje on 31.12.2009. By the most recent information from the population census (preliminary data 2011. – Central Bureau of Statistics) in Međimurje there is total 114.414 residents, of which 5717 beneficiaries of permanent social aid. We draw a conclusion that 4,997% of population in Međimurje permanently uses social assistance, and from the statistic data in Annual report of SWC Čakovec (2010.), yet 74% of all beneficiaries are members of Roma national minority.

**Partners:** OŠ Orehovica (Primary School Orehovica), Udruga za obrazovanje Roma UZOR (Association for Roma education UZOR)

Role: helping with the implementation of the project activities, motivating project beneficiaries, advisory role

**Funders:** EU, IPA fund, IV. Component- Human Resources Development;

Total budget: 148.184,57 Euro

### Targeting:

- Target group: 1. members of the Roma,  
2. longterm unemployeed  
3. permanent receivers of social assistance  
4. have completed at least primary school  
5. equal representation of men and women.

Economic situation of the group relevant to the project: In the Republic of Croatia in 2009, 2.14% of the total population was beneficiary of permanent social assistance. In Međimurje the percentage is 4.42%. (Source: Annual of SWC Croatia 2009.). More precise data are Čakovec SWC's from 31.12.2009, which state that this form of aid included 5232 people.

According to the SWC on 31.12.2010, 5717 people used permanent social assistance, so the latest data show that in Međimurje 4.997% of the population uses permanent social assistance, which is 9.27% increase in one year. 74% of permanent social assistance beneficiaries come from the Roma minority (Annual Report of CSW Čakovec, 2010.). According to the records from December 2010. in Croatia there was 319 845 unemployed persons, and in Međimurje 7281 (source: Annual CES 2010.). Completely transparent data on the share of Roma in total unemployment in Međimurje do not exist, but there are estimations from June 2011. based on the criteria of knowledge of the Romany language, which was conducted by ES regional department Čakovec. 1174 unemployed Roma belong to the able-bodied age of 15-44 years. In this age group there is a total of 4844 unemployeed in Međimurje. Although they make about 7% of the population, the proportion of Roma in this age group in total unemployment is 24.24%. So unemployment in the Roma minority is about 3 times higher than the average MW.

**Selection criteria:** Several databases and methods were used to create database of potential beneficiaries: Croatian Employment Service database, Social Welfare Center database, invitation though media (local newspapers and radio) and personally informing potential beneficiaries by project team members. Invitation for the informing about the project and possibilities to enter education for assistant chef was sent by mail to 195 addresses to persons which met target group criteria defined in the project.

135 persons were informed; 55 filled in the application and thus expressed interest; 43 met all required criteria and were invited for further testing in motivation and interviews. At this point the project is in the process of final selection of beneficiaries.

Selection criteria that are in use: members of the Roma community, long-term unemployed, permanent receivers of social assistance, have completed at least primary school, equal representation of men and women, motivation for education program for assistant chef.

**Program overview:** Because of the great population of Roma minority of the Međimurje County which are social welfare beneficiaries, SWC Čakovec with the partner institutions OŠ Orehovica and Association UZOR decided to act on the strengthening of Roma social welfare beneficiaries on the labor market.

In 2011 team lead by external expert started with the analysis of the needs and project design. Full application form was submitted in 2012; contract signed in November 2014.

The implementation is divided into 2 stages: 1<sup>st</sup> stage: preparation for the implementation of the education for assistant chef. Activities predicted during this stage: public presentation of the project, creating and verifying the new curriculum for the assistant chef, informing and motivating participants and their family members, organizing symposium of the topics of education of venerable groups, study visits to Macedonia and Slovenia, creating promotional materials

2<sup>nd</sup> stage: enrolling beneficiaries in education for assistant chef, implementing the education, organizing presentation of the project and skills that beneficiaries gained during education on 3 fair in Međimurje County, organizing practical training at employers in hotels in Croatian seaside, promotional activities, creating film on the project activates and education of the beneficiaries

**Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** During first 5 months of the project implementation (we are currently in our 5 month of implementation<sup>9</sup>) we did following evaluation processes:

1. Internal evaluation after 1<sup>st</sup> month of implementation
2. Internal evaluation after 3<sup>rd</sup> month of implementation
3. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter report submitted
4. During monthly partner meetings activities implemented during past month are presented to partner staff , with activities results and indicators achieved

**Outcomes:** During first 6 months of the implementation period, only informing and selection of the candidates was planned.

During first 5 months following activities have been implemented: press conference, 1 30-minutes radio show, preoperational workshop for project team for activities of informing and selection of candidates, 4 seminars on andragogy and didactics for project team and professors that will conduct education, creating curriculum for assistant chef adapted to the situation and needs of the target group; informing and selecting candidates, study visits to Slovenia and Macedonia

**Sustainability:** with received diploma as assistant chefs, candidates will increase their competitiveness on the labor market.

No other actions are being planned or developed at this time.

**Cost-Efficiency:** it is not possible to calculate requested

**Lessons Learned:** Starting date of the project was reason for modification of the action plan (gantt chart) because some activities should relate with summer touristic season. Additionally, public procurement which was not planned delayed great portion of the activities (because activities are connected and interrelated) but all within manageable time.

Some smaller changes had to be made in the design of the project such as form of selection process, duration of education for assistant chef, place of performance practical training, postponing some activities.

Changes that were made, were made to make sure that the activity is possible to implement within the budget or the time frame, and additional to that- to enhance quality of the results.

**Resources:** [http://czss-ck.hr/?Projekti\\_\\_Gastrostart](http://czss-ck.hr/?Projekti__Gastrostart)

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**Implementer:** United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Croatia in cooperation with Međimurje county administration, Public employment service and cluster CEDRA/ NGO ACT

**Status:** ongoing

**Country:** Croatia

**Location:**

Croatia, Međimurje County

Međimurje County is territorially the smallest Croatian County, but also has the highest share of Roma in its total population. According to the 2011 Census, total population in Međimurje was 113.804 inhabitants with 5.107 persons who identified themselves as Roma. It is commonly accepted that this figure underestimates reality and it is estimated that 7000 to 9000 Roma live in Međimurje. Međimurje County counts 12 Roma settlements which are spatially distanced from majority villages resulting in geographical aspects of exclusion.

**Partners:**

Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities (GOHRRNM); Office for health, social issues and national minorities of Međimurje County; City of Čakovec; Croatian Employment Service Čakovec; Centre for Social Welfare Čakovec; Roma Minority Council Međimurje County; and Roma Minority Council Kuršanec.

**Funders:** Open Society Foundations/Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma; UNDP

**Targeting:**

Target groups of the project:

- Representatives from local authorities Međimurje County;
- Representatives from local institutions Međimurje County;
- Representatives from NGOs Međimurje County,
- Representatives from Roma NGOs Međimurje County;
- Roma individuals especially young generation.

Final project beneficiaries: Roma community Međimurje County.

**Program overview:**

The project "*Platform for Roma Inclusion in Međimurje*" was designed in order to address processes of longstanding exclusion of Roma from education, employment, community participation and governance in Međimurje County, Croatia.

Through the implementation of a set of interlinked activities, the project contributed to social inclusion of Roma in Međimurje County through creation of sustainable partnerships and practices promoting access and participation of Roma in policy making, governance of overall local development (*overall project goal*).

In terms of employment, Roma in Croatia have both a lower employment rate and a higher unemployment rate than the general population (UNDP). Among young Roma women, 82% are unemployed, compared to just 24% of non-Roma women of the same age. Roma in rural areas are at a particular disadvantage on the labour market: while 46% of Roma from urban areas have jobs, only 30% in rural areas are employed.

In an effort to help the Roma in breaking the employment barrier, UNDP implemented following activities:

- Production of a report mapping Roma self-employment opportunities in Međimurje County and exploring different innovation models of self-employment for Roma<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> This activity included assessment of potential for Roma employment within Međimurje County. Based on listing of these professional skills and market context, the analysis identified the following ideas for potential future Roma cooperatives in Međimurje County: 1) Food bank shop; 2) Food stores (consumer cooperatives); 3) Social cooperative child care; 4) Cooperatives to provide services in homes; 5) Cooperative collecting waste/recyclables; 6) Snail farming; 7) Cooperative for bio-dynamic agriculture; 8) Learning Centre; 9) Roma ethno-house; 10) Cooperative of women – housewives/beauty salon; 11) Building cooperative.

- **Supporting the development of two Roma cooperatives in Međimurje County (Roma settlements of Kuršanec and Sitnice);**
- Development of a mentoring scheme involving Roma and disadvantaged non-Roma pupils from vocational schools, their teachers, employers association and Public Employment Service.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The project was managed and monitored by a Project Manager (PM). A project board with representatives of UNDP, County public administration and Roma representatives supported implementation of the project, its monitoring and evaluation. For the project, two narrative and financial mid-term reports and final report were produced by Project authorities and shared with donors and other national and local key stakeholders.

### **Key project outcomes:**

- 1) National report on social and economic position of Roma on the point to be published and UNDP's data used in policy documents;
  - 2) County Action plans for Roma inclusion in Međimurje and Sisak-Moslavina Counties developed;
  - 3) Međimurje County Atlas of Roma communities developed and in use for the purpose of planning and progress monitoring ([link to Atlas](#));
  - 4) Local authorities/institutions supported to develop EU projects involving Roma NGOs as partners;
  - 5) Roma NGOs and individuals empowered to formulate and prioritize their demands and translate them into project proposals (project clinic and mentoring set up);
  - 6) Improved educational outcomes of Roma pupils so that their integration into Croatian schools is better facilitated;
  - 7) Improved capacities of teachers for inclusive teaching and options for additional extra-curricular classes for Roma;
  - 8) **Improved self-employment and employment opportunities for Roma through creative training schemes;**
  - 9) In addition, - an interdisciplinary mobile team recruited by UNDP has linked more than 329 Roma people with Međimurje local institutions by helping them to access public services such as health, welfare, housing, economic activity, education and training, and employment opportunities. In terms of results, were supported: 69 requests for scholarships for Roma secondary schools pupils; 12 requests for one-time financial assistances (for buying school books for instance); 1 registration in kindergarten; 67 requests for child allowance. This support represents a total of 195 111 EUR which has been/will be directly allocated to Roma population.
  - 10) Enhanced access of Roma communities to sustainable and good quality public services and empowered to initiate social activities in their communities (mobile team in Roma settlements).
  - 11) Multicultural sensitivity increased between Roma and non-Roma young people.
- o One of the key project outcomes was **to improve self-employment opportunities of Roma in Međimurje and especially consisted in supporting the development of two social cooperatives led by long-term unemployed Roma people.**

Despite a global low level of formal education, a majority of Roma developed some specific professional skills through informal forms of education which are still not formally recognised in Croatian system for validation of learning outcomes. UNDP's report on Roma self-employment opportunities in Međimurje County thus confirmed that self-employment in a form of a cooperative is a very appropriate and suitable model to support Roma towards economic independence particularly given the unfavorable conditions that currently prevail on the Croatian labor market.

