



# ERNE

European Roma integration good practice exchange and policy NETwork

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# RESEARCH

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## Introduction

The ERNE project is a contribution to the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategies so as to maximize chances of success for Roma integration, by means of exchange of experiences and of best practices via a network. The purpose of this network is to analyze good practices contributed by project partners in four crucial educational areas: pre-school, school, higher and vocational education. Special attention will be brought to issues of accessibility, reduction of early leaving and progressing from one educational level to the next ([www.erne-project.eu](http://www.erne-project.eu)).

The ERNE project is an important initiative, which tries to identify and exchange good practices, develop policy recommendations and raise awareness in the field of the integration of Roma children and adults in the educational systems. With this research the partnership intends to face the challenges existing for the integration of Roma citizens and to facilitate integration of Roma in Higher Education Institutions.

The present research paper will focus on integration of Roma population in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The project partners have been asked to send information related to this subject, together with good practices identified in their areas. Interviews with relevant stakeholders were conducted. Additional, a questionnaire was developed, and sent to other universities in Europe, in order to find more information related to integration of Roma population in HEIs.

**Higher education, post-secondary education, tertiary education or third level education** is an optional final stage of formal learning that occurs after secondary education. Higher education institutions are universities, academies, colleges, seminaries, and institutes of technology. Higher education is also available through certain college-level institutions, including vocational schools, trade schools, and other career colleges that award academic degrees or professional certifications. Tertiary education at non-degree level is sometimes referred to as further education or continuing education as distinct from higher education. ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)).

In Future of Higher Education in Europe (Edit. by Sacha Garben, LEQS Paper, No. 50/2012), is mentioned that Higher education has become a key factor in the Lisbon Strategy, now followed up by the Europe 2020 Strategy - the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade to make Europe the world's most competitive knowledge economy<sup>1</sup>. In order for the

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<sup>1</sup>Garben, S. - Future of Higher Education in Europe, LEQS Paper, No. 50/2012, p. 16



EU to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy, the Union has set five objectives on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate, which are to be reached by 2020. The education objectives are to reduce school drop-out rates below 10%, and to reach at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education. Each Member State adopts their own national targets in each of these areas and concrete actions at EU and national levels underpin the strategy (Garben, 2012, p. 17). Although the European-level cooperation is mostly on a voluntary basis, it is clear that the Member States' education policies are becoming more and more Europeanized.

The core feature of the Bologna Process is the introduction of a common Bachelor-Master-Doctorate system. It was initiated in 1998, when at an international Forum organized in connection with the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the Sorbonne University, the Ministers of education of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom decided on a 'Joint Declaration on harmonization of the architecture of the European higher education system'. It was open for the other Member States of the European Union (EU) as well as for third countries to join.

## **I. Higher-education and the situation of Roma population in the partner countries. The educational system**

### **Selection of relevant European and national regulations and initiatives, related to the access to higher education of Roma population.**

The approach of inclusion is performed in an integrated way, paying special attention to the situation of the Roma in all EU policies, aiming to improve the economic situation, health status, living conditions, employment opportunities, understanding through culture and education.

The European Union and Member States have a shared responsibility to Roma inclusion and they use a range of tools and policies in their areas of responsibility.

We have selected some regulations that are giving directions towards the integration of Roma population in higher education and we are presenting here below the main recommendations, in order to disseminate the existing regulations in the field and to ensure a common understanding of the background.

- **European Parliament resolution of March 11th 2009 on the social situation of the Roma and improving their access to the EU labor market (2008/2137 (INI))** finds that<sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>2</sup> Official Journal of the European Union, C 87, April 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 p. 63



1. The unequal access to services and multiple disadvantages faced by Roma children do not allow them in practice to have access to early development and a high quality education, those disadvantages in turn have negative effects on their emotional, social, physical and cognitive development, as well as on their labor market opportunities in the future and hence on their integration into the mainstream society;
2. The education systems are selective and that despite the efforts of Member States to overcome segregation many and varied systems apparently designed to combat segregation often actually accentuate disparities between social groups and disadvantage deeply poor classes, especially the Roma who find themselves on a downward spiral; thus stresses the need for specific education policies in order to address Roma families and encourage active participation;
3. Emphasizes that although the proportion of Roma young people in secondary and higher education systems has increased in some Member States, their level of qualifications is still below the EU average; points out the existing gap between labor shortages, on one hand and high unemployment among Roma caused by low skill level, on the other hand; calls thus that Member States and the EU to prioritize the support the Roma in improving the skill level; draws attention that in the absence of formal qualifications the position of Roma on the labor market can be improved by creating a system of recognition of practical skills;
4. Urges Member States to ensure equal access of Roma women and girls to quality education and adopt incentives (such as professional development opportunities) to attract good teachers to schools in more socially and economically deprived regions and especially in communities with a large proportion of Roma population in rural areas;
5. Recommends the elaboration of a comprehensive package of programs in order to promote and encourage Roma university graduates to return to their communities and the employment within their communities and their interest;

▪ **The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities<sup>3</sup>.**

Member States of the Council of Europe and the other signatories of this convention agreed by Title II, Article 12 and 13 the following:

1. The parties, if appropriate, will take measures in the field of education and research, in order to foster the knowledge of culture, history, language and religion of national minorities and of the majority group.
2. The parties undertake to promote equal access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.
  1. Within their education systems, the parties shall recognize the right of persons belonging to a national minority to establish and manage their own private educational and training institutions.

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<sup>3</sup> Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, February 1<sup>st</sup> 1998, p. 12



The commitment of the parties to recognize the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and administer their own private educational institutions and training is made subject to their educational system, especially the regulation of compulsory education material. Institutions covered in this section will be subject to the same controls as other institutions, especially in terms of quality education. Educational conditions once met it is important that the awarded diplomas to be officially recognized. Relevant national legislation should be based on objective criteria and respect the principle of non-discrimination.

▪ **The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages<sup>4</sup> through the member states of the Council of Europe have agreed:**

1. To make available *university and other higher education* in regional or minority languages; or
2. To provide *facilities for the study of these languages as university and higher education subjects*; or
3. If, by reason of the role of the State in relation to higher education institutions, subparagraphs 1 and 2 cannot be applied, *to encourage and/or allow the provision of university or other forms of higher education in regional or minority languages or of facilities for the study of these languages as university or higher education subjects*.

For the purposes of the Charter:

- A. „regional or minority languages” means languages that are:
- B. traditionally used within a given territory of a State by nationals of that State who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the State's population;
- C. and different from the official language(s) of that State;

▪ **The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015<sup>5</sup>. Selection of relevant policies for HEIs**

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 is an ”unprecedented political commitment by European governments to eliminate discrimination against Roma and close the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society”. The Decade focuses on the priority areas of education, employment, health, and housing, and commits governments to take into account the other core issues of poverty, discrimination, and gender mainstreaming.

The Decade is an international initiative that brings together governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as Romani civil society. The twelve countries currently taking part in the Decade are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain. Slovenia and the United States have observer status.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 operates according to Decade’s Terms of Reference. Principal operational elements of the Decade are: National Action Plans, policy

<sup>4</sup> European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, Strasbourg, November 5<sup>th</sup> 1992

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.romadecade.org/about-the-decade-decade-in-brief>, accessed March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014



coordination, exchange of experiences, revision and demonstration of progress, participation of Roma and provision of information and expert support.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 is not another new institution, bureaucracy, or fund. Participating governments must reallocate resources to achieve results, also aligning their plans with funding instruments of multinational, international, and bilateral donors.

▪ **Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia<sup>6</sup>**

The Republic of Croatia guarantees minority rights to all its national minorities, in accordance with the highest international standards, international conventions and other human and minority rights instruments deriving from the Constitution and other laws of the Republic of Croatia that regulate the rights and protection of national minorities. The Roma are a recognized national minority in Croatia and they have the same rights as the other national minorities in the country.

The Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia is complementary to the 2003 National Program for Roma. It undertakes to tackle the problems that the Roma population faces in four areas: education, health care, employment and housing. The measures proposed by the Action Plan will help to eliminate the marginalization and discrimination of the Roma minority, eradicate poverty and improve their living standards as a result of faster economic development. In all four areas special attention has been devoted to the rights of children and women, their education, health care, and inclusion of Roma in all forms of work. The Government of the Republic of Croatia also expresses its readiness to take further commitments to overcome the difficulties that the Roma national minority has been facing for many years not only in Croatia but in almost all other European states.

The Action Plan regarding *the higher education field of intervention* for 2005-2015 states as a target the increasing of the number of Roma university **students** and graduates (male and females), and the following goals:

1. Systematic efforts to increase the number of Roma **students** (male and female) enrolled in institutions of higher learning (assistance with enrolment).
  - 1.1. Helping candidates to prepare for university entrance exams.
  - 1.2. Provision of accommodation in student dormitories.
  - 1.3. Awarding scholarships to needy Roma **students** (male and female).
2. Student traineeships depending on the field of study, with the Roma population.
3. Teacher training courses introducing **students** to multiculturalism and, in this connection, Roma culture, history and language.
4. Creating the conditions that will enable **students** to graduate, with a clear prospect of employment after graduation (in cooperation with social partners).

▪ **Parliamentary Resolution on the Decade of Roma inclusion Program Strategic Plan of Hungary<sup>7</sup>**

The Parliament adopts the Strategic Plan in token of its commitment to the improvement of the economic-social situation of Roma people living in Hungary. The Strategic Plan

<sup>6</sup> Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 Action Plan of the Republic of Croatia, Zagreb, March 2005, p. 2, 22

<sup>7</sup> Parliamentary Resolution on the Decade of Roma Inclusion Program - Strategic Plan 2007, p. 7



establishes comprehensive objectives in four priority areas (education, employment, housing, health) in relation to the effectuation of equal treatment, as well as culture, the media and sports, and defines actual tasks in association with these objectives, connected indicators and measures towards the execution of the tasks. Gender equality is foreseen to be effectuated via the tasks and measures connected with the four priority areas.

In the field of education, the Parliament aims at expanding the scope of integrated education<sup>1</sup>, the effectuation of desegregation (the dissolution of all the segregated classes and schools), as well as the elevation of the qualification level of Roma people.

**Regarding the Higher Education field of intervention it is aimed the:**

- Introduction and improvement of balancing programs for the compensation of disadvantages in higher education towards ensuring the admission of and the completion of studies by **students** with multiple disadvantages.

Required measures:

- a) Strengthening of chance-creating measures in higher education.
- b) Promotion of the successfulness of those disadvantaged **students** in their studies who have been able to gain admission to higher education.
- c) Ensuring the access of disadvantaged **students** to accommodation in student hostels so that the largest possible number of these **students** could complete their higher-education studies successfully.

▪ **Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. National Action Plan – Czech Republic<sup>8</sup>**

Regarding the educational field of action, a main object is to provide equal access to quality tertiary education for Roma **students** through discussing with the representation of colleges and universities *creation of a stipend program* for Roma university **students**.

▪ **Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 National Action Plan for 2010-2012 - Spain<sup>9</sup>**

The main objective of this Plan is to promote new actions to correct the existing imbalances between the Roma population and the rest of the Spanish population, as well as to encourage different forms of participation and social development that ensure the full exercise of social rights and access to goods and services of the Roma population.

Regarding the educational field of action as a main object **is to facilitate university entrance and permanence of young Roma through:**

1. Fostering career guidance programs in the last formal education years, as well as in adult education, in order to facilitate transition from school to work.
2. Promoting grant programs supported by non-profit or private institutions to facilitate the access of Roma youth to university.
3. Encouraging organizations belonging to the Roma associative movement to develop programs to help Roma youth access university.
4. Promoting academic support programs in Adult Education Centers facilitating the completion of secondary education and the taking of the university entrance examination for over 25s, especially in the case of Roma women.

<sup>8</sup> Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 National Action Plan – Czech Republic p. 2

<sup>9</sup> Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. Action Plan for the development of the Roma Population – Spain p. 17



5. Encourage Roma youth to continue their academic pathway, especially in the case of women.

▪ **Strategy of the Government of Romania for the inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020<sup>10</sup>**

Regarding the Education section of this strategy there are mentioned some specific objectives as it follows:

1. Ensuring equal, free and universal access of Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority to quality education at all levels in the public education system, in order to support economic growth and the development of the knowledge-based society.
2. Promoting inclusive education in the education system, including by preventing and eliminating segregation and by fighting against discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, social status, disabilities or any other criteria which affects the children and the young people belonging to disadvantaged groups, including the Roma people.

According to DG Justice<sup>11</sup> every EU country has its own view on how to improve the integration of its Roma populations, and how to access and manage EU funds for vulnerable people, including the Roma. In 2011, the European Commission adopted a Communication pushing for the development of national strategies for Roma integration detailing the concrete policies and measures to be taken<sup>12</sup>. Every Member State, except Malta, has drawn up either a National Strategy for Roma Integration or a set of measures concerning the integration of their Roma populations. The National Strategy of each Member State was assessed by the European Commission in 2012<sup>13</sup>. Assessment reports on the implementation of the EU framework were published in 2013<sup>14</sup> and 2014<sup>15</sup>

## Austria

In the Document: *Roma in Austria - an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 - Political and legal measures*, reported in 2011 to the EC by the

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<sup>10</sup> Strategy of the Government of Romania for the Inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020, p.16

<sup>11</sup> ([http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/index_en.htm))

<sup>12</sup> Communication on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies by 2020

<sup>13</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52012DC0226>

<sup>14</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52013DC0454>

<sup>15</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma\\_implement\\_strategies2014\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_implement_strategies2014_en.pdf)



Austrian Federal Chancellery, the relevant aspects of education policy are expressed in that way (excerpts): *"Austria's overall education policy (which is not aimed expressly at Roma) encompasses a number of Roma-specific activities. These include, in particular, teaching in Romani or funding Roma institutions that support children's educational development, e.g. by offering early years language support, training nursery teachers or even providing afternoon or whole-day nursery sessions"* and *"In principle Austria avoids the implementation of segregation measures in the education sector. On account of linguistic differences, e.g. where several different languages are used in the teaching of ethnic groups, pupils may be taught in groups which are based on their origin. This is however offset by the sense of community which is promoted within the classroom itself, within the school as a whole or outside the school environment."*<sup>16</sup>.

As far as post-secondary education is concerned, it should be noted that, as for other minorities, there are no separate statistics for Roma and Sinti. It is therefore not possible to determine how many Roma and Sinti or, for example, Corinthian Slovenes are studying at Austrian universities. This is fully intentional on the part of the legislative authorities, which distinguish only between Austrian nationals, EU nationals and third-country nationals. **Roma and Sinti therefore have exactly the same rights and obligations as other students during their post-secondary education.**<sup>17</sup>

Based on some previous discussions and explorations the consequence of the concrete situation in Austria is that there **could not be given** a detailed overview about strategies and policies of **institutions** and **organizations** in the area of **higher education concerning minorities** in general and **Roma, Sinti et.al.** in special, by the reason of the common policy and strategy, see quotations in the paragraph above.

Although there are not many valid sources available there are some indications that the educational situation of the autochthon Roma has improved significantly during the last 25 years. (c. Luciak & Gärtner-Horvath 2012). This thesis could be stated in principle for Roma at the area of higher education in a similar way, as an element of strategy and policy regarding minorities in higher education in general.

The Austrian partner have mentioned that there is no evidence of the effect and effectivity of this approach in detail. Some innovative activities should be mentioned. Since 2011 a group of members from different Roma groups are engaged in cooperation with Roma associations in the issue of higher education for Roma population. A sample of supporting factors as well as obstacles for access to higher education was identified, discussed in several workshops, mostly in the capital Vienna. These group plans to run an Austrian-wide qualitative study in different Roma societies. Involved are e.g. Romano Centro, Vienna; Roma Service, Burgenland; Mikael Luciak, Institut für Bildungswissenschaften der Universität Wien; Österreichische Gesellschaft für Politische Bildung<sup>18</sup>.

The civil society, Roma associations and universities are trying to approach this problem as well, as a sign that this question - the inclusion of Roma youngster in higher

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<sup>16</sup> Austrian Federal Chancellery, 1014, Vienna 2011, p. 12

<sup>17</sup> Austrian Federal Chancellery 1014, Vienna 2011, p. 16

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.kupf.at/medien/zeitung/2011-2012/142/roma-und-sinti-sterreich-auf-dem-weg-zu-herer-bildung>, accessed on 23.03.2014; ÖGPG-Tätigkeitsberichte 2011



education - is still open to further discussions. A podium discussion "Roma and the University"/"Roma an die Universität!" took place on 25th of June 2012, with the participation of Initiative for Minorities, Austrian Association for Political Education and the ORF. The points of discussions were: the causes of insuccess in school and education of Roma children, responsibilities of community, school system, society and social conditions and life standards<sup>19</sup>.

According to the Austrian project partner, considered should be as well the balance between gathering data in detail and an real inclusive approach, as there are to make no difference, and the question, is it possible to be effective in inclusion without data and statistics, but, also referring to aspects of data protection and non- discrimination.

## Croatia

Higher education institutions are universities, polytechnics and schools of professional higher education with all its constituents.

University is an institution that organises and implements university studies in at least two scientific an/or art areas in a greater number of fields and interdisciplinary studies. University constituents are: faculties, art academies, departments, institutes, foundations, associations, student centres, health care institutions, libraries, and technological centres.

There are currently around 130 higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia which can be found in the Overview of Institutions in the Higher Education System.

In many respects, the Bologna Process has been revolutionary for cooperation in European higher education. Four education ministers participating in the celebration of the 800th anniversary of the University of Paris shared the view that the segmentation of the European higher education sector in Europe was out-dated and harmful. The decision to engage in a voluntary process to create the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) was formalized one year later in Bologna, by 30 countries.

Croatia joined the Bologna process in 2001 and has been an active participant ever since. All study programmes have been aligned with the Bologna structure in 2005, and all students graduating in Croatia from these programmes receive ECTS credits and are entitled to diploma supplements. Croatia has been actively pursuing the implementation of other Bologna action lines as well, and the quality assurance system that Croatia has introduced in 2009 has allowed for very high levels of university autonomy.

As the main objective of the Bologