



ERNE

European Roma integration good practice exchange and policy NETwork



Lifelong
Learning
Programme



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POLICY RECOMMENDATION PAPER

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BACKGROUND

European Commission published the “EU Framework National Roma Integration Strategies by 2020”, which set goals for the integration of Roma in the educational system by enabling all Roma children to complete at least the primary school.

"(...) Member States should ensure that all Roma children have access to quality education and are not subject to discrimination or segregation, regardless of whether they are sedentary or not. Member States should, as a minimum, ensure primary school completion. They should also widen access to quality early childhood education and care and reduce the number of early school leavers from secondary education pursuant to the Europe 2020 strategy. Roma youngsters should be strongly encouraged to participate also in secondary and tertiary education" (Announcement from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020" (COM 2011 (173), Brussels 5/4/2011).

European Commission plans for every member state to adopt a national strategy for the integration of Roma and explain how they plan to achieve goals set in the framework. However, this postulate brings a great number of challenges for member states and stakeholders in the sector, and the criteria is still too high to be achieved:

"Educational achievement within the Roma population is much lower than the rest of the population, although the situation differs among Member States (...) Surveys suggest that in some Member States, only a limited number of Roma children complete primary school (...). It is well known that children who miss out on, enter late into the school system, or leave too early will subsequently experience significant difficulties, ranging from illiteracy and language problems to feelings of exclusion and inadequacy. As a result, they will have a harder time getting into further education, university or a good job. ."

The member states are thus faced with the need to find solutions, approaches, good practice examples and initiatives they are unable to provide at the moment, even outside their local and regional stakeholders in educational systems (municipalities, schools, universities, polytechnics, vocational schools, NGOs and so on). The challenge of providing integrated approach in the education system, as opposed to segregation and having separate schools for Roma children and so on (as visible in some member states), creates the need for new and innovative approaches, systems and policies. Only an integrated, consistent and relevant system can achieve and sustain the integration of Roma children.

According to the document "Improving the tools for the social inclusion and non-discrimination of Roma in the EU, European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, June 2010", there are three key levels which should be observed when approaching the improvement of the integration of Roma in education:

- **Enabling access to preschool and school systems:** It seems that inclusion in the school and preschool system is one of the crucial factors when it comes to integrating the Roma through education. Access at this level is partially related to infrastructural discussions, for example, Supply of kindergartens and preschool institutions in general, however, there are some good practice examples in EU member states which could be analysed, discussed and perhaps adopted.

- **Ensuring staying in the system:** Similar to framework of general discussion on educational system, the challenges of reducing drop-outs are the send key area in need of analysis, research and exchange of good practice examples among member states and educational system stakeholders. For example, only 42% of Roma children completes primary school (Open society Institute, International comparative data set on Roma education, 2008. Data on primary education is available for 6 member states: Bulgaria, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia).

- **Ensuring system throughput and transfer among the levels of the system:** Relations between different levels of the education system, between the education system and professional education and guidance are considered the key elements for a more successful integration and complete participation in society through education and employment. Relations between systems involve a risk that children and participants are not able to overcome the transition with only their motivation, knowledge and life spirit, which in turn results in the person's dropping out of the system especially during the transition between two systems.

While the three identified levels are considered to be the key challenges especially for educational systems in EU member states, it is obvious that for the specific target group, provided within the framework (Roma children and adults), these challenges are even greater problem and therefore member states, but especially subjects within different education systems and levels, have the need to find solutions and approaches. At the same time projects and good practice examples regarding the three identified levels are available in different countries, but are, unfortunately, impossible to put in a transnational context, but also to disseminate and transfer.

Therefore, the ERNE project aims to identify, analyse and exchange the existing best practice examples in partnering states and develop policy recommendations in order to encourage the integration of Roma children and adults in every level of education.

The network has focused on analysing solutions for the three identified levels and this paper offer the policy recommendation and interchangeable good practice examples for vocational education.

AIMS

The main aim of this policy recommendation paper is to develop specific recommendations for policy makers regarding the sustainable influence in creating policies and decision-making in partnering states but also on the European level on integration and support provided to Roma children in the education system at the level of vocational education.

All partnering organizations have a wide experience with different approaches and methods for the integration of and support of Roma children in educational system and their best practice examples on the inclusion of Roma children in the educational vocational system, which have been identified in the ERNE project, which is the basis of this Paper.

The policy recommendation shall be submitted for online consultations in order to achieve a high level of agreement. After the online consultation phase, there will be a public conference in Koprivnica, where all stakeholders, decision-makers and politicians shall participate in order to talk about the identified approaches of good practice examples and seek solutions for the integration of Roma children and adults through education and share research results as well as online consultations results regarding the policy recommendations.

Using the aims shall finally enable the deep analysis of the key elements and levels of education system regarding the existing challenges for the integration of Roma citizens. The achieved results shall enable the transfer of good practice examples within partnering states and partner organizations, as well as improving specific policies. The network itself follows the expansion strategy during the project implementation process as well as sustainability strategy for the long-term existence of the network for the benefit of Roma children and adults through education in Europe.

SITUATION OF ROMA CHILDREN IN EU EDUCATION SYSTEMS

“In most European countries the legislative context provides, in theory, access for Roma children to pre-school education. However, the real situation is very different. Real access is restricted on account of unemployment and family poverty; geographic isolation; unwelcoming and unattractive school environments; and cultural factors which include parents seeing the family and the home as the most appropriate place for early childhood education” (from: Towards quality education for Roma children: transition from early childhood to primary education”, UNESCO and Council of Europe, Paris, 2007).

In the above mentioned report on education of Roma children in Europe, UNESCO made some dramatic conclusions: 50% of Roma children in Europe do not complete primary school. In particular countries of Central and Eastern Europe, most Roma children attend “special schools” founded in 1950s and 1960s for children with learning disabilities. The segregation of Roma people began at that point.

Therefore, in most European countries the integration of Roma people has become one of the main policies in educational systems because all member states care for the establishment

and implementation of the Roma integration plan by 2020. Moreover, despite the fact that for some European member states the integration of Roma and travellers has been a challenge for the last 50 to 70 years, a significant number of European countries has only recently identified the challenge due to free movement process, opening labour markets etc.

The existing concepts and approaches (where they exist) are mostly outdated because special schools were founded during 1950s and 1960s, so there is a dire need for innovations in the entire sector.

THE SITUATION OF ROMA PEOPLE IN PARTNERING COUNTRIES

Italy

When it comes to Florence area, where the partner P6 has its headquarters, a high percentage of Roma population comes from Romania. The discrimination of Roma population in Romania is greater than in Italy so the Roma are often excluded from public health system, education system and labour market in their own country.

When they arrive to Italy, they often do not have access to basic medical services (because they do not have medical insurance card in their own country) and often live in camps and overcrowded houses with no hygienic conditions. Therefore, when they first encounter an education system, in primary school, they are already at a disadvantage with other pupils.

On national level, Abruzzo is a region with the most Roma settlements. For a while now, in the town Giulianova (Teramo county – Abruzzo) there is a Roma community of around 200 people. Among them there are 90 minors of which 60 are children of primary school age. In 1998 the ostracism of Roma children was significant. Most Roma minors was forwarded to authorities and ended up in L'Aquila training camp (juvenile prison) which was number one in Italy considering the ratio of territory size and population. Female Roma children leave school early in great numbers, often for cultural reasons. At the age of 9-12, female Roma children change their roles within the family and within a group identity. They are considered women and they start working with other women in order to support the family. During that time, female Roma children can meet persons of the other gender only while chaperoned by relatives in order to protect them from inappropriate behaviour. This cultural peculiarity in Roma population results in irregular school attendance and dropping out.

Germany

After the accession of eastern European countries to EU, especially Romania and Bulgaria, there has been a higher immigrant inflow. Prevailing share of families emigrating from those countries are ethnically Roma. These people come from extremely poor living conditions. It is clear that education, health and accommodation are the three most important areas that need to be resolved at a local level. This is especially clear in a city borough Neukölln, in Berlin, where there have been intensive discussions on how to resolve the immigrant issue, especially

of Roma immigrants. Therefore, there is a direct need for resources and policies for resolving these issues.

Despite the simplified process of formal registration, the great majority of those immigrants is not registered, either because they migrated back, or they registered at a later time. For that reason the immigration wave of people who want to stay permanently was not recognized in the beginning. The space capacity in high schools in North Neukölln was full, so extra small classes were formed in South - Neukölln, especially for immigrants from Romania and Bulgaria who did not speak German.

Due to language barrier there is a dire need in high schools for additional teaching staff, translators and cultural mediators, but also practical learning methods. Apart from that, children must attend preschool/kindergarten to enable them to learn the language at an early age and raise their educational prospects, regardless their descent.

Romania

Statistical data in Romania shows that just a little over half of Roma children (51%) attends school and that 7% of Roma men and 3% of Roma women completed high school, when compared to 73% of men and 61% of women in general population. Main obstacles to educational achievements of Roma pupils lie in the lack of knowledge of the local language with Roma children, poverty of Roma families, prejudice towards Roma children and low expectations of teachers when it comes to Roma pupils. Also, difficulties in integration may occur because their parents do not know where or how to enrol their children in school. Besides those reasons, the lack of personal hygiene and the necessary immunisation of Roma children causes health issues in public schools which in turn is used as justification for the exclusion of Roma children from schools. In Romania, for example, school principals claim that Roma children cannot be integrated into schools because they might cause schools to fail their health inspections.

Statistical data from Romania suggest that socio-economic characteristics have the prevailing influence to school attendance of Roma children. For example, it is more likely for Roma children to attend school if they live in mixed communities than those children living in Roma settlements or villages. Also, children whose father is employed or whose mothers completed more than eight years of school are more likely to regularly attend schools. Therefore, the socio-economic characteristics should be considered when examining the impact of education programs on school enrolment, school attendance and achievement indicators of Roma pupils. Unlike compulsory education, there is no evidence that the proportion of Roma who have completed secondary school has increased over the last two decades. Preschool activities, which are not compulsory almost do not exist in Roma communities.

In order to facilitate the attendance of school programs for Roma children, the courses of Romani language for non-Roma teachers started in 1997. As a result, the number of Romanian children who attend school in Roma language has increased from 150 in 1992 to 1717 in 1998, but it represents only a very small fraction of Roma children in Romania.

Croatia

The contemporary situation of Roma in Croatia is reflected in two characteristic forms of coexistence. Roma communities living in relatively isolated and separate neighbourhoods preserve their national and cultural self-awareness, but it occurs as a consequence of poverty and backwardness in relation to the environment. In contrast, the standard of living among the Roma population living mixed with the majority population is significantly better, but at a price of loss of national identity determinations. The same situation is in Koprivnica-Križevci county and neighbouring villages with Roma settlements.

The exact number of Roma who live in the Republic of Croatia, including those living around Koprivnica and their territorial distribution is difficult to determine for several reasons, including the resolution of a number of Roma to identify themselves as members of other ethnic groups and the frequency of their migration. Therefore, the results of the official census (according to the census of 2011 Roma in Croatia has 16.975 / Koprivnica - Križevci County 925, Koprivnica 149) are only an indication of the real situation. According to estimates by the Council of Europe, there are between 30,000 and 40,000 Roma in Croatia. It is estimated that in Roma settlements around Koprivnica there are more than 300 Roma.

The family is the fundamental element of the Roma social structure, with the specific traditional provisions. The Roma mostly the Roma language. Roma households are predominantly young and about 55% of the population is under the age of 19. Roma families are organized according to traditional roles. Attitude towards women is not equal. Women are often marginalized and discriminated against, which is reflected in the education of their children and in the way a family functions. Additionally, there is a high fertility rate. In some Roma communities, arranged marriages, under-age marriages and forced marriages are still prevailing as "traditional practice." Woman in Roma society is subordinated and therefore with no great possibilities of family planning.

Unfavourable socio-economic situation of the Roma is caused by deep-rooted social problems associated with poverty, low education, high unemployment, inadequate housing and living conditions, poor health status and a wide range of discrimination. Intertwined and mutually causally linked, these negative factors create a closed circle of social exclusion which Roma are unable to resolve alone and without support. Low living standards of most Roma as well as the ever-present marginalization contribute to their dependence on social welfare.

The differences between the Roma and the majority population are significant, in regards to family and education. Part of Roma population marries early, there are also teen pregnancies, which is also one of the causes of absence from the educational process. The differences in lifestyle and value system between the Roma and other groups result in the appearance of stereotypes, mistrust and unwillingness to converge and create understanding between the two groups, thus deepening the gap between them. In Koprivnica, there are shifts in addressing the marginalization of the Roma community and the desire to incorporate the same in both the educational system and in the wider community.

AUSTRIA

It is estimated that approximately 30,000 Roma presently live in Austria, the overwhelming majority of whom are of foreign birth or birth to foreign parents. The ERRC's 1996 report noted that this group -- up to 25,000 people (i.e., roughly 5/6 of the local Romani population), many of whom had been in Austria for decades and some of whom were born there -- faced serious hindrances to the ability to live with dignity; the combined effect of restrictive legislation pertaining to the acquisition of work and residence permits, as well as popular hostility to dark-skinned foreigners, had rendered life for non-citizen Roma in Austria extremely difficult.

The majority of Roma are city-based and many have assimilated. Most Gurbet and Arlije are Austrian citizens, as are most second-generation Kalderas. Many are self-employed in second-hand trading and other businesses.

As ethnic data is only collected on an optional basis in the Austrian Census, the numbers and distribution of Roma, and thus the analysis of problems of integration and discrimination, are inevitably inaccurate. Government policy for the Roma community is directed mostly at the conditions of the Burgenland Roma, the most disadvantaged group - but they are quite a small part of the total Roma community.

Concerning the ability of individual non-citizen Roma to establish themselves in Austria, local activists report that persons with legal status other than full citizenship have, since the ERRC's 1996 report, effectively been driven to the extreme margins of Austrian society. Austrian law was amended in 1997, but legal restrictions on individual establishment have not been lowered. At present, legal employment for non-EU citizens is available to those persons who have entered Austria with a permit of settlement (Niederlassungsbewilligung) issued for a particular job. Other work permits are issued only under a system of very restrictive exceptions.

Roma are disadvantaged in education and achieve lower levels than the general population. A minority complete higher secondary education, and very few go on to higher education. - See more at: Roma education levels are dramatically low. Roma populations are generally characterised by 'primary' and 'incomplete primary' education profiles. Poverty, lack of language skills and the frequent involvement of children in income generating activities or care for younger siblings result in increasing numbers of Roma children dropping out of school in Austria.

Since 2000 Roma teaching assistants have been assigned to classes in Viennese schools with a high proportion of immigrant Roma.

GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES IN PARTNERING COUNTRIES

The partners in this project from Italy, Germany, Romania and Croatia have gathered good practice examples from their areas and regarding the integration of Roma into vocational education or adult education. The criteria was to identify examples that have proved effective and efficient in the integration process of Roma in the area of vocational and life-long education, through activities, services and financing.

Good practice examples will be presented to partners from other countries and discussed at a conference in Koprivnica.

Within the framework of ERNE Project, we will summarize the chosen good practice examples in different countries.

Italy

Example one

Name of Project: *Giovani Si* – publicly financed internship program for young people – which started in 2012 and is still valid.

Project is conducted by: Presidency of Tuscany regional government *Giovani Si* offices, Presidenza Regia Toscana, Piazza Duomo 10, Florence, Italy; at regional level.

Financing of '*Giovani Si*', in the total amount of 500€ a month, is partly provided by the Tuscany Region (300€), and partly from the company hiring the interns (200 €).

If the intern is Roma, asylum seeker, refugee or a bearer of international protection and is residing in "Polifunzionale Centre" (living space financed by the Ministry of internal affairs (UNRRA) and UN funds controlled by the city of Florence and the cooperative *il Cenacolo*) and if P.A.C.I. project also participates (living space project providing certain services, such as legal counselling, family affairs, work integration affairs) then P.A.C.I. project covers the expenses otherwise covered by the company. This means that, unlike regular internship under '*Giovani Si*', the company does need to finance the intern.

The legislative context is related to the amendment of the Law on Regional apprenticeship (Legge Regionale n.3 del 2012 "Modifiche alla Legge Regionale n.32 del 2002 in materia di tirocini). The law enables the 500€ refund a month, which is given to the intern.

Giovani Si is an initiative sponsored by the Tuscany Region which aims to prepare young people for the labour market. In order to promote internships among young people (between 25 and 29 year olds), *Giovani Si* provides, on behalf of the Tuscany Region, 300 euros a month from a total of 500. In the case of vulnerable persons, the Region allows a full refund (Article 17 ter point 8). However, the company must budget the monthly expense of the interns. The exception is the above mentioned case, when a Roma person participates in Polifunzionale centre and P.A.C.I. project.



This good practice example ensures professional education of candidates (courses) before or during internship, in addition to educating young people, at no cost for the company.

There are various "Giovani Si" information points in the region, and the entire list can be found on the project's website.

Internship is activated through the 'Soggetto promotore' (the holding body) and implemented in 'Soggetto Ospitante' (host body) which can be private or public. In the case of employment after the internship period, the company can benefit from tax relief.

For asylum seekers, refugees and holders of international protection and users of Polifunzionale centre the access to "Giovani Si" is approved by "Work integration areas", one of the additional services provided by the Centre through PACI Project.

'Giovani Si' is an initiative supported by the Presidency of the Tuscany regional government that wants to invest in the future independence, entrepreneurship and leadership of young people in the region and wants to prepare them for the labour market. 'Giovani Si' is also a tool for the integration of asylum seekers, refugees and holders of international protection. However, it is not directly intended to address the issue of integration of migrants.

In order to give a chance to young people to prepare for the world of employment through proper training, Tuscany Region requires that the companies pay at least 500 euros gross per month to implement out-of-school employment. For participants aged at least 18 but under 30, Tuscany Region will co-finance their employment with 300-500 euro of their salary. The duration of employment varies according to the specifications of the job, from at least two to six months, including extensions, or 12 months for the unemployed or unemployed graduates and for vulnerable groups (as defined in Article 4 Law 381 \ 91).

Employment is activated by the holding body, and is done in a private or public organization hosting. If at the end of the above mentioned employment period the company decides to hire a young person for an indefinite period, the company will have tax relief.

In the case of Roma interns from Polifunzionale center, this good practice is provided by "Working integration area" within the framework of P.A.C.I. project. The P.A.C.I. project offers immediate coverage of all costs incurred by the company internship, many months before the approval of the grant of the 'Giovani Si'. Therefore, companies need not budget any money for the compensation of interns.

The cost is immediately covered by the Project, which, unlike private companies, cannot claim a refund. This means that, unlike the usual internship within 'Giovani Si', the company does not need to fund interns. In this way, forced migrants placed in Polifunzionale Center are not a burden for the local community, but a resource for local businesses and 'Giovani Si', or they represent a shared opportunity to open the labour market for the disadvantaged. The needs of the host project and private companies should also be taken into account. The services "Working integration area" can offer to companies are as follows:

- Correspondence (good connection) of persons and companies, based on the selection and preparation of candidates
- Training of candidates on the basis of necessary skills

- Implementation of individual or collective training courses before or during the internship period, at no cost for the company
- Support and mentoring candidates during their internship
- Creation of an easy way for the good integration of workers at the time of employment
- Continued support of the person and the company after they leave the project for a period of several months

Lack of jobs, lack of quality training programs and internships, the difficulties of living independently from their families and backgrounds, are all priority issues for the majority of young people who live in Tuscany today. For this reason, in June 2011 the Presidency of Tuscany regional government launched *Giovani Si*, a project whose goal is to promote the autonomy of young people living in Tuscany. The main objective of *Giovani Si* is to provide opportunities and implement effective measures in order to support young people in their transition to adulthood.

Young women and men, aged between 18 and 40, represent a direct target group of the project *Giovani Si*. Indirect target groups are Tuscany companies, local authorities, high schools and universities, centres and agencies for vocational training, trade unions, NGOs and cultural organizations.

Another reason why this good practice really addresses the issue of Roma integration is that there is a huge gap between the employment rates of Roma and non-Roma because Roma do not have the required level of education to find good jobs. Therefore Tuscany Region considers that a key investment must be in the education of the Roma in order to facilitate their introduction into employment and business.

Example two

Twin Apple Project, started in 2001 and is ongoing. It is implemented by the city of Florence – Public Education Department – Youth Policies.

The project is of a local character, based on Law number 285 dated on August 28 1997, and it concerns regulations for the promotion of rights and opportunities of children and young people. It is implemented with the help of a volunteer association AUSER and social community "Il Cenacolo". The service is offered to underage persons residing in the juvenile prison "Istituto Penale Minorile Meucci di Firenze", mostly foreign young people, most of whom are Roma.

Additional services offered in the project: mentorship for young people and internship in companies.

The project began when an employee of the Territorial Social Services, Directorate of Juvenile Justice - Department of Social Services or juvenile prison requires an intervention for disadvantaged young people, mainly those that are about to be released out of prison (or because they have served a prison sentence because the Juvenile Court decided for the alternate measure of custody). An employee fills out the form in the form of "scheda di segnalazione", which will be evaluated by the Board of Control and if the assessment is positive, the child will benefit from individualized vocational training related to mentorship and counselling.

The project aims to offer training, provide internships and recreational activities for young people that have been detained in a juvenile prison and encourage their reintegration into society.

Project activities started in 2001 by offering young people activities in workshops on bookbinding, art classes, music and IT. The workshops are not aimed specifically at professional training, but the evaluation of manual skills of young people, their ability to plan and realize a product in the framework of the exchange of know-how.

To achieve the objectives, a key role is played by retired craftsmen from the volunteer association AUSER, the leaders of the workshop. During the activity, the elderly become positive social models for the youngsters. They transmit positive values, such as commitment and passion for creativity.

The specific objectives of the project are:

- To monitor and orient young people who are at a disadvantage in the labour market through an individualized plan (planned along with them)
- To strengthen those conditions that help young people to stay in the labour market
- To improve the quality of life of disadvantaged young people by reducing services of straightforward material assistance and promoting opportunities aimed at the development and evaluation of their personal resources.

Other activities that are planned in the project:

- Flexible and individualized teaching methods aimed at improving the transversal competences
- Mentoring Services (monitoring and mentoring during initiation into a job)
- The individualized counselling services
- Creating a network of host companies (with adequate research of job opportunities for every young person)
- Pay for the internship (about 400 € per person, for a total of 200 hours).

Lessons learned from the previous project, which is the foundation of Twin Apple Project, have shown that the lack of a support network outside the prison could jeopardize all the work done in motivating young people to change their lives and could strengthen their commitment to a deviant lifestyle.

Lack of support and supporting network such as family, but also community network, is a major problem for young people who will soon leave prison. This problem leads to a vicious circle of social marginalization at risk to remain in the prison circuit and it leads to an even greater discrimination between Italians and foreigners. In fact, foreigners are still more exposed to marginalization because they do not have any references or networks in Italy so they can get out of this vicious circle.

Twin Apple Project aims to promote professional pathways for young people who are at greatest risk of marginalization, by promoting their social inclusion through the employment, which is considered to be the best integration tool. The following services are offered to encourage employment:

-Orientation and mentorship

-Evaluation and identification of competences (acquired in any field).

The target group are young people between the ages 16-25, minors who are about to be released out of juvenile prison or who have had legal problems, older volunteers, mentors, with the cooperation of the following stakeholders: Juvenile prison in Florence, Juvenile Court in Florence, Tuscany Region, the Province of Florence, local health authorities, University of Florence - department of Psychology, Vocational Technical Construction School in Florence, Volunteer Association AUSER, social cooperative "Il Cenacolo".

Project activities provide mentoring and teaching as follows:

1. Mentor
2. Counsellor (for orientation)
3. Employment mentor

The Control Board selects a mentor for each case. The mentor is provided by Volunteer association AUSER and mentors keep track of young people throughout the project.

Also, the project provides for psychological support during the transition phase from prison to work.

Orientation phase includes methods of counselling and mapping competencies and is focused on the detection of person's preferences in order to validate their knowledge, competencies and other skills that are useful for introduction into employment.

Mentor's job consists of the following:

-Finding work in companies or social enterprises

-Matching (combining the right person with the right company)

During the period of professional practice, each person must fill in personal records on a daily basis. At first, the internships were conducted in social enterprises (social cooperatives, mainly belonging to the area of Florence and CO & SO Consortium). Later, private companies also got involved, from the following sectors: tourism, restaurants, handicraft industry, publishing, industrial services, mechanics.

The project provides for a fee of approximately € 400 for each person, but the final cost depends on one's involvement and presence recorded in the personal register (quantitative indicator), as well as the evaluation questions about the internship, filled in by the host company together with a mentor for the introduction to a job (qualitative indicator). Salaries are financed by Law no. 285 of 28 August 1997.

Achieved results

10 internships activated

10 contracts achieved with host companies. Average duration of internship was 200 hours.

6 private companies and four social cooperatives involved.

Internships provided businesses information and impressions about possible future candidates for job openings.

The results of the project were measured by following tools:



- Quantitative indicator: the presence of the company was recorded in the personal register of participants
- Qualitative indicator: evaluation questionnaire on internship was filled by Host Company, together with the mentor.

The project is linked to employment as one of inclusive activities because it aims to employ young Roma released from prison through an internship.

Germany

Example one

BVBO Berliner Programm für berufliche Orientierung (professional orientation) started in 2005 and lasted until 2014. The Project was conducted by various non-governmental organizations. It works on all three levels: local, regional and national.

It was financed by the ESF and nationally co-funded by the Employment Agency since 2011. It was funded by the Senate - Department of Labour, Women and Integration – at a national level.

The program began as a pilot project in different areas, after which the results were summarized. A Commissioner was appointed who deals with the management and administration and works directly with various non-governmental organizations. This structure was chosen to support non-governmental organizations. Every non-governmental organizations must cooperate with the school in which the project is directly linked to the professional activities of the school and which provides practical training in small and medium-sized enterprises for practical orientation.

The aim and purpose of this good practice example is to offer vocational education at an early stage at the school level.

The program is structured with various activities. Schools and trainers may choose which programs would be best for particular needs of their students.

It is often the case that the program begins with a given project at school by offering information on different occupations. This leads to a small internships (1-2 days) in the small and medium enterprises. Additional support is offered during the application phase and competences are developed (especially social competences).

The idea is to offer vocational education at an early stage (8th grade) to support the decisions young people have to make. All participants are treated equally. There is no special "ROMA" course and nationality is not put into focus. It is especially important to avoid the development of stereotypes when choosing occupations.

The target group was young people, ages 14-17 – all pupils included in the school system.

The program is open to collaboration that will support professional orientation, particularly to cooperation with small and medium-sized businesses. The program consists of socialization activities and seeks to support each individual according to their special needs. Social skills are taught in a specific environment (sports / theatre). The focus of the program depends on the focus of the school in which it is implemented. Training sections offer basic information about occupations and vocational education system, plus what is required during the application phase.

If legal advice is needed, the program tries to find the support that can meet individual needs.

All of this results in participants thinking about the choices they have to make and getting them ready to apply for vocational training. Parents are informed about the needs of students. The program is evaluated by external assessors.

Example two

Project compass.mitte started in 2001 and ends in 2015.; www.zukunftsbau.de

It is implemented on a local level and financed by Berlin-Mitte County. The project is funded under the SGB VIII of German law. The project includes additional activities, such as social services for parents and other support services in case of crises, addiction and other problems young people and young families may be facing.

Is available to all young people under the age of 27, but a general rule is that the door is open to everyone.

The main goals and purpose of the Project

International work and support in cases of vocational education, integrated approach.

Zukunftsbau is an accredited company for internship that facilitates the work of young people. It was established in 1986 and is engaged in comprehensive and professional training of young people who are at a disadvantage and of long-term unemployed people with a view to integrate them into the labour market. Zukunftsbau offers consulting services, professional training in the 'dual system', vocational guidance and modular program qualifications with integrated support for social welfare. All Zukunftsbau services are based on a complete and lifelong learning to enable participants in not only achieving vocational qualifications, but also in becoming responsible members of society.

It allows individual case management by offering a multitude of services.

Consulting companies are located all over Berlin, which offer special deals and individual support for every situation in life. The starting point in the consultation stage are the individual needs and interests of the person seeking help. The main priority is to find a suitable vocational training for young people.

- professional vocational orientation
- Support in finding internships

- Complete support (social problems, problems at school, financial support for life)
- Information about the system of vocational education and some occupations
- Support at the application stage
- Accompanying persons to the offices of the company.

Consulting company "compass.mitte" offers services to everyone who comes and tries to obtain funding from various sources in order to ensure continuous service to its clients.

The composition of the participants in good practice example: very different, ages up to 27 years.

The project welcomes any kind of cooperation that will support services.

The result is the stabilization of a personal situation. The project is evaluated in the County.

The project has a link in case you need it. But mostly the people who come to seek the support do not identify themselves as Roma.

More young people have found a stable existence.

Romania

Example one

Project Centre for Professional and academic counselling, mediation and support for young Roma, is of local character and carried out in Bucharest. It is ongoing. It is conducted in Romania, Bucharest, Anghel Saligny 8, 4th Floor, 5th District

The project is funded by the Foundation Toflea, the Netherlands Foundation for Eastern and Central Europe, the Association Amare Rromentza.

The project is a response to the needs identified in previous projects of the Association Amare Rromentza. The project offers additional activities such as tutoring for children and youth.

The project aims to improve access to the labour market and school education for young Roma people, aged between 16 and 29.

The aim of the project was to establish a centre for counselling and mediation for young Roma. The centre will provide information, counselling and assistance for young Roma, in conjunction with subsequent integration into the school system or the labour market. The focus was on places in vocational schools available to Roma candidates. The project is aimed at



raising employment opportunities during the project for at least 80 young Roma in Bucharest at the age of 16-29.

Services provided by this project are as follows: advising on enrolment in vocational schools, support for school education, information regarding employment opportunities, mediation entering the labour market; lobbying and advocacy in labour market institutions and with potential employers.

The value of this good practice example is that the project provides support for young Roma, but at the same time provides mediation between them and the vocational schools or potential employers. The project has helped young Roma people to overcome barriers and increase confidence in the further integration.

The target group here are young Roma between ages 16-29, and the participants are young Roma school mediators and counsellors.

The main stakeholders involved in the project are school mediators, Roma communities, employers, agency work (labour), school counsellors.

The project is based on needs identified in previous research. The methodology and activities were similar to those recommended in national and European strategy for Roma integration.

The project has used:

- Inclusion support and mediation services
- Integration counselling in vocational schools
- Easier access to labour market
- lobbying in institutions and with persons responsible for hiring.

The results of the project relate to the interaction of all these activities, but also with measures relating to education and the integration of young Roma in educational institutions.

Quantitative effects of this project are:

- 200 Young Roma in Bucharest, aged 16-29, participated in informative workshops on access to the labour market
- 80 young Roma participated in the consultations on the issue of access to the labour market
- 80 Young Roma have passed vocational training to qualify for the position in accordance with the needs of the labour market
- 200 Roma students from Bucharest aged 14-18 were informed about the places reserved for Roma youth in high schools and vocational schools
- 100 Roma students are participants of school counselling.



All results have been achieved within the project and refer to the time of implementation. Project activities are harmonized with strategies for integrating education and employment.

Example two

Project Competitive young Roma with equal opportunities in the labour market, was realized in two years, from December 2010 to November 2012, and was conducted at the regional and national level (centre, Northwest, Bucharest Ilfov)

The project is funded by the European Union through the European Social Fund, Operational Programme Human Resources Development (ESF).

The project was a response to the needs identified by the Foundation Resource Centre for Roma communities.

The main objective of this project was to facilitate access to the labour market in order to reduce social exclusion, discrimination and poverty of young Roma in the developing regions of Central, North-western and Bucharest - Ilfov.

The aim of the project was to establish a centre for counselling and career guidance for young Roma about the integration on the labour market. The focus was in helping 700 young Roma in developing career planning skills, finding and keeping a job and in supporting 120 young Roma in finding a job.

Services provided by this project:

1. Developing skills for career planning, finding and keeping a job of 700 young Roma through the development of tailored career paths, combined with social and psychological support
2. Raising awareness of 700 young Roma regarding social deviation (alcohol and drug abuse, violations and breaking the law) to enhance the ability to make decisions and to avoid early school dropout rate;
3. Vocational training of 120 young Roma, in order to develop their skills and competencies in accordance with the requirements imposed by the labour market;
4. The promotion of an inclusive society by 3500 employees, to monitor changes in social attitudes towards vulnerable groups, in order to increase occupancy rates and sustainable integration of young Roma in the labour market;
5. Developing an innovating pilot program to combat stereotypes and prejudice to Roma people at the level of 300 employees / employers, in order to facilitate access of these target groups to the labour market, leading to the inclusion of the Roma who are at risk of social marginalization.



The value of this good practice example is that this project provides support to young Roma in regard to career planning, job search and retention and to facilitate access to the labour market in order to reduce social exclusion, discrimination and poverty of young Roma.

The target group are young Roma aged 16 and older and counsellors. The main stakeholders involved in the project are: Roma community, employers, employment agency.

The project is based on needs identified in previous research. The methodology and activities were similar to those recommended in national and European strategy for Roma integration.

Planned activities in the Project:

1. Development and support for the program of career counselling and professional orientation.
2. Development and support for the counselling program on the prevention and social deviance
3. Developing and printing the guide "Ready for the future"
4. Selection of 14 vocational counsellors for professional guidance and orientation
5. Training 14 vocational counsellors for professional guidance and orientation
6. Selection of 700 young Roma who will be involved in guidance and orientation activities and the prevention of social deviation
7. Facilitating the participation of 120 young Roma in vocational training (qualifications or retraining)
8. Support in finding employment for 120 counselled and trained young Roma
9. The development of specific methodologies for working and communicating with new Roma employees, dedicated to employers and employees
10. Information and publicity campaign dedicated to employers and their employees to improve their attitude towards vulnerable groups

The effects of this project:

- 700 Roma students advised and professionally focused, informed and advised on the prevention of social dysfunction
- 700 social scholarships for Roma students
- 140 students participated in the activities of the healthy use of free time
- 2000 copies of the guide, "Ready for the Future"
- 120 young Roma participating in professional training programs
- 120 supports to participants in training
- 100 graduates of training courses
- 200 young Roma aided in the search for employment
- 70 young Roma have entered the labour market



- 3500 employers and employees notified within the information and publicity campaigns and 3,500 leaflets distributed
 - 300 participants in the working groups - employers and their employees who have expressed an interest and willingness to employ young Roma.
- The project activities are aligned with strategies for Roma integration in education and employment.

Quantitative results achieved by this project are:

- 700 Roma students advised and professionally oriented
- 700 social scholarships for Roma students
- 140 students participated in the activities of the healthy use of free time
- 120 supports to participants in training
- 100 graduates of training courses
- 200 young Roma supported in search of employment
- 70 young Roma have entered the labour market.

Croatia

Example one

The training program for Roma assistant implemented on a regional level, May 2012, in the duration of 750 school hours.

Organization: Open University Koprivnica, Starogradska 1, 48000 Koprivnica.

The program was funded from multiple sources. Croatian Employment Service- Regional Office Križevci, local government - city Đurđevac, EU funds from the IPA IV. Project " The new tomorrow for the Roma community Đurđevac" (Applicant Centre for Social Welfare Đurđevac)

Describe the legislative context in which the good practice example is financed:

The program is certified by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports; UP/I-602-07/0903/00099; 533-09-09-0003. According to the measures of the National Programme for the Roma and the action plan Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015, Croatian Employment Service has funded the cost of training four Roma, one was financed from the city budget Đurđevac and two from the EU project "The new tomorrow for the Roma community Đurđevac" (IPA4.1.2.1.02.02.c19 "Establishing Support in Social Integration and employment of socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups" EuropeAid/129121/M/ACT/HR).

The training program for Roma assistants could be enrolled by a student who has graduated from high school that is at least 18 years old, has skills for working with people, is a communicative person and meets physical and mental criteria for performing the job (a medical certificate of health and mental / physical condition).

During the program, participants will be theoretically and practically familiarized with the tasks and duties of the Roma assistants. Upon completion of the program they will be able to:

independently perform tasks and duties within the scope of these activities, to know how to apply the methods of educational work with children, learn to interact with children and their parents as well as educators and teachers, help encourage Roma parents to cooperate with kindergarten / school, to know how to motivate children and their parents or guardians to regularly visit the kindergarten / school, to know how to motivate parents / guardians to regularly come to PTA meetings. They will know how to organize daily and annual work plan. They will gain knowledge in the area of multiculturalism and will be able to continue to cultivate their own. The entire program is conducted over a period of 750 school hours, of which 450 hours of theory and 300 hours of practical training.

Aim and purpose: Roma assistant as a liaison between the school, teachers, parents and children is essential, particularly in communication, both in kindergarten and at school. This is important in areas where Roma constitute a significant minority. Roma assistant also plays a role in Roma settlements in motivating children and helping with homework.

The training program for the Roma assistant gives the student the tools in different subjects: pedagogy, child psychology, Croatian language, civil and intercultural education, computer literacy, communication and organizational skills, health education.

The value of this good practice example in the Roma assistants program is that the Roma assistant is important for the successful implementation of preschool and primary education of Roma children due to the lack of knowledge of Croatian language, low levels of education of the parents and lack of parental support for children.

The target group are the Roma min. 18 years old, three women / 4 men.

The project partners are: Croatian Employment Service- Regional Office Križevci, Centre for Social Welfare Đurđevac, City Đurđevac, primary schools and kindergartens.

The program is based on the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015, which is carried out at the same time with the National Programme for the Roma. The measures envisaged to achieve some improvements should help in eliminating discrimination and marginalization of Roma, as well as to improve their socio - economic status and living standards.

Based on the measures of the National Programme for the Roma and the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015, the Croatian Employment Service is responsible for the area of employment. The measures within the competence of the Croatian Employment Service are focused on education to raise the employability and self- employment, subsidising all sectors and financing employment in public works. Four Roma attended a training program for Roma assistants through these measures, one was financed from the budget of the City of Đurđevac, and two Roma from the EU project "New future for the Roma community Đurđevac ".

The following activities are planned: Sports, recreational activities, trips, learning about basic personal hygiene and proper behaviour, communication in Croatian and Roma language /



dialect, learning and mastering the language barrier, encouraging children to actively participate in workshops, events, walks and various school activities, developing work habits in learning the basics of civil and intercultural education, computer literacy, communication and organizational skills, the basics of health education.

The effects achieved by this program are observed in the lowered school dropout rate, more regular school attendance, achieving better results, completing more classes than before and the higher cooperation between parents and the education system.

In the area where a significant number of Roma people live, Roma assistants are needed as intermediaries between Roma parents, their children and teachers. They facilitate the inclusion of Roma children in schools through communication and the adoption of socially acceptable rules of behaviour, which can be a good incentive for completing school, going to college, getting a job.

The result of the program is that all of these seven trained Roma assistants are occasionally and successfully employed in preschool or elementary education.

Example two

The training program for cleaners, held April-May 2012 for a period of 100 hours, organized and conducted by the Open University of Koprivnica, Starogradska 1, 48000 Koprivnica, at the regional level.

The program is funded from the project IPA4.1.2.1.02.02.c19 per call for proposals' "Establishing Support in Social Integration and Employment of Socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups" EuropeAid/129121/M/ACT/HR.

The program includes additional content of acquiring the skills for employment.

The training program for cleaners could be enrolled by participants with primary school. The training program was conducted only with adult learners (those who are 15 years old or older) for personal needs, the needs of the Croatian Employment Service and the organizations that sent them to training.

During the program, the participants learned about the theoretical and practical activities and tasks of cleaning. They learned how to rationally use energy and they acquired practical knowledge and methods of machine area cleaning. They learned how to disinfect areas, were trained to protect the environment, gained knowledge about the application of basic hygiene, sanitation and safety standards at work. They acquired practical knowledge and skills in



communication and business etiquette and learned how to practically apply the knowledge gained.

The training program for cleaners was designed for the purpose of achieving a fully specialized and professional cleaning of every surface. In the case of this project, the program was implemented for the long-term unemployed members of the Roma community Đurđevac. The intention was that these participants gain skills and public documents for easier integration into the labour market which could, in the long term, contribute to curbing the trend of social exclusion of the Roma community Đurđevac.

Tools that participants acquire during this training are: planning and organization of work, cleaning and maintenance - manual and mechanical cleaning, disinfection, basic standards of hygiene and sanitation, communication and behaviour in the workplace, business etiquette, environmental protection, occupational health and safety.

Philosophy regarding this training program is almost the same as in any other training program, and that is to acquire competences for employment. Getting a job due to newly acquired competences means providing an income for life and there is no more dependence on social welfare. It gives the example of other community members.

The target group of this program are young Roma aged 15 and older, eight men, two women, aged 20 to 28.

Participants in the program are Croatian Employment Service- Regional Office Križevci, Centre for Social Welfare Đurđevac, companies that provide cleaning services.

National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015 are taken into account in the preparation of project proposal "The new tomorrow for the Roma community Đurđevac". One of the goals of the National Programme for the employment of Roma from 2003 is the inclusion of Roma in vocational training programs. Given the extremely poor state of education and employment in the Roma community Đurđevac, it was the aim of this application.

The participants in this project who have completed a training program for cleaners acquired skills / competences and have been involved in public works, which is one of the measures of the Croatian Employment Service. They were employed at a certain time, gained experience and were paid for their work.

Example three

Project "For literate Croatia: way to a better future (Decade of literacy in Croatia 2003 – 2012), was implemented from September 2004-December 2012. Each of the 16 implemented cycles



within the scope of the Project lasted for 18 weeks. The implementation was done at a regional level by Open University Koprivnica, Starogradska 1, 48000 Koprivnica.

The project is funded by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia.

The regulation is based on the Primary and Secondary Adult Education, Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Education (Official Gazette 87 / 08).

Primary adult education is conducted in accordance with the prescribed curriculum for adult primary education (Official Gazette no. 136/2003).

Croatian Government, in accordance with the Resolution of the United Nations Literacy Decade for the period of 2003 – 2012, launched the project "For Literate Croatia: The Way to a Better Future (Decade of Literacy in Croatia from 2003 to 2012)." The project is conducted under the guidance and supervision of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. Stakeholders are county government offices, open universities, primary schools and other institutions that are authorized to carry out the program of primary adult education.

The success of this project in the Open University Koprivnica is the result of collaboration between the Open University of Koprivnica and its partner, the Croatian Employment Service-Regional Office Križevci , the Centres for Social Welfare in Koprivnica and Đurđevac and the State Administration Office in Koprivnica – Križevci county. Prospective participants were accessed on a personal level and motivated to complete primary education to be able to complete a training program for simpler tasks and become more employable.

Each year, the funds are provided from the state budget to finance the participants' primary adult education. Therefore, completing primary education is free for all students. The project includes the completion of primary school, and then one of the training programs for easier jobs. The candidate must be at least 15 years old and be a Croatian citizen. She / he must contact the Department of Social Affairs in the Office of the State Administration of Koprivnica – Križevci County (or any other county) and leave documents for registration. The next step is an application for the approval of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports to begin teaching. After the Open University of Koprivnica (or any institution that has a certificate of the Ministry for the implementation of the program of primary adult education) gets consent, classes are organized. The program of primary adult education is divided into educational periods, from the first to the sixth, each for a period of eighteen weeks. Once students finish the eighth grade, they may enrol into and complete a training program for simpler jobs.

The purpose of this project is to enable the completion of primary education to persons older than 15 and to improve the level of education in Croatia by facilitating continuing education for adults. It is intended that people complete primary education and training program to perform simple tasks to become more easily employable.



Since this project is a literacy project, it also refers to the completion of primary education, followed by one of the training program for simpler jobs, the participant can benefit from it in a way that they become more employable. The project gives its participants the ability to obtain the prerequisites for further education. Likewise, after the training for simpler jobs and the acquiring new skills, they can get better access to the labour market.

Those with success stories can encourage others from the Roma community to try similar education programs through the process of dissemination.

The fundamental value is that the young members of the Roma community are introduced to socially acceptable norms through this project and are thus able to contribute to the rapid inclusion of the Roma community in the local community

Target groups: mostly unemployed, mostly men, age: 15-50.

The project partners are: Croatian Employment Service- Regional Office Križevci, Centre for Social Welfare in Koprivnica and Đurđevac and the State Administration Office in Koprivnica – Križevci County.

National Programme for Roma, a strategic document adopted by the Croatian government in 2003 deals with many Roma issues, such as improving living conditions and participation in social life and decision-making processes in the local community, all without losing their own identity, culture and traditions. Another important document related to improving the socioeconomic status of the Roma was the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015, which is carried out with the National Programme for the Roma. The measures envisaged to achieve some improvements should help in eliminating discrimination and marginalization of Roma, as well as improve their socio - economic status and living standards. Croatian Employment Service is in charge in the area of employment. Since most of the Roma community has low or no levels of education, the measures of the Croatian Employment Service are focused on education in order to raise the employability and self-employment, subsidizing of all sectors and financing employment in public works.

The participants of primary adult education at the Open University Koprivnica will, through learning subjects like math, Croatian, English, geography, history, etc., acquire general knowledge needed for better socialization. The participants - members of the Roma minority – will improve their knowledge of Croatian language.

Effects: There are more and more Roma children enrolled in primary education, absenteeism has been decreased, fewer school dropout rates, stereotypes against the Roma community have been shattered. All of these effects can be measured in the reports and monitoring by the ministries responsible for preschool, school, higher and vocational education, the indicators on the participation and success of Roma children in the educational process on an annual basis.



Results can be heard in committee hearings in local communities with a significant percentage of Roma in their population.

The completion of primary education and acquiring qualifications for doing simpler jobs can contribute to curbing social exclusion. It helps participants gain knowledge and competence for easier integration into the labour market.

Example four

Project "Step towards new life opportunities", lasts for 12 months from August 28, 2013 until August 27, 2014, at a regional level.

The organizer is the city of Koprivnica, Zrinski trg 1/I, 48000 Koprivnica, www.koprivnica.hr.

The project is funded from the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (HRD OP) 20072011.

Regulatory Context: Establishing Support in Social Integration and Employment of Socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups, EuropeAid/131454/M/ACT/HR, which refers to access to the education system with the additional activity of creating employment opportunities for the long-term unemployed welfare recipients.

The aim is to integrate people with disabilities into the labour market and mainstream society for which the city of Koprivnica seeks assistance from the European Union. It is based on the activities that the applicant and partners carry out in the scope of their daily duties and includes their best methods.

The project, which has been used as an example in the process of implementation in Đurđevac and Koprivnica - Križevci County - is within the same competition. This project is aimed exclusively at members of the Roma nationality, the project manager is the Centre for Social Welfare Đurđevac, and the partners are the City of Đurđevac and Croatian Employment Service - Regional Office Križevci.

The first activity is selecting the target group that will actively participate in the implementation of the project. Centre for Social Welfare Koprivnica is responsible for the successful execution of activities because this project is closely linked with the regular duties and tasks performed by the Centre. After selecting the target group, two types of workshops were set, individual and group. Individual workshops can achieve a greater connection between experts and users, in order to achieve a greater level of trust, and users can easily present their problems and thoughts. Group workshops are conducted so that users learn to work in groups, teamwork, how to share opinions and experiences regarding general and impersonal subjects. Practical training workshops on techniques of making wicker products is the next project activity.

The purpose of this good practice example is the inclusion of the Roma and the long-term unemployed who are older than 40 into society, boosting their motivation and creating the

preconditions for the future organization of making traditional wood products. The overall objective of the project is the inclusion of Roma and older long-term unemployed people into society and the labour market, which will lead to a reduction in the number of welfare recipients and help reduce the number of unemployed in the town of Koprivnica. In order to contribute to achieving the objective, two specific goals were set. The first is to strengthen the motivation for social inclusion and employment. The other goal of the project is to create the preconditions for the establishment of cooperatives for the production of traditional products and self-employment.

Used tools: During the project, individuals will get a chance to talk about their problems with regard to the social integration during the five individual consultations with a psychologist. Training in life skills will also be organized into groups of a total of three times. Group workshops will be organized to help the students learn how to present themselves to potential employers. The participants will have the opportunity to learn how to write a resume and covering letter, how to present themselves to potential employers at interviews, tips and tricks of verbal and non-verbal communication, the importance of teamwork, etc. The workshops will be held in three groups of 7-10 people a total of 5 times. Also, participants will be encouraged to learn English, computer science and business topics through free, easy to use and available 24 hours a day online video training. This new knowledge and skills will increase their competitiveness in the labour market. Roma and persons older than 40 will have individual and group workshops, and through the implementation of the project they will learn how to make wooden products. Overall, 24 workshops on the art of knitting will be organized. The last part of the training as part of the project concerns the 10 seminars on social entrepreneurship and basic business conditions.

Fundamental concepts of psycho-social approach are empowerment, self-esteem, eliminating the structure of social welfare and the development of market forces. Moreover, the emphasis is on overcoming social injustice and the spread of opportunities for individuals to shape their own lives. By developing strength, ability, competence, authority and power within a given individual, psycho-social approach develops motivational base for action with more confidence in the public space, and these are the core principles of the good practice example.

Target group: 25 Roma welfare recipients (aged 18) and long-term unemployed persons older than 40.

The association of good practice with the objectives of national / European strategies and policies.

The project is in line with national and European strategies for Roma, because the activities are defined in accordance with the defined problems in those documents. Project activities aim to improve problems such as social exclusion, high unemployment, low education levels, lack of motivation for lifestyle change.



Lack of formal education cannot give a full explanation of the relatively high unemployment rate of Roma, as part of the problem stems from discrimination in employment. This project represents a strategy that can be used as common among EU countries.

This project is a good example of how to act in a different way to motivate Roma and long-term unemployed persons older than 40. Project activities whose results are practical workshops on techniques of creating knitted and wooden products have the goal of combating unemployment and increasing the current lack of income of Roma.

The effects of the project: It is expected that at least 80% of the target group to successfully complete at least 75% of all the workshops and to acquire skills for making knitted products. It is also expected that at least 70% of the target group will become aware of the basic business issues and the possibilities of business within a business incubator.

Their motivation to work and a positive business plan will be a prerequisite for the establishment of cooperatives.

The project is associated with inclusive strategies, such as employment and housing by the Roma and persons older than 40 through individual and group workshops to learn how to make wood products, which will help them in their future lives because they will have more experience and will be able to get a job in the future.

AUSTRIA

VET is a strength of the Austrian school system, it is also a system that fits to the needs and demands of minorities. Some VET schools are those with the highest rate of students with an other first language as German (e.g. "Handelsschule"), so those schule types are also an area that are valuable perspectives for Roma students. But, as in the chapter before addressed, the common approach in the VET area is in principle the same, not to establish additional measures with elements of segregation, but individualizes and person-targeted support concerning the needs and demands of each person and each group.

Specific measures to integrate Roma in the area of employment and access to the labour market:

First example:

"THARA projects: the aim of these projects is to make it easier for Roma/Sinti to access the labour market and job related and vocational educational institutions. In addition, the professional opportunities for adult and young Roma/Sinti are increased through identity reinforcing careers advice, advice on training and social issues, "intercultural" coaching and vocational training (<http://www.volkshilfe.at/1235,,2.html>).

The AMS advice centre for Roma in the Province of Burgenland is an additional service offered by AMS. The additional advice and support offered by the centre is designed to help eliminate the factors which make successful entry into training or employment difficult or which jeopardise the individual's long-term prospects. In addition to the services offered by AMS, the following services are also offered: advice and information on career choices, perspectives on life and work, increasing self-confidence, how to deal with the authorities, help with looking for childcare, social security issues, encouragement with training/further training, support in the workplace or during training, public relations work.

The key "Investitionen in Menschen und Qualifikationen" [investment in people and qualifications] component of the strategy for the Danube area will focus, amongst other things, on combating poverty and social exclusion among marginalised groups in the Danube region, particularly the Roma communities, and on implementing the Roma Decade (2005-2015) actions and other actions which need to be implemented.

General inclusion measures in the areas of employment and social inclusion:

These are designed in such a way that they benefit all citizens and consequently also members of minorities; it can therefore be assumed that participants and purchasers include Romnija and Roma. Measures include the following:

- Introduction of means-tested minimum income scheme

- Guaranteed training and industry-wide apprenticeships

- Zukunft Jugend [Youth Future] initiative

- Frauenschwerpunkt [focus on women] (Labour market package III) "

Austrian Federal Chancellery 1014 Vienna, 2011, pg. 22f.

RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Suggested ideas based on best practice examples

1. Companies can hire interns with minimal financial investment, if the major part of the funds come from public funds. Therefore, it is a "win - win situation," in which businesses and trainees benefit from the system.
2. In the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents is preferred through strong cooperation between public authorities, the local juvenile court, juvenile prison, volunteer organizations and local companies. Means must be provided by the public authorities / laws
3. Practical vocational orientation should be implemented in every school system.
4. Provide a place / home-centres in neighbourhoods that provide ongoing support needed for young people.
5. Vocational training is a good alternative to the classical school education that can also be applied for the elderly by giving them a chance to enter the labour market.
6. For the integration of Roma into the labour market, counselling and career guidance is very important because of social prejudices against Roma.
7. The implementation of training for as many Roma assistants as possible, in communities with a significant number of members of the Roma minority.
8. Acquiring skills in people in the Roma population in any area creates the possibility of greater employability and faster inclusion into the labour market.
9. It is necessary to develop a well-designed programs for the education of Roma, and through co-financing of local communities, regions, countries and the EU to provide funds for the implementation of these programs.
10. Educational and individual and group workshops aimed at strengthening the motivation for involvement in society and the labour market can be transferred to other projects, since they are of general nature and target key problems of the target group. On the other hand, the workshop on the techniques of knitting can be transmitted as a good practice because they are specific, do not require any previous knowledge and the general idea can be used in any other field, such as agriculture.

Experts' reviews

ERNE is an important initiative whose purpose is to find examples of good practice done in certain partner countries in order to create recommendations and policies aimed at greater inclusion of Roma children and adults in the education system. The main idea of all recommendations is to enable an easier access to services and information connected to professional opportunities through various channels while improving and equalizing the position of Roma in society.

Most European countries' legislative context, in theory, enables Roma children to have access to their education systems, but due to unemployment and poverty of Roma families, geographical isolation, unfavorable and unattractive school environment and cultural factors (parents see a family and home as they best way to get an early education) the inclusion of Roma is very limited. What Robert Ermanni emphasizes, which is not included in this research project, is that the most important thing is improving the living standard of Roma and provide them with access to basic services such as health care system, place of residence, normal living conditions, access to education and professional centers. Mr. Ermanni observes that Roma live away from city centers where the struggle for life is tougher and persuading the parents to send their children to school becomes all the more difficult as they need additional help at home. Therefore, the first step should be to guarantee equal access to regular services offered to other local citizens. Additionally, it is important that all projects run by local and state governments should not be aimed exclusively at Roma as that is discriminative in itself, but for everyone who feels the need and lives in similar circumstances and only for the time period long enough to achieve the same level of access to services as is offered to everyone else.

The discrimination of Roma is very emphasized: teachers have low expectation of Roma children and even school principals claim Roma children may not attend their schools due to their lack of basic hygiene as that might cause the school to fail health inspection tests. Mrs. Ksenija Krušelj said: "Prejudice is created by adults, not children." Therefore it is essential to work on reducing prejudice among adults and getting to know the Roma and their culture in order to achieve a better coexistence. Teachers should teach other children to accept Roma as their friends.

Roma families have a traditional role division. The relationship towards women is not equal. Women are often marginalized and discriminated against, which reflects in their upbringing and the way families function. What Ksenija Krušelj noticed through her experience is that Roma women would love to go to school and learn but due to the views and customs of their families they cannot. Additionally this is prevented by the fact that Roma women become mothers early in life with no one they to take care of their children while they attend school.

All interviewed persons support projects initiated by the state with the aim of better integrating Roma in the majority society but also emphasizing the disadvantages, such as hiring Roma workers mainly through public works projects, which implies part-time jobs and the lack of permanent employment, which in turn would motivate other Roma to get included in the education projects. According to Franjo Horvat, all institutions should hire Roma persons with

a high school degree because they would be best equipped for dealing with other Roma needs and problems.

They also agree that the greatest problem in the integration of Roma in majority society is the lack of knowledge of Croatian language. If Roma do not speak Croatian, they cannot fully participate in all projects of state and local governments aimed at a better inclusion of Roma in society. The offered solution for surpassing this obstacle is including Roma children in preschool education in order to allow them to start learning Croatian at an early age, but also to teach them to how to sit still and pay attention and about personal hygiene. Also, it is agreed that Roma assistants should be present during first years of school in order to help Roma children acquire school material. It is important to emphasize that the assistants are not individual helpers (for individual students) but one assistant per class with the majority Roma students. Robert Ermanni observes that the Roma assistant should not last “forever” but as long as there is the need.

According to Mr. Ermanni one recommendation is missing from the list:

Vocational schools should follow the needs of a local market and focus on the type of training sought after at a certain time, such as production and different crafts.

In order to better integrate Roma in schools, Mr. Ermanni emphasizes that it would be important to give more publicity to cases when Roma individuals were successful in a sector, in order for Roma population to reclaim dignity. The situation is the same as with gender equality: when women have an important position in politics there is a greater publicity. The same applies to Roma individuals who have achieved success – they represent a role model for others. We rarely hear of a Roma person being successful as a professional. A greater publicity should encourage other members of the community.

Mr. Ermanni and Mr. Horvat as well as Mrs. Krušelj consider a lot has already been done in the integration of Roma, their education and coexistence in society, but a lot remains to be achieved in order to build the system completely. It is important to listen to each other and not hear only what one wants to hear. What needs to be explained is that the laws are equal for everyone. It is also important not to impose other culture on the Roma, as they have their own - everyone should adjust to each other.

Knowledge deriving from activities in good practice examples that can be contributed to the general recommendations at the local, regional, national, European level

1. There is a huge gap between the unemployment rate of the Roma and non-Roma, which is due to the fact that "the majority of working-age Roma lack the education necessary to find a good job. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in the education of the Roma in order to enable successful entry into the labour market" (Announcement from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020" (COM 2011 (173), Brussels 5/4/2011).

A good tool for achieving this goal is presented in public funding internships, which on the one hand gives the necessary training and mentoring to Roma workers, linking them with the labour market and gives them a chance to stay in the system, while on the other side it gives financial support to businesses and indirectly helps them to overcome their prejudices against Roma.

2. Creating a network between juvenile prisons, public authorities, juvenile courts, volunteers from NGOs and organizations working in the social sector, in order to assist in the introduction of work and social inclusion of one of the most vulnerable target groups, Roma juvenile delinquents.
3. Practical vocational orientation should be implemented in every school system.
4. Provide a place / home-centres in neighbourhoods that provide ongoing support needed for young people, especially Roma.
5. Lobbying and mediation on the labour market is extremely important for the integration of Roma, considering the prejudice about the Roma population.
6. The inclusion of Roma assistants in the education system results in increased enrolment of Roma children in schools. Consequently, this emphasizes the need to ensure continued funding for Roma assistants until the situation of Roma improves
7. By increasing competence in a variety of jobs (cleaners) create chances for an easier access to the labour market, as well as greater security and a chance to get out of social exclusion.
8. The partnership of all relevant stakeholders engaged in the Roma population is essential. Due to the low level of education of the target group, it must be an individual approach to every member in the process of motivation.

9. Training target group on business opportunities by using new sets of skills acquired at the workshop. If self-employment plays a significant role in the long term, the support of possible businesses should begin immediately, through the teaching of basic business skills, facilitating access to capital and stimulating the real economy instead of possibly existing gray market (the latter is especially important if you the future entrepreneurs want to benefit from participation in the EU).