- o In cooperation with CEDRA/ACT Čakovec, the project then supported development of **2 Roma cooperatives.**

The **first cooperative "Domaći vrt"** established under the project and registered in December 2013, in the Roma settlements of Kuršanec and Sitnice, is organized around **organic and biodynamic farming**. So far, some 30 long-term unemployed Roma from Međimurje County have received training that they will apply in the collection and cultivation of medicinal plants and the production of vegetables and fruits following exclusively biodynamic principles. Due to the complexity of the process, the cooperative will include other ecological producers and experts from the local community, and it will be mentored by the cluster CEDRA/NGO ACT Čakovec<sup>2</sup>. In February 2014, cooperative started with production. For now, **4 long-term unemployed Roma are employed** in cooperative (with

the support of schemes for self-employment of the unemployed that are offered by Croatian Public employment Service in e Čakovec).



Picture: Rome cooperative "Domaći vrt".

**The second cooperative from the Kuršanec settlement is called "Romona"** and involves 4 unemployed Roma women aged 17-35 years old. This second cooperative, on the point to be registered, will mostly deal with screen-printing with ecological colors and will soon start with production.

- The **strategic planning process** for both cooperatives has been implemented through a series of meetings/trainings with 14 Roma cooperatives' members led by CEDRA /ACT Čakovec through UNDP's project.

The theoretical part of the training cycle, which teaches the various activities of cooperatives, how cooperative businesses are conducted and important social skills for employment, has been completed.

The result is a strategic plan for each cooperative the next two years - determining structural developments of the organisations. After the determination of strategic goals (strengthening organizational and financial structure; ensuring the competitiveness of products/services; strengthening relations with local stakeholders; promoting entrepreneurship), a business plan for each cooperative has also been developed providing an overview of operations and anticipated financial structure of the new structures. Further cycles of professional trainings and a mentoring scheme for cooperatives' members are planned.

- The two cooperatives are **off to a good start**. UNDP and CEDRA/ACT Čakovec plan to continue to work together to mentor the cooperatives to be become sustainable over the long term. In addition, these organizations will also provide them with support in looking for additional investment. The two initiatives will be watched closely for their potential to serve as **a model for helping marginalized groups** create their own businesses and thus secure decent livelihoods for their families.

#### **Sustainability:**

In order to ensure sustainability of the project, all project's activities were implemented in strong partnerships with local actors to ensure their appropriation after project's end. Mentorship and professional trainings of cooperatives' members will be further provided by CEDRA/ACT Čakovec and will deal with:

- Further professional trainings on organic and biodynamic farming techniques (for members of the cooperative "Domaći vrt"); further professional trainings on screen-printing techniques (for members of the cooperative "Romona");
- Further mentoring and trainings regarding management activities of social cooperatives;
- Mentoring and trainings on PR and communication techniques for enhancing visibility and promotion of the cooperatives and their products;
- Mentoring and trainings on project development for enhancing fundraising activities of the cooperatives.

#### **Cost-Efficiency:**

For now, cooperatives are not yet economically viable. However, strategic plans (business plans) of both cooperatives expect that both initiatives will be economically viable from mid- 2015.

**Lessons Learned:**

Project conducted to the definition and implementation of an **action model process** helping Roma (and marginalized groups in general) to create their own businesses. This model is ready to be replicated in other Croatian counties with high share of Roma population and includes in details lessons learnt from the implementation process (involvement of Roma community at all stages of the process; partnerships with local companies/institutions; etc.).

**Resources:**

- [Međimurje County Atlas of Roma settlements](#)
- Report on Roma self-employment opportunities in Međimurje County – forthcoming

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## THE "TEN-PERCENT-RULE"

**Implementer:** City of Most, Czech Republic

**Status:** ongoing

**Country:** Czech Republic

**Location and context:** This practice was developed and applied first in the city of Most, which is a severely disadvantaged industrial town in the Northern Bohemian industrial agglomeration. The city is also known for the Roma ghetto Chánov, which is separated from the rest of the town and underwent in the years after 1990 a process of serious decay. The city realizes one of the so-called Integrated Urban Development Plans (financed by ERDF), which focuses partly on the Chanov settlement and led to the reconstruction of some of the housing blocks, the creation of a community centre and the upgrading of public spaces. The construction works are realized in the form of public tenders, which need to be realized in accordance with the provisions of the Czech law on public tenders. The invention by the city was the formulation of a requirement that at least ten percent of the work force has to be long-term unemployed, preferably living in the Chanov settlement. This rule allowed the local Roma to benefit from the construction works also in regard to employment. Supposedly, some of the workers were given more permanent employment by the companies after the conclusion of works related to the project.

**Partners:** Local NGOs, state Agency for Social Inclusion

**Funders:** The project was funded by the ERDF and accompanying soft measures were funded by ESF. However, the rule could be applied in any other project (even in projects that do otherwise not relate to Roma integration) and is promoted by the Agency for Social Inclusion as a way to promote employment.

**Targeting:** A few individuals were selected by private companies. The selection criteria was status of long-term unemployment and, at least in later tenders, also the local residence of the workers.

**Program overview:** The program is based on combination of hard measures (upgrading of public spaces, reconstructing of houses, creation of community centre, creation of pathway linking city and Chanov settlement) and soft measures (job trainings, community activities, social work). The ten-percent rule was applied in relation to the hard measures.

**Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** The project is still ongoing. The financial realization is monitored by the Ministry for Regional Development. An independent evaluation was conducted by Štěpán Ripka (for the Metropolitan Institute) and a shorter report was written by the author of this report.

**Outcomes:** The rule would need to be applied systematically in many projects to bring significant change. As the rule was so far applied only in this project, where it led to the temporary employment of a number of workers, the long-term impact was limited even though some of the workers apparently gained employment beyond the project. In addition to the direct impact on employment, I consider the rule as a positive element in the sense that it could increase the acceptance of the other improvements brought by the project among the Roma. Without this rule, it would on the opposite be awkward to realize a project that should benefit Roma in an area inhabited by unemployed Roma that does not offer any employment to the Roma. However, without the rule this would be a likely scenario. Another important outcome is that the city demonstrated that it is possible to formulate such a condition without violating the very rigid laws on public tenders. The model is now promoted to other municipalities facing Roma inclusion challenges.

**Sustainability:** The city seems willing to continue with this practice.

**Cost-Efficiency:** From the perspective of the city, additional costs are likely to be non-existent or neglectable. At the opposite, the application of such a rule ensures that at least some of the money spent ends in the local economy.

**Lessons Learned:** In the beginning, the rule asked only the employment of long-term-unemployed. Later on, the requirement was modified in order to ensure that the unemployed are in contact with the local community.

**Resources:** The rule is described in the following publication by the Agency for Social Inclusion:

<http://www.socialni-zaclenovani.cz/dokumenty/dokumenty-k-oblasti-zamestnanost/socialne-odpovedne-zadavani-verejnych-zakazek-manual-dobrych-praxi-melkova-g-asz-2014/download>.

**Contact person:**

An independent researcher who wrote about the project in Most is Štěpan Ripka (stepanripka@gmail.com). Another person to contact in order to obtain information is Gabriela Melková (expert of the Agency for Social Inclusion for the area of employment). Her contact is melkova.gabriela@vlada.cz

## COOPERATION IN BAG SUPPORTED BY PREZI.COM

**Implementer:** BAGázs Public Association

**Status:** September, 2012 – January, 2013. Closed

**Country:** Hungary

**Location:** Bag, Roma segregated neighborhood, 54 Roma families + 140 volunteers

**Partners:** BAGázs (management, empowerment, tools, volunteers), Prezi.com (funding, volunteers), Habitat for Humanity (professional help and tools), Reflekt Stúdió (professional help and volunteers), Szociális Építőtábor Egyesület (volunteers, tools)

**Funders:** Prezi.com with HUF 5M, but exact actual budget unknown

**Targeting:** Target group: 54 poor Roma families, more than 200 people; selection of families: willingness to actively participate in the planning phase (3 meetings) and offer at least 2 hours of voluntary work;

### **Program overview:**

Prezi.com chose the Roma segregated neighborhood in Bag as a place for group training in the Fall, 2012. They offered to help BAGázs Association and renovate the buildings there. For this cause they offered HUF 5M and 120 volunteers. With the donation the company contributed to buying a container house for BAGázs, used for community development purposes.

The project not only relied on locals in the actual works, but also in involved them in the preparation. The project was designed and implemented by BAGázs and Prezi.com together with the local people. BAGázs participated in the joint planning of works together with locals and the management of the two days of works. The aim was to improve the housing conditions of local people, familiarize them with the details of the design phase, and also take an active part in it. A long-term goal was to provide a basis for similar projects, activate locals, spread such community voluntary work, and giving mutual help.

The preparation of this project meant several meetings of the Budapest and local employees of BAGázs in November 2012 and also with other partners. Subsequently, several planning meetings were held at the site, designed to inform the locals about the program and involve of those living in area in the formulation of tasks, in order to carry out works that were fully based on their needs.

Preconditions for participating in the project were a minimum of 2 hours of volunteer work on the community property and participation at the three planning meetings. In these meetings the locals could speak about their needs, and then they jointly planned the actual works together with Prezi.com and BAGázs organisers. They organized themselves into teams and determined the workflow. About 50 locals participated at each meetings.

The houses were assessed by a Habitat for Humanity foreman and local staff member of BAGázs Association. The inhabitants of the houses themselves decided on the basis of the available budget, what renovations they wished in their house.

The 54 families were divided into nine groups, which are led by two local men skilled in construction works. Each group consisted of six Prezi.com and one BAGázs volunteers. The task of the groups was to carry out pre-planned works in the houses together with the men living in the houses. This is how the joint work with locals and volunteers was achieved.

The project was implemented on 10-11 January 2013. The work lasted from 8 am to 5 pm, tools and materials were deployed at the yards of two local residents. During the two days, all teams have visited 5-6 houses, and made the necessary repairs.

It is important to note that a separate group was formed for the production of desks. The children who wished could become proud owners of locally produced desks.

In addition to the individual renovations the container house was also renovated painted and a 30 m<sup>2</sup> covered terrace was built behind it together with locals and volunteers.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The monitoring aspect is not applicable in this case.

Milestones:

1. successful planning and awareness-raising in the Fall, 2012;
2. purchase of necessary tools, materials and equipment by the time of works
3. successful carrying out of the planned works in two phases (10-11 and 26-27 January, 2013)

All planned targets were achieved.

### **Outcomes:**

The project resulted in 54 house renovated (insulated windows and doors, broken glasses replaced by polycarbonate, 30 interior doors replaced), more than 1000 m long fences were built around the houses. Another result was that container house a terrace was built, and the construction of a barn was begun.

After the renovation program on 26-27 Jan. volunteer days were organized to complete the remaining works. Besides fitting all the door handles and locks, we continued with the terrace and the barn. The volunteer days were attended by BAGázs volunteers, locals and staff of Reflekt Studio.

### **Sustainability:**

The work of BAGázs Association is a community driven initiative that keeps constant contact with the target group, and a large part of its members are members of the community as well. This way the residents of the renovated houses live a kind of life that is partly open to the community and thus they are enhanced to sustain the status of their renovated homes. Another sustainability fact is that project results (community house, terrace and barn) are constantly used and are essential to the work of the BAGázs.

### **Cost-Efficiency:**

No such calculations were made, but it is true that the unpaid (voluntary) work consists at least 2/3 of the value of project results, and careful previous planning had ensured that only the necessary works were carried out. It is unlikely that one could achieve these results much cheaper than this. The benefit of the work for the volunteers (e.g. change of attitude, increased team cohesion within Prezi.com, etc.) is not measurable, but it is presumed to be quite substantial.

### **Lessons Learned:**

The project is a good example for other companies in the sense that an internationally recognized company supports such a house renovation program, organizes a team building event to carry out the works, and thus increases its corporate social responsibility (CSR). In addition, the cooperation of a for-profit company and an NGO could serve as a model for similar future initiatives.

The project is a model also in the sense that if NGOs cooperate for one cause, everyone can do the jobs they really specialize in. The involvement of locals and different experts is exemplary and informative for other similar projects.

A unique feature of the project is the key role of an individual local resident, employed by BAGázs, Roland Kanalas, who was responsible for the assessment of buildings and keeping permanent contact with locals. We believe it is important and exemplary that he is one of the locals, strengthening cohesion among residents and avoiding the feeling that outsiders carry out a major part of the project .

One of the commercial television channels made a ten-minute report of the program, thus a wider range of society was able to obtain insight into the project and the work of BAGázs Association, and gain inspiration for similar projects.

**Resources:** <http://www.bagazs.org/hu/projektek/befejezettprojektek/osszefogas-a-prezi-com-al>

**Contact:** [info@bagazs.org](mailto:info@bagazs.org), phone: +36-70-610-6536



**Implementer:** Town of Szécsény Local Government

**Status:** 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015, ongoing

**Country:** Hungary

**Location:** Szécsény, disadvantaged micro region

**Partners:**

Szécsény Local Government (project management)

Szécsény Roma Self Government (activization of target group, representing Roma needs)

**Funders:** EMMI, HUF 2 928 354, own funding by the local government in the form of available resources (shop)

**Targeting:**

Disadvantaged families participating in social land programs.

**Program overview:**

The program is designed to help local small producers access the market, the marketing of their products, and improving the employment situation of the town. During the use of the products produced and processed in public and social catering, by reducing material costs, the limited liability companies can achieve new developments thereby increasing the quality of services.

In order to enter the market successfully the products are marketed via direct communication about local products in the local media, and brochures for 2000 households in order to facilitate market access.

We also plan to use special packaging applicable only to products manufactured in Szécsény, thus contributing to the wider marketing of products and of Szécsény tourist attractions.

The shop selling local products will be operated by Szécsény General Education Nonprofit Ltd., which is owned by the municipality.

In addition to the food products, the local folk artists can also sell their products, the expansion of which is planned in 2014, complete with tourism-related programs such as tastings, wine and spirits competitions, organizing cooking competitions.

The expected revenues will be used by the local government for public and social catering and pay social assistance.

**Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

As the project is just about to start, there is no information about this.

**Outcomes:**

The processing of goods produced on municipal land in 2014. The project is expected to result in the preservation of vegetables: peas (370 kg), 1000 kg of beetroot, onions (775 kg) and 5300 kg of cucumbers, tomatoes (600 kg), 350 kg of paprika.

The project results in the expected storage of vegetables: peas (100 kg), 500 kg of beetroot, onions (300 kg) and 1500 heads of lettuce, cucumbers (1000 kg), 500 kg of tomatoes, paprika (300 kg) and 2200 kg of carrots.

The building made available to establish the shop is in good condition and is owned by the town of Szécsény.

**Sustainability:**

The sustainability of project achievements is ensured as there is a great need for such a social shop. The project sustainability is also ensured by the favourable sale prices, the low projected operating costs, favorable purchasing

prices, the proximity of purchasing sites and the already large demand. We also offer local artisans retail sale area. Increased tourism activity enhanced by the marketing local products also contributes to the sustainability of project results and outcomes.

**Cost-Efficiency:**

Such calculations are not available at the moment.

**Lessons Learned:**

As the project is just before start, such conclusions are not yet available.

**Contact person:** Dr József Bagó +36 32 370 199

## SOCIAL SHOP IN HOMROGD

**Implementer:** Homrogd Local Government

**Status:** 1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014, ongoing

**Country:** Hungary

**Location:** Homrogd

**Partners:**

Homrogd Local Government (project management)

Homrogd Roma Self Government (activization of target group, representing Roma needs)

**Funders:** EMMI, HUF 3M, own funding by the local government in the form of available resources (presently operated production capacities, building for the shop)

**Targeting:**

50 to 70 families participating in the social land program that became able to produce quantities in excess of family demand.

**Program overview:**

The idea of creating a social shop rests in the fact that the quantity of agricultural products produced under the social land program operated by the local government for 20 years exceeds the amount of self-subsistence. Therefore a social shop was planned to become a part of the local economy and improve the financial situation of participating families.

On the other hand the local government established a well-equipped nursery garden under the Start Work Program, where purposeful cultivation responding to local needs could be carried out. We also developed capacities for preservation, making preserves and pickling that is also able to produce goods for sale. Before it was also a tradition in the area to collect wild fruits and herbs, so reviving this creates an opportunity for both collectors and consumers. Local economy is also enhanced by creating material resources for gardening and keeping small livestock. As a ceramics production workshop is operating in the village, the produce of that could also be sold in this form.

The goal of the project is to equip the social shop with equipment, tools and furniture (sale area and storage space). Our plan is to set up cold storage space where the freshness of fruits and vegetables is ensured, thus an increase in the duration of the sales potential can be realized. The production of products is ensured in the capacities developed earlier (see above). Other necessary goods would be procured from wholesale shops.

**Outcomes:**

The building made available to establish the shop is in good condition, just needs painting.

Equipment to be procured: 1 cooler, 1 slicer, 2 scales, cash register, milk cooler, shelves, sales counter.

In the warehouse we plan to develop a cooling chamber where are able to store fresh fruits and vegetables for a long time.

We plan to permanently employ 2 trained employees (already available).

**Sustainability:**

The sustainability of project achievements is ensured as there is a great need for such an social enterprise already now. The project sustainability is also ensured by the favourable sale prices, the low projected operating costs, favorable purchasing prices, the proximity of purchasing sites and the already large demand. On the other hand, as we offer farmers retail sale area, we believe in the motivation and creativity of producers to offer a wide variety of goods. A direction of further development will be the targeted production and acquisition of produce and products. Another long-term goal is the creation of a social cooperative and thus livestock breeding (pigs) and processing. All these factors can ensure sustainability and continuous improvement.

**Cost-Efficiency:**

Such calculations are not available at the moment.

**Lessons Learned:**

As the project is ongoing, such conclusions are not yet available.

**Contact person:** Dr Imre Juhász, phone +36/46-554-200

**Implementer:** Van Helyed Foundation

**Status:** ongoing for 6 years from November, 2013.

**Country:** Hungary

**Location:** Ózd, Hétes area, 16 segregated settlements with poor economic and social situation, previously the area of volunteer work of Van Helyed Foundation (see at <http://cseppgyerek.blog.hu>)

**Partners:**

Van Helyed Foundation (project management, development and mentoring, cooperation with schools)

Schools in and outside of Ózd

**Funders:** preparation: EMMI, HUF 8M (screenings HUF 4M, the employment of 1 full time teacher HUF 4M); actual project: Velux Foundation HUF 300M

**Targeting:**

In light of the national competency tests even the best students studying in Ózd schools (educating mostly Roma students) perform well below average. This means that the class 8 students are at the level of class 5-6. In foreign languages they even produce lower results. In our experience, competences of talented, yet disadvantaged Roma children do not develop during their educational career. They become passive in studying and tend to avoid facing school failure. Many drop out of school and finish class 8 as functionally illiterate.

The schools are unprepared to manage the tensions arising from the differences in socialization of marginalized groups. They possess no tool to manage deficits having a negative effect on studying and school integration. As a result, the education of talented but disadvantaged children deteriorates. There is no realistic possibility for them to develop their abilities, to switch school or go on to further education. Thus they have a minimum chance of getting into higher education or onto the labor market.

Possible beneficiaries (about 105 children over 6 years) meet the following criteria:

- Aged 11-15 with grade 4 (good) on the average;
- Talented in some area, motivated (also the parents), but disadvantaged, willing to undertake an independent examination of social environment;
- Preferably of Roma origin.

**Program overview:**

We developed a complex educational program to treat the problems leading to social and economic crisis. The preparation of the realization of the program is supported by EMMI and consists of the following: creating individualized screening methodologies for about 120-150 possible beneficiaries, their actual screening, preparation of individual development programs, contacting schools of students, contacting future inclusive schools.

The actual personal development is supported by the Danish VELUX Foundations as of Summer 2014 for six years. Our program is a methodological model, in which we help desegregation through mobilization within the current school system.

Within the project create a social network based on national cooperations with educational institutions and boarding schools that leads students out of segregated schools. The basis of the network is a new methodological center in a building already located near the segregated areas, already owned by Van Helyed Foundation. The inclusive educational pedagogy program of the center allows that disadvantaged Roma children achieve the level of knowledge appropriate to their age and that they enter schools most compatible to their abilities. The shift of schools of our students is enhanced throughout the program, thus enabling choice and mobility in educational opportunities.

Preparation is enhanced in an extracurricular education community, in a motivating environment. Individual development is person-centered, child-centered, collaborative with families, manages social disadvantages and intensive. In the meantime we look for the most appropriate, high-quality integrated school, college if necessary, where they will continue their studies. Their progress is monitored. In order to achieve success we provide

professional mentoring in partnership with the chosen school even to graduation. We undertake the development of nearly 100 children.

The Education Network is model of how to build bridges within the school system between (and from) segregated schools and/to non-segregated schools. Our program is not only inclusive with regard to education. The development of cooperation with the family through social work is an essential element of the preparation process to work with children. The process managing also the social situation allows children to change school and go on to further education.

We also prepare inclusive schools, give professional assistance the mother schools, as well as follow and help the integration and development of young people.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The development of children is individually monitored through personal mentoring.

### **Outcomes:**

Preparation:

- 120-150 children assessed (complex screenings, personal psychological and pedagogical assessment), personal development plans are developed
- About 10 schools contacted and informed

Program phase:

- 35 students changing school
- 70 students are cared for simultaneously (each year)
- 5 students/year going on to further studies
- More educated disadvantaged (mostly Roma) students, much better chances of a successful life.
- More sensitive, integrated and inclusive school system and teachers in Ózd (at least 3, previously non-inclusive primary schools, 3 secondary schools), decreased educational segregation. About 10 inclusive schools outside of Ózd.
- Integration and inclusion of the otherwise quite segregated Roma community in Ózd.
- Renovation of the present building and creation of a methodological centre.
- Complex methodology to enhance the further studies of disadvantaged students and the successful involvement in inclusive schools

### **Sustainability:**

The sustainability of project achievements is ensured as there is a great need for such a social activity. The change of attitude of schools and the overall population ensures further sustainability. The project is using operational forms adaptable to the current legal and school system, thus long term operational finance is also secured.

### **Cost-Efficiency:**

Such calculations are not available at the moment.

### **Lessons Learned:**

As the project is just starting, such conclusions are not yet available.

### **Resources:**

<http://cseppgyerek.blog.hu/>

**Contact person:** Kriszta Bódis, [bodiskriszta@gmail.com](mailto:bodiskriszta@gmail.com),

**Implementer:** Autonomia Foundation, Boston Consulting Group

**Status:** ongoing

**Country:** Hungary

**Location:** Budapest, Székesfehérvár, Nyíregyháza, Békéscsaba, large towns of Hungary, the location of the firms partnering in the program as employers.

**Partners:**

- Roma NGOs, facilitating the recruitment and screening of the participants (Add a kezredAssociation, Aparhanti independent Roma association, Uccu Foundation)
- NGOs supporting Roma university graduates (Romaveristas, Romaster, Roma Education Fund)
- Training, recruitment companies providing services for the training free of charge (Hays, Dramatix, Assessment System)
- Large companies providing employment: energy providers, banks, electronics production company

**Funders:** Open Society Foundation – 22 950 USD

**Targeting:** young educated Roma, aged 18-35, with secondary or higher education. Unemployed, or present employment is lower quality than their qualification.

Minimum criteria for selection: being Roma with at least secondary education.

Process of selection: recruitment through various Roma or pro-Roma organizations, online application, screening interview

Target numbers for pilot year (2014): 60 trained participants, 15-20 employed through the program at partner firms

**Program overview:**

The project aims at developing a new model to facilitate Roma employment in the private sector. The present phase is a small-scale pilot program, experimenting with various tools that assist the potential employees to access mainstream jobs as well as the employer companies to create inclusive environment.

The results of the experiment – if successful – can form the basis of well-established, fact-based policy tools for the government for creating more efficient employment and integration policies. The final objective of the project is to create a tried-and-tested model that can be mainstreamed by the present partners or by state actors.

The program is initiated by the Boston Consulting Group, in cooperation with Autonomia Foundation and several large companies in Hungary. The program is piloting a new approach for Roma integration through promoting employment in the mainstream business sector. The main idea of the program is to facilitate access of Roma to non-physical jobs at market-leading companies that represent higher level employment opportunities. The pilot project is largely implemented through coordinated CSR activities of various actors – large firms as employers, training and assessment companies, consultancy companies and NGOs.

The project identifies and recruits companies that show openness to this initiative - mostly from the client sphere of the Boston Consulting Group.

The project assists the recruitment and employment process by

- identifying relevant positions at the participating companies
- adjusting various company procedures to make the open positions accessible for Roma (sensitive recruitment, affirmative action, etc)
- recruiting and screening potential Roma employees
- prepare the candidates for the recruitment process
- assist the employers creating an inclusive environment, help the new Roma employees integrating into the company environment, minimizing drop-out
- facilitate networking among the partner organizations
- draws conclusions, adjusts the methodology and distill a model at the end of the project.

- **Recruitment of Roma candidates:**

The recruitment at the countryside localities is based on the client network of local Roma organizations and other organizations supporting Roma youth.

These organizations together with Autonomia Foundation do the initial prescreening of the applicants, according to the expectation of the given job openings. Recruitment and prescreening is based on an online application form and personal interviews

- ***Preparation of the candidates:***

The preparation involves a 4-day training with various training elements – computer skills, presentation and communication skills, simulation of interview situation, advice on CV and motivational letter, individual coaching, feedback on personality test, etc.

- ***Assisting the companies with***

- compilation of a practical handbook for the participating companies
- collection of similar initiatives at partner companies within the same multinational holding
- reviewing relevant company procedures and adjusting them to facilitate the recruitment of Roma (sensitive recruitment, affirmative action, mentoring, etc)
- collecting the job openings, coordinating the recruitment process

- ***Networking and conclusions***

- two workshops are organized during the pilot year with all the partner organizations at the beginning and at the end of the project to evaluate and adapt the procedures
- methodological review, model description at the end of the project.

**Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- 2 workshops to evaluate the effectiveness of the project and adapt procedures where necessary
- continuous monitoring of the status of the participants (in recruitment, successfully employed, drop-out, etc)
- continuous review of the available job openings and matching them with the profile of the candidates
- feedback from all participants of the trainings (participants, trainers, interview simulators) at the end of each training round and refinement of the training methods

Milestones and targets are:

- four recruitment-training-employment cycles in the pilot year
- 10-15 participants/training, 50-60 altogether this year
- 4-5 participants successfully employed/quarter year, 15-20 altogether this year

**Outcomes:**

The pilot phase involves:

- five market-leading companies enrolled as employers
- 20 Roma assisted in finding employment at these companies
- methodology and model tried and distilled for Roma integration through promoting employment in the mainstream business sector.
- cooperation between 10-15 various organizations (employer companies, training, recruitment and consultancy firms, NGOs and Roma colleges) established
- new CSR strategies developed or strengthened that have tangible impact on Roma integration

**Sustainability:**

- employed participants will have stable, long-term, quality employment
- the model developed will be tested, adapted and ready for enlargement after the pilot year
- actual plan for sustaining/broadening of the project in the framework of a three-year Progress project submitted in December 2013 (waiting for the result of the application).

**Cost-Efficiency:**

At present the project is run on a very low budget, covering “hard” expenses, like food, lodging and travel expenses of the trainings. At the present pilot phase all the partners – BCG, Autonomia Foundation, the training, assessment and recruitment companies, the local organizations involved in the recruitment process – work in this project without remuneration.

The value of the contribution of the training companies is approximately 8,8 million HUF/four training events this year. The value of the work of the implementing organization and the partner Roma organizations is not calculated yet

Detailed cost efficiency calculations are not done in the project, however it could be calculated on the basis of

- increased income of the participants by gaining better employment
- public costs saved on unemployment/social benefits, etc on participants who would be unemployed, enrolled into employment training, etc if not employed through the project

### **Lessons Learned:**

During the first 5 month of project implementation the main conclusion is that the model seems to be working. There are elements of the project that should be developed further, when more resources are available. These are the followings, based on the experiences so far:

Longer, more diverse preparation process, before enrolling the participants into employment

Coaching, mentoring the participants at the preparation, and later, at the early phase of employment

Carrier orientation for the participants not gaining employment in the program

Broadening the scope of the employer firms in number, geographical location, type of position offered

### **Resources:**

Project webpage: [www.integrom.hu](http://www.integrom.hu)

Program description on Autonomia webpage: <http://autonomia.hu/hu/programok/integrom-program>

### **Contact person:**

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**Implementer:** Implementing Agency for OP Employment and Social Inclusion

**Status:** January 2012 - December 2015 (ongoing)

**Country:** Slovak Republic

**Location:** eligible are all Slovak self-government regions except Bratislava self-government region

**Partners:** none

**Funders:** European Social Fund; budget: 29 999 999,46 €

### **Targeting:**

Target groups (1):

Long-term unemployed; vulnerable groups; job seekers; job seekers with low qualification and/or basic level of education; spatially isolated groups; children – recipients of social tutoring and legal protection provided in line with particular laws; communities – recipients of assistance in material need; citizens from segregated communities; citizens whose income is below poverty line; low income employees; youngsters – recipients of social services in line with particular laws; communities endangered by social exclusion, drop-outs, young adults leaving child homes and foster care households, socially dependent women after maternity leave; disabled persons; elderly people; lone seniors; homeless people; people with drug abuse syndrome; citizens returning from imprisonment; marginalized communities.

Target groups (2):

Field social workers, assistants of field social worker.

The selection process has been realized via direct contracting to the applicant ( IA OP EaSI as IB/MA ) due to the comprehensive character and nationwide focus.

### **Program overview:**

National project is aimed at support of field social work. The main objective is support of social inclusion via increased accessibility, quality and efficiency of care services aimed at persons at risk of social exclusion. The purpose of project is to **increase their employability** and to minimize socio-pathologic phenomena. Field social work within marginalized Roma communities is an important tool of social inclusion and sensibilization of majority regarding respecting of MRC needs. Via education and awareness raising campaigns the project contributes to change of target group's values. Permanent field social work at local level helps to improve position of Roma minority in the Slovak Republic.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Interim monitoring reports are submitted to the Managing Authority on regular ( 6 months ) basis; the period of implementation is January 2012 - December 2015; values of indicators are reported on six months basis.

Evaluation of impacts shall be realized by the end of project implementation. Possible social changes shall be interpreted with help of sets of data on supported clients.

### **Outcomes:**

- target value (y. 2015) of no. of persons involved into project activities: 86 872
- value ( dec. 2013) of no. of persons involved into project activities: 64 019
- target value (y. 2015 ) of no. of disabled persons involved: 750
- value ( dec. 2013) of no. of disabled persons involved: 3 497
- target value (y. 2015) of no. of field social workers incl. assistants: 860
- value ( dec. 2013) of no. of field social workers incl. assistants: 852
- target value (y. 2015 ) of no. of involved municipalities: 250
- value ( dec. 2013 ) of no. of involved municipalities: 273

In favor of target group approx. 146 000 interventions have been realized in respective period.

*Municipalities* represents the final recipient of field social work.

**Sustainability:**

The main prerequisite of outcomes sustainability is consolidation of field social work and increased quality. Beneficiary ensures the field social work in excluded communities from y. 2005 via demand-driven projects. Slovak Republic intends to follow the scope of national project with support of EU co-financed resources and due to amended legislation, innovated strategies and existing standards of *field social work*. Regional coordinators assist in methodological leadership; difficult client cases are solved with help of external experts. Permanent training of field social workers and assistants is ensured within project activities.

Added value is represented by hiring assistants of Roma origin with respective level of education who commands Roma language in most cases.

**Cost-Efficiency:**

Standard scale of per unit expenditures has been applied as a tool for simplification of financial management, regular checks on-situ are being realized; no substantial deviation or errors occurred within project management.

Current value of disbursement represents 8 649 206, 70 €, i.e. 28.8 % of committed amount.

**Lessons Learned:**

Time-schedule of project implementation has been adjusted due to the prolongation of public procurement aimed at training of target group (2). Key success factor is represented by sufficient and qualified no. of field social workers, willingness of municipalities to participate within said national project, adequate publicity and awareness raising campaign. Comprehensive evaluation shall be at the disposal by the end of project implementation, however merging small demand driven project of short term nature to an complex long-term national project seems to be efficient and sustainable solution for solving varied problems of marginalized Roma communities.

**Resources:** <http://www.iazasi.gov.sk/sk/narodny-projekt-tsp-v-obciach>, Interim monitoring reports, Annual implementation report on OP Employment and Social Inclusion ( [www.esf.gov.sk](http://www.esf.gov.sk) ).

**Contact person:**

Mgr. Marcel Fukas

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**Implementer:** Svatobor (civic association)

**Status:** November 2006 – present (projects are still ongoing)

**Country:** Slovakia

**Location:**

- Malinka areal in Rudlov village and surroundings (micro region Hlinné, Vranov nad Topľou district, Prešov region,)
- part Grodzin in Ďurd'oš village and surroundings (micro region Hanušovce nad Topľou, Vranov nad Topľou district, Prešov region)

**Partners:**

- Czech seed firm - Semo a.s. - providing sales of production, methodical and marketing support
- Slovak Land Fund and state enterprise Lesy SR - provision of land for the project (through long-term lease)
- Municipal offices of Hanušovce and Rudlov - selection and co-coordination of Roma engaged in project activities
- civic associations Sosna and Pro-Tornensis - consulting and training support for the project

**Funders:** Total budget (for the years 2006 to 2015): 730 000 EUR

- UNDP - GEF SGP Program
- Members and supporters of the civic association Svatobor
- Labor Office Vranov nad Topľou
- Slovak Government Office
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
- Hermes Österreich
- Open Society Foundation
- The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities
- Ekopolis Foundation - EEA GRANTS

**Program overview:**

Main goal of the project, as described by the implementer, is to reduce poverty and social inequalities in targeted Roma communities of Vranov nad Topľou region through the participation in the eco-farming work directed at bio-seed production.

It is a long term project implemented systematically mainly through biofarming activities, which are interconnected and their common denominator is the vision of support of the food and energy self-sufficiency of Roma communities.

It is a step by step process which consists of several individual projects and initiatives. Since 2006, the association gradually managed to secure adequate agro-technics, lands and buildings (for example: by long-term rental, or purchase), develop or renew the farming skills of Roma and to re-cultivate the lands.

**Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Monitoring and evaluation of the project is carried out regularly every 4 months in the context of project evaluation from the partners and donors.

**Outcomes:**

Project achievements:

- \* 3 Roma communities (Rudlov, Hanušovce nad Topľou and Ďurďoš) that demonstrate sustainable land and forest management;
- \* 37 participants - members of Roma communities (18 men and 19 women), mainly from municipalities Rudlov and Hanušovce nad Topľou, have received training and are involved as volunteers on water management measures, organic seed production and community-supported organic horticulture ;
- \* 157 Roma (83 women and 74 men), mainly from Rudlov, Ďurďoš and Hanušovce nad Topľou, experienced an improvement in their food self-sufficiency;
- \* formation of 11 permanent jobs for Roma in the context of the activities of eco-centers;
- \* 12 seasonal jobs for Roma - mainly in water management measures and horticultural works;
- \* 12.5 hectares of organically farmed production area, where they apply principles of sustainable management;
- \* 11 kinds of vegetable seeds, medicinal and aromatic plants produced in accordance with the quality standards of eco agriculture;
- \* 15 kinds of vegetables, mushrooms and fruit grown on eco-farm;
- \* practical environmental education courses on food and energy self-sufficiency of socially vulnerable communities.

**Sustainability:**

Long-term sustainability of the project activities is realized through the combination of income from external sources (from donors) and revenues from sales of the own production of the eco-farm.

**Resources:** [www.svatobor.estranky.sk](http://www.svatobor.estranky.sk)

**Contact person:**

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**INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OF RESIDENTS OF THE VILLAGE SPIŠSKÝ HRHOV THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF CAPACITIES OF THE MUNICIPAL COMPANY**

**Implementer:** Municipality Spišský Hrhov

**Status:** 06/2010 – 05/2012

**Country:** Slovakia

**Location:** village Spišský Hrhov (district Levoča, eastern Slovakia)

**Partners:** civic association Spiš, MVM Group Spišský Hrhov, MimoArt Spišský Hrhov, TagDesign Poprad, Labor Office Levoča

**Funders:** Project was realized thanks to the support from the European Social Fund under the Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion.

Total budget: 252.532,27 EUR

**Targeting:** The village Spišský Hrhov has for a long time been dealing with the subject of employment with the conviction that an effective employment policymaking is a matter of local approach. As a result of rising unemployment and deepening of social gap of the group of people in the village, the municipality decided to establish municipal enterprise (Hrhovské Služby, Inc.), that today has the status of a social enterprise. In addition to business work, the enterprise functions as an intermediate labor market – provides work for hardly employable members of MRC and offers them training activities (to acquire professional skills, personal competencies) related to practical training, advising and assisting in taking on the regular labor market. Municipal enterprise / social enterprise responds to the needs and demand of the local market and offers services and works, thanks to which it is able to create more jobs and to ensure its own sustainability.

**Program overview:**

The project contained following activities:

- Training of selected employees of the municipal enterprise (Hrhovské Služby, Inc.) for coordinating teams of clients from MRC through the educational and social training module
- Treatment of facilities for theoretical and practical training
- Motivation and basic training modules: Labor market, labor law, job counseling, basics of business, labor mobility, health and safety
- Training ROLE work experience
- Woodworking and wood-building work
- Plant and agriculture production

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**Implementer:** The project is managed by the Social Trade Rioja Association, a non-profit organization founded in 2005, promoted by the La Rioja Association for the Roma Promotion, the Rioja Foundation Caja de Ahorros and the Rioja Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

**Status:** It's a project that has been developing since 2005, and is the realization of a Sunday hawking market, it has a weekly frequency.

**Country:** Spain

**Location:** It takes place in La Rioja, particularly in the city of Logroño.

**Partners:** Nine years ago, La Rioja Association for the Roma promotion, proposed to the Chamber of Commerce to bring together all the people of their community that were doing selling activities and conveys the need to develop a weekly market. The Chamber was very receptive to the project and contacted with the Public Administrations in order to expose the support to the project, which also would be closely linked to a social content. In addition, the support and participation of the Foundation Caja de Ahorros was achieved. This Foundation plays a key role in this partnership.

**Targeting:** This Sunday Market is made up of 217 families, while more than 50 people are on the waiting list. The user's traders of the market belong to different nationalities, including native traders, who make up a diverse group of vendors that coexistence between them and the citizens of the town of Logroño. The creation of the Market has led to the creation of a space for the provision of public services in which the issuers belong to social groups that are socially marked by discrimination from racial or ethnic origin.

**Program overview:** One of the first activities to be adopted by the Association in 2005 was the development of a Sunday Market. This Market contributes to the improvement of living conditions and regularization of street trading, quality of service provided and to facilitate the employment situation of people in this area that are at risk of social exclusion. In this Market there are established rules that all vendors are required to comply (prohibited and authorized goods for sale, obligations that each person can access a single license annual sales, the posts are to be serviced by authorized persons or close relatives, being prohibited the assignment or subletting of the posts, which must have an identification card issued visible by the Association; all sellers must be current on compliance with licensing, taxes, fees and relevant permits to carry out the activity. The Cooperative offers the advice of a tax advisor to all the vendors. The 100% of the vendors are fully regularized in the system. With revenues obtained from fees, the Association pays its current expenditure and reports about social benefits that have helped to make, among other social programs of various kinds

**Outcomes:** This project achieved several outcomes:

- Regulate and control a form of sale that to this date has very little formal control.
- Making this Sunday Market in Logroño a meeting point for many people who are visiting the city and making purchases.
- Ensuring that the benefits obtained from the organization of this market different social needs are attended (social, education, health and employment needs).

The main aspects that define and characterize this initiative are based:

- Creating a space for the provision of public services in which the issuers belong to social groups socially marked by discrimination from racial or ethnic origin.
- Establishment of favorable laboral alternatives for the insertion of social groups at risk or likely to be victims of attitudes that foster inequality and discriminatory treatment in this field.
- Promoting intercultural coexistence between citizens of the same town.
- Implementation of a meeting space in which the cultural and social presence of the groups its reflects, carrying out actions to promote equal treatment and non-discrimination on racial or ethnic origin.
- Initiative valued as a good practice reference by the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality of the Government of Spain.

- Development of outreach activities of the Roma culture that serve to publicize positive aspects of the Roma community in order to break down stereotypes and attributed prejudices.

With the incomes obtained from fees, the Association pays its current expenditure and reports social benefits that have helped to make, among others, social programs of various kind:

- School mediation programs with Roma students (it has been hired several staff: a psychologist, a teacher and social mediators that are working in the educational integration area).
- Employment tutoring services have started.
- Training and educational adult programs
- It contributes to the functioning of the Centre "Mistos" that serves children at risk of social exclusion. They attended over a hundred children each year, which are provided with educational support and workshops for childhood and youth areas.
- Health programs

**Lessons Learned:** This project has achieved the respect of local and regional administrations. For the Association it would be interesting to extrapolate this working experience at the state level through the creation of a National Bureau which would meet annually with all the stakeholders of the sector: Finance, Social Security, Spanish Federation of Municipalities, Regions, etc. In this annual meeting they could speak of the sector problems, different strategies and proposals to enhance this type of sale.

As a final conclusion, the joining of forces of the three promoter entities: La Rioja Association for the Roma promotion, The Rioja Foundation Caja de Ahorros and the Rioja Chamber of Commerce and industry, has brought forward an employment insertion project. A project that serves to resolve economical needs of a portion of the population, and also contributes to achieve social improvements, that they expect involve long-term better training and professionalization of the collective.

**Contact person:**

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**Implementer:** YUROM CENTAR

**Status:** 2012-Jun 2013

**Country:** SERBIA

**Location:]** Municipalities of Vranje and Bujanovac, Southern Serbia

**Partners:** Roma NGO Romani asvi and NGO from Bujanovac RHC

**Funders:** CARITAS 64.000€ and YUROM Centar 16.000€

**Targeting:** Improving the working conditions of 50 Roma in Vranje and Bujanovac collecting secondary raw materials

50 direct beneficiaries

**Program overview:** In Serbia, as in all other countries on the Balkans, there is a long tradition of collecting and processing recyclable materials, but illegally - through "grey" economy. In these countries legal regulations relating to collection - recycling are not completed, neither purchase and processing policies and procedures of secondary raw materials and therefore these activities are under the "radar" of all levels of government. These activities, usually, represent occupation of a large number of poor citizens, especially Roma, for whom it is a main source of income for them and their multi-member families. And while the "illegal" waste collectors contribute significantly to the improvement of waste management, thus contributing to the collection, sorting, and locating, and often waste processing - little has been done in the past in order to assist them in trying to live a decent life. Solid waste collection activity is the most common self-employment of Roma in Serbia.

The project is aimed at reducing poverty in the Roma community engaged in collecting wastes. The specific objective of the project is to improve working conditions of Roma waste collectors in Vranje and Bujanovac. This is achieved through the following activities:

1. Preparing and conducting capacity building training programs for the Union of waste collectors in Vranje and Bujanovac.
2. Strengthening of Roma waste collectors through trainings on occupational safety and purchasing protective equipment.
3. Establishment of cooperatives for waste collectors.

During the implementation of project activities the network of active members of the Union is used, as well as resources and capacities of Roma NGOs, those from the Union has cooperated and have expressed interest in participating in the project implementation. Also, YUROM Centre experts are engaged in advocacy and are lobbying for waste management development and cooperatives promotion with local and national authorities.

YUROM Center, in cooperation with the National Union of waste collectors, is training and supporting around 50 individual waste collectors, mostly Roma, from Vranje and Bujanovac, in skills and information that can contribute to the improvement of social position, economic empowerment, entrepreneurship, safety and recycling, by forming co-operatives. Collector will also be supplied with the necessary equipment for work, such as tricycles with baskets and balers, and protective equipment, will enable collectors to realize the planned clean-up activities.

Target groups/beneficiaries:

- Waste collectors from Serbia, specific from Vranje and Bujanovac;
- The inhabitants of Roma settlements;
- The entire population of the targeted municipalities and towns, whose living conditions will be improved after clearing illegal dumps;
- The general population indirectly, by public increase knowledge and awareness of environment protection and occupational safety at work with secondary raw materials;

The project activities are aimed in solving problems, such as exclusion of collectors from the process of waste management policy at national and local levels, community disorganization of secondary raw material management due to lack of professional approach and civil rights and many other issues present

**Outcomes:**

Result 1. The living conditions in Roma settlements have been improved

1. Improved living standard and housing conditions of Roma in Roma settlements. Ensured every-day income to family and improved nutrition quality. The average weekly income of collectors is around 20 €, compared to the period before receiving tricycles, when there was almost a zero income.

Result 2: Roma have been trained on environment protection and occupational safety, settlements arrangement and living conditions

After a series of trainings and consultations (trainings and mentoring) persons included in the Project are now much more familiar with issues like: recycling, waste management, local self-government authority, secondary waste market (prices and trade flows), traffic behaviour, occupational safety, cooperative management and NGOs activities, which are now associated in a cluster of organizations dealing with economic development of a local Roma community in which they live.

Result 3: Foundation of a cooperative for working conditions improvement and raising awareness and visibility of collectors

After investigation of legal opportunities and analysis of cost-effectiveness of individual collectors and Roma NGOs from three municipalities of Pcinjski District associating, there was formed a NGO Association according to the Model of cluster organizations to deal with economic activities. (secondary raw materials collecting), but also with other jobs, to be in the function of economic empowerment of family members - individuals, members of NGO Cluster „AMALIPE“. The Cluster of Roma NGOs „AMALIPE“ was registered in the State Agency for Companies Registration, as a legal person to deal with economic activities.

**Sustainability:**

Municipality of Vranje, Bujanovac and Vladicin Han has not yet provided office space for the "Cluster Amalipe" And if they have suggested.

**Next steps-**

1. Strengthening Cluster
2. Continued advocacy needs that municipalities must participate in strengthening the newly formed cluster.
3. continued advocacy for the adoption of social cooperatives in Serbia
4. continued cooperation YUROM center and organizing training - training for cooperative managers and administrative staff.

**Cost-Efficiency:** Ensured every-day income to family and improved nutrition quality. The average weekly income of collectors is around 20 €, compared to the period before receiving tricycles, when there was almost a zero income.

**Contact person:** YUROM Centar, Ing. Osman Balić, + 381 62 434582

**Implementer:**

The project was funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway with the support from CARE Norway and was implemented by CARE Serbia in partnership with RIC Kragujevac and Eurorom, B&H.

**Status:**

Project completed in 2014

**Country:**

Serbia and B&H

**Location:**

Serbia: Kragujevac, Aranđelovac, Smederevska Palanka, Medveđa, Čuprija, Mladenovac, Lazarevac, Ripanj.

These cities constitute an area of severe disadvantages concerning the employment and education of Roma community particularly pertaining to long-term unemployability and social vulnerability of Roma men and women. Prospective beneficiaries are members of the Roma middle class working in flea and other markets, farmers, socially disadvantaged, small vendors selling their goods on top of boxes in the street, the existing Roma companies and companies willing to employ Roma in their enterprises.

**Partners:**

Roma Information Centre, Kragujevac was the organizer of all activities conducted in Serbia. The greatest contribution by the organization was the design of the very project, the original design and delivery of business training session for the beneficiaries, designing and delivering other training programs aimed at beneficiaries and their specific needs which have emerged during the 4 years of organization's operation.

**Funders:**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway

The budget intended for RIC for the period between 2010 and 2014 was 800,000 USD.

Note – we are not familiar with the total budget aimed at all project participants.

**Targeting:**

An extremely unfavorable economic, educational and social situation in 8 municipalities in which the project was implemented. Each applicant was able to choose which segment of the project they would like to join. Special admission criteria only applied to the awarding of non-returnable grants, i.e. funds, divided into 4 special criteria for self-employment, business expansion, agriculture and social grants. In the educational segment the requirement was completing the enrolled program (primary or secondary school or additional training or retraining programs).

The program involved more than 3,000 beneficiaries, the immediate outcome of which can be seen in the Table Project Outcomes.

**Program overview:**

The program was implemented from 2010 to 2014. The aim of the project was to enhance the presence in the labor market and increase self-employment of Roma.

Project activities included: education – the completion of primary education; the completion of secondary education; additional training and retraining programs; business – training in self-employment and agriculture, applying for non-returnable funds, how to register a business; training in how to expand a business, how to apply for non-returnable funds, how to employ Roma men and women; additional training delivered in the life skills workshops which enabled them to acquire new skills helping them find a job or complete school.

Implementation steps were as follows: campaigns and motivational workshops; applying for programs; training; application collection; awarding of grants; monitoring; mentor's assistance; acquiring skills in various training programs and in various fields.

The activities aimed at employment focused on different aspects of education each year as the regulations on starting and managing a business kept changing as well as the regulations on each business activity; hence, manuals were developed for each year containing information on the type of business the applicants wanted to start up. Special training syllabus was developed for agriculture and the award of social grants targeting families living in extreme poverty who were to receive grants (note: regarding the agriculture, a registered estate was considered an advantage although not a requirement for awarding grants due to the difficulties typically experienced by Roma – no transfer of ownership over the house or the estate, not owning any land, but renting it instead, etc.)

The crucial segment of the project was a motivational workshop in which the beneficiaries expressed their interest for project segments they wished to join. They were also able to participate in multiple segments, e.g. attend primary school while attending training in self-employment and grant awarding.

In the course of the project, the strategy was developed to empower all the members of a household to ensure all of them expressed the specific situation in their family and thus achieve long-term change in the household.

In addition to providing individual support, group support sessions were organized and experiences shared within each city and between different cities.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

In addition to internal monitoring by RIC activists, mentors and experts, the program was also monitored by CARE Serbia by conducting on-site visits. There was also a monitoring visit by CARE Germany and Norway mission.

A specially designated person was appointed to conduct evaluation activities. The report on the achieved results of an independent evaluation was received only by CARE Serbia.

Special tables were designed to monitor the indicators of all project components, as well as a special database for data management and various tables for data entry.

### **Outcomes:**

Please refer to the table of project outcomes by year, as well as the separate table containing data on self-employment program, Appendix 1.

The independent evaluation contains qualitative project outcomes for all three years of implementation which have been provided only by CARE Serbia (please contact them to obtain these data).

### **Sustainability:**

The effects of this program should be monitored over a longer time of 10 to 20 years. In our view, these 3 years of project piloting provided significant observations on how Roma began to participate in the process, how they can acquire new skills and which strategies they should use in the long-term perspective.

The organization itself gained invaluable experience on how to implement all project components, how to change strategies in which such programs are delivered and how to continue advocating for achieving the economic empowerment of the Roma community.

### **Cost-Efficiency:]**

We did not focus on cost-efficiency during the implementation of the project, so we are not able to answer this question.

### **Lessons Learned:**

The lessons learned showed it was important to choose Roma coming from the middle classes of the Roma society for starting up the companies planning to operate for 5 years or longer as they are already experienced in working in flea markets and other markets/fairs, as well as to support the already operating Roma companies to expand their business operation.

Regarding the less advantaged and socially vulnerable households, agriculture and awarding of grants were the key components aimed at them. In awarding such social grants, it is important to provide a multi-stage support all the way to the opening of applicants' businesses (which is something we were not able to provide during this project).

The methods should always be tailored to the beneficiaries who come to us wanting to participate in certain programs; hence it is important for all of us to realize the importance of flexibility of these programs as this is the only way to achieve economic empowerment. Sticking to rough estimates and expected outcomes without sufficient needs analysis (this should be first carried out in the community providing us with the insight on which methods we can use in the city and in rural areas) may result in having to change the already adopted decisions really quickly due to project deadlines.

Without sufficient motivation of the beneficiaries, they tend to quickly lose interest for further involvement in any of project components, so we consider this essential for successful implementation of the project.

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**Implementer:** Development and Education Centre Novo mesto, RIC Novo mesto

**Status:** Ongoing, 1. 11. 2012 – 31. 10. 2015

**Country:** Slovenia

**Location:** The consortium is composed of 7 partners from 6 European countries (Slovenia, Bulgaria, Greece, Slovakia, Italy, and Serbia). The Roma minorities are the largest in Slovakia and Bulgaria amounting to around 10%, followed by Serbia (8.18%), Greece (2.47%), Italy (0.23%) and Slovenia (0.42%; data taken from CoE Roma and Travellers Division). Yet the situation of the Roma is still characterised by discrimination, social and often economic exclusion. According to the data of the European Commission, poverty and unemployment is high amongst the Roma population, with prejudices and stereotypes still inflicting them. Therefore, there is clearly a great need to define and implement measures addressing the specific circumstances of this vulnerable group. The project's aim is to provide clear added value to existing EU initiatives, strive for concrete results and actual implementation. This means joint transnational activities with concrete, visible and implementation oriented actions to raise the level of financial literacy among Roma adults, empower them to make long-term decisions for the whole family and thus positively affect the intergenerational learning.

**Partners:** The consortium is composed of partners from different countries and with diverse expert knowledge. It includes universities, adult education centres, a social research agency, NGO. The professionals working on the project come from various fields such as psychology, pedagogy, social work, research, health management, adult education, human rights protection, economy, financial management, entrepreneurship, organisational consulting, project management, vocational/non-vocational training, and working with the disadvantaged. Four partners have cooperated together on a previous EU project (RIC, Codici, HESED and TRUNI), two Greek project partners, UPRC and Techniki Ekp, have worked regularly together on previous projects. The allocation of tasks among the partners relies on the expertise of the individual project partner:

\* RIC Novo mesto (Slovenia) is responsible for the project management based on the experience in previous large-scale transnational and national projects in the field of education for Roma and other educational topics. As a public body, it works closely with a wide network of local, regional and national partners, and at transnational level and is able to perform successfully the work in WP1 project management, WP7 Dissemination and WP8 Strategy & Action.

[www.ric-nm.si](http://www.ric-nm.si)

\* Codici Social Research Agency (Italy) has been responsible for social research in many EU projects, especially focused on marginalized target groups and Roma and Sinti communities. Based on their experience, Codici experts were able to lead the WP2 Needs Assessment.

<http://www.codiciricerche.it>

\* Trnava University (Slovakia) has been involved in a number of international projects funded by EU authorities or other (e.g. USA based). Based on these experiences of project implementation and the internal evaluation leadership in SRAP project they are the leader of WP6 Quality Assessment.

[www.truni.sk](http://www.truni.sk)

\* Health and Social Development Foundation (Bulgaria) has knowledge to develop and implement courses for the Roma population and trainers, have conducted many educational courses for the Roma community and directly work with them in the settlements. They have the capacity to successfully implement the piloting actions in WP5.

[www.hesed.bg](http://www.hesed.bg)

\* University of Piraeus Research Center (Greece) lead the WP3 Training Course Development for the specific target group of Roma adults. Based on their experience – UPRC has been the leader of the EU project FINALIST where a financial literacy programme for adults was developed – they will adopt their previous expert knowledge and prepare a new course in order to meet the needs of Roma adults.

www.kep.unipi.gr

\* Techniki Ekpedeftiki (Greece) will develop the WP4 FINALLY Toolbox, since they have a direct contact with the target group of Roma adults in the settlements and with teachers/trainers of Roma adults.

www.techniki-ekp.gr

\* Faculty of Economics, University of Niš (Serbia) has expert knowledge in the field of economy but are able to participate in the LLP as a fully eligible partner for the first time. Thus, it is not a WP leader but participates in all WPs.

www.eknfak.ni.ac.rs

**Funders:** This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

Total project costs: 381.851,00 euros

EU contribution (75 %): 286.388,00 euros

Partners contribution (25 %): 95.463,00 euros

**Targeting:** The project aims to reach three target groups. Direct beneficiaries:

1) min. 15 Roma adults involved in pilot actions in 5 countries=75 participants

2) min. 20 trainers in 5 countries = 100 participants;

Indirect beneficiaries:

3) min. 100 stakeholders per partner country = 600 stakeholders

1) The main target group of Roma adults are Roma adults without basic financial literacy skills who will take the course during pilot actions in 5 countries: SI, SK, BG, EL, SER. They will benefit the most from the project activities developed in WP 2-5 (Needs Assessment, Development of Training Course and Toolbox, Pilot Actions). The Roma adults will be reached through already existing relations in Roma settlements or in existing programmes that the project partners involved already offer.

2) The project will also benefit trainers/teachers in the partner organisations that will either work directly on the project outputs, be involved in the staff training or in the regional workshops during pilot actions. Other external trainers from adult education providers, social services, schools etc. will be invited to join the regional workshops in order to discuss the tools developed, and be trained how to implement the course and use the resources. At least 20 trainers per country will be involved and will gain new knowledge how to work with a specific target group in the area of financial education.

3) Stakeholders will be informed about the already form the project beginning through various dissemination and exploitation tools. The interested institutions from adult education, school sector, social services, the financial sector, the economy and policy sector will be invited to cooperate and evaluate the tools developed.

### **Program overview:**

The main aim of the project is to raise the level of financial literacy among Roma adults which will enable the specific target group to learn an ability that can be of benefit to the whole generation. It will act in the sense of the OECD definition of financial literacy, which is that this is “the combination of consumers’/investors’ understanding of financial products and concepts and their ability and confidence to appreciate financial risks and opportunities, to make informed choices, to know where to seek help, and to take other effective actions to improve their financial well-being.” These skills, which are important for European consumers in general, are even more valuable for the poor and discriminated group of the Roma population. The main objectives of the project are:

\* to perform a focused needs assessment within the target group (on the one hand the Roma adults themselves and the professional staff working with them on the other);

- \* to develop a specific, tailor-made and transnational FINALLY training course according to the needs of the target group;
- \* to develop innovative learning and teaching resources named FINALLY Toolbox both for learners and trainers with a transnational core;
- \* to train the trainers through development of simple guidelines and implementation of staff workshops and to test and evaluate the training course and tools through pilot actions in 5 partner countries;

Under the project the needs assessment was implemented using different methodologies: semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Roma population in order to collect their point of view regarding their financial and economic situation while focus groups with professionals were organized to understand the educational and social frame of the research contexts. The collected results are compiled in six National reports in six languages (SI, IT, EL, SK, BG, SER) and are all translated into English - available on the project website: <http://finally.splet.arnes.si/publications/reports-of-the-project-finally-needs-asesment/>.

The Transnational Report in English summarizes the data collected and provides guidelines for content development in FINALLY Training Course and FINALLY Toolbox (Learning and teaching resources and the Guidelines for the Finally Toolbox Usage). The Strategy for the Development of Training Course has been developed and the framework of FINALLY Training Course and FINALLY Toolbox has been designed. Both will be tested and evaluated during the pilot actions for Roma adults (at least 75 participants) and external teachers, trainers (at least 100 participants) in five partner countries (SI, EL, SK, BG, SER) in the second part of the three years long project. After that the FINALLY Training Course and Toolbox will be improved in 2015.

In order to sustain the final outcomes of the project, a printed and electronic version of the outcomes will be available online and in local libraries as well as incorporated in educational programs of some partner institutions. The results of the project have been disseminated through press conferences, conferences, events, press releases, press articles, newsletters, on the radio, TV, websites and other communication channels that allow reaching the widest possible audience. Details of the project may be seen on the project website: [www.project-finally.eu](http://www.project-finally.eu)

We believe that the project will contribute to better financial literacy among Roma adults and will equip them with the skills they need in order to cope with changes in today's tough socio-economic situation.

### **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:**

The progress of the project is visible and measurable from the regular 6-monthly interim reports that the project partners have sent to the project leader. There will be 6 internal Monitoring Reports comprising information about the activities performed and budget spending done by experts and discussed by each national team and steering group at transnational meetings.

The monitoring reports, which are prepared by project leader team, have served as a basis for project teams to enable better decision making, detect potential risks in project delivery, adapt the activities implementation and budget spending and reporting to European Commission.

Quality assurance (evaluation) is a continuous focus of the whole project team. For this a Quality Plan and Quality Control Checklists has been provided in the frame of Workpackage 6. An internal quality assurance is continuously provided by the partner Trnava University. The quality plan concerns not only each workpackage and each project meeting but also the project as a whole. For quality assurance the following tools have been used:

- \* Partner Reviews (during the project lifetime there will be four partners reviews);
- \* Interim Reports of Quality Assurance (prepared by WP6 leader; during the project lifetime there will be four partners reviews)
- \* Monitoring reports (every 6 months)
- \* Project meeting evaluation (there will be five project meeting evaluation)
- \* Revision of internal documents and deliverables (descriptive and content analysis)

These tools assess the quality of research methods, timeline evaluation, revision of internal documents and deliverables, the communication and the quality of the project network, partnership. Dissemination and exploitation are also part of the quality assurance. At the end of the project a summative evaluation – Quality Control Report – will be provided.

### **Outcomes:**

\* International needs analysis composed of interviews among the Roma adults and professionals, Roma activists in focus groups. The collected results are compiled in 6 National reports in 6 languages (SI, IT, EL, SK, BG, SER) and are all translated into English. The concrete impact of this result is the fact that it will serve as a basis for tailoring the programme for raising the level of financial literacy among the adult Roma. They have had the opportunity to inform us about the most important issues and problems they face, so the programme will address those issues precisely and we consider that the best possible approach – to listen to the beneficiaries and offer them exactly what they need. The national reports partners distributed among groups of professionals and researchers and online networks for Roma. Deliverables can be found on the partners' websites and on the project website <http://finally.splet.arnes.si/publications/reports-of-the-project-finally-needs-assessment/>

\* The Transnational Report summarizing the data collected and giving guidelines for content development in FINALLY Training Course and FINALLY Toolbox. It is prepared in English and can be found on the project website <http://finally.splet.arnes.si/files/2014/01/TRANSNATIONAL-FINAL.pdf>

\* Finally Training Course – Curriculum - it will be an innovative tailor-made training course aimed to raise the level of financial literacy within the target group of the Roma adults. It will be a transnational tool, designed to the needs of the target group of Roma adults. It will be translated to ENG, SI, EL, SK, BG, SER and Romani language.

\* FINALLY Toolbox - Learning and teaching resources - mainly, these will be training resources with a transnational core, which will be valid for all partner countries, since the Toolbox will be a joint transnational tool of the whole partner consortium. The FINALLY Toolbox will comprise a set of ready-to-use and tailor-made learning/teaching resources for learners and teachers. It will be translated to ENG, SI, EL, SK, BG, SER and Romani language.

\* FINALLY Toolbox - Guidelines for FINALLY Toolbox Usage - it will be a concise and readable guide, easy to use in every training course not only by partner organisation but also other adult education providers, schools and stakeholders. The Guidelines will serve as guidance for implementing the training course, instructions and directions for teachers/trainers how to use the FINALLY Toolbox. It will be translated to ENG, SI, EL, SK, BG, SER and Romani language.

\* The core outputs: Training Course, FINALLY Toolbox and Guidelines for FINALLY Toolbox usage will be printed in book form (6 languages x 20 copies = 100 copies) and made available in the local libraries and distributed to direct beneficiaries.

\* As an exploitation activity, the DVDs with ready-to-use FINALLY Training Course, FINALLY Toolbox and Guidelines for Toolbox use will be produced in English. This will be a simple way to use all the project's main outputs and use them in any kind of learning occasions, whether while mobile visits in the Roma settlements, in the classroom, in workshops, counselling or other lifelong learning opportunities.

\* The Pilot actions will test and improve the deliverables Finally Training Course – Curriculum and FINALLY Toolbox - Learning and teaching resources, Guidelines for FINALLY Toolbox Usage. They will provide an essential input for the development of the final versions of FINALLY Training Course and FINALLY toolbox. It will be two types of pilot actions: Type 1 - train the trainers (5 pilot action activities in total - one per country: Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia; 5x20 participants = 100 participants).and on the other side Type 2 - training of Roma (5 pilot action activities in total - one per country: Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia; 5x15 participants = 75 participants). The pilot actions will be evaluated in order to derive the most relevant and useful content and toolbox.

\* Pilot Actions Final Report - The Pilot Actions Final Report will comprise data about the process of pilot actions, both within Type 1 and Type 2 evaluation in 5 partner countries. The WP5 leader will prepare the joint pilot actions final report based on the results provided by the responsible partners. Guidelines for partners how to improve the WP3 and WP4 outputs will be prepared.

\* Dissemination materials: leaflets and posters promoting the project in all partner languages and also in English have been produced and distributed. Can be found on the project website: <http://finally.splet.arnes.si/project-finally-leaflet/>

<http://finally.splet.arnes.si/project-finally-poster/>

\* Electronic newsletters: there will be produced and translated six Newsletter in all countries languages and English and Romani language and disseminated through e-mail. They are also published on the project website:

<http://finally.splet.arnes.si/publications/project-finally-newsletter/>

\* Facebook profile was done and linking of project website with other websites to ensure more publicity.

\* Finally video - development of a project video with experiences from project partners, work within the target groups that will serve as an exploitation mechanism for presentation to decision makers, stakeholders. It will be produced in English but subtitles will be added of each project language to produce the national versions of the FINALLY Video (ENG, SI, IT, SK, BG, EL, SER).

### **Sustainability:**

Even though exploitation takes place after the project's lifetime, when all project final products are ready, the exploitation activities have been planned from the start. The basis for the successful exploitation of the project FINALLY is a well-planned and implemented dissemination/exploitation strategy at different levels. Furthermore, the identification of stakeholders has been carried out at the initial stages of the project and has been continually updated. As the stakeholders are being updated about the project developments and findings on on-going basis, their interest grows and it is expected that they will be more ready and inclined to use the final products. It is also very valuable that the stakeholders have been providing feedback to the partnership of the project FINALLY hence we can design products that will be relevant and attractive to the end users. Exploitation plan has been produced and the main means of exploitation to be produced are:

\* Finally video - development of a project video with experiences from project partners, work within the target groups that will serve as an exploitation mechanism for presentation to decision makers, stakeholders. It will be produced in English but subtitles will be added of each project language to produce the national versions of the FINALLY Video (ENG, SI, IT, SK, BG, EL, SER).

\* Production of DVD's with FINALLY Training Course, FINALLY Toolbox, and Guidelines for Toolbox use, as an exploitation activity, will be produced in English. This will be a simple way to use all the project's main outputs and use them in any kind of learning occasions, weather while mobile visits in the Roma settlements, in the classroom, in workshops, counselling or other lifelong learning opportunities.

\* FINALLY Strategy & Action Guidelines - it will be a document for all external target groups and interested stakeholders on how to use the project results and build them into their current programmes. Together with the FINALLY Video it will be a core document for exploiting the project results.

All this outcomes will be offered to international educators, stakeholders etc. and be available after the project lifetime.

**Cost-Efficiency:** We have been followed a set Financial Plan. Furthermore we will follow the Financial Plan that the cost-effectiveness will be 100%, which is neither good nor bad, such as raised.

**Lessons Learned:** So far, the project ran through the set guidelines.

**Resources:** Details of the project may be seen on the project website: [www.project-finally.eu](http://www.project-finally.eu)

### **Contact person:**

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The project is co-funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union.

**Implementer:** Roma Initiatives Office – Open Society Foundations

**Status:** In preparation, proposed start date: first part of 2015

**Country:** Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia

**Location:** Roma communities in both urban and rural areas. We are focusing on existing entrepreneurs (Roma and non-Roma) with businesses employing Roma people.

**Partners:** Roma Initiatives Office (leading partner), Soros Economic Development Fund (investor), CoopEst (investor), Council of Europe Development Bank (investor), Mikrofond Bulgaria (funds disbursement), Horizonti Macedonia (funds disbursement), OMRO Romania (funds disbursement), Opportunity Bank Serbia (funds disbursement), Roma Business Association (mentoring and support of clients), Microfinance Center Poland (support and training of microfinance entities).

**Funders:** CoopEst, Soros Economic Development Fund, Council of Europe development Fund approx. € 5 M debt portfolio.

**Targeting:** We are targeting two groups:

A. Existing entrepreneurs in Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Macedonia working in Roma communities and employing Roma and requiring € 5 000 - € 25 000 to expand their business.

B. Employees of mainstream financial institutions involved in lending to Roma

**Program overview:** In the initial phase we will focus on businesses with a high potential for growth and expansion and therefore create jobs in Roma communities and fight unemployment. Although we will not specifically target start-up initiatives, we will consider all applications on a case-by-case basis. The medium to long-term vision is to provide Roma people with opportunities to develop entrepreneurial skills. After initially finding jobs, for example, Roma employees might learn more about the business and with time some of them might gain the skills needed to start and run their own businesses. We may also provide training for aspiring entrepreneurs. Because the fund will provide debt the final decision for awarding the loan will be taken by the microfinance institution after consultation with the management team and the country support teams.

The long term vision is that mainstream financial institutions will come to understand that Roma are credit-worthy customers and will begin to make credit and other financial products more widely accessible to Roma businesses and families.

**Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** We plan to monitor and evaluate the number of jobs created through our lending as well as measure the impact of our lending on Roma communities.

**Outcomes:** We are aiming to help mainstream financial institutions develop the tools and skills required to answer challenges in Roma communities and demonstrate that there is no higher risk in working with Roma communities, nor do Roma people need custom-made financial products. The real challenge is to train loan officers to evaluate Roma businesses in the absence of credit history and the usual financial documents required during the due diligence process.

On the other hand, we aim to start working with existing entrepreneurs (with potential to expand their businesses and generate employment in Roma communities) and provide them with the tools and support needed to develop their businesses so that they would be able to pay back the loan while also generating more value and create employment.

**Sustainability:** The financial product will not be subsidized, in an effort to convince mainstream financial institutions that Roma communities represent a profitable market. All financial institutions involved in the process will have a strong social mission but will seek to generate a profit used to cover the risk and operations. Part of the profit generated by the Roma investment fund will be used to cover the costs for training, mentoring and business support needed by the financial institutions and entrepreneurs. Local authorities will be encouraged to get involved and progressively have a more important role in using the tools and skills we will develop to support Roma communities, generate and maintain employment.

**Cost-Efficiency:** N/A

**Lessons Learned:** N/A

**Resources:** N/A

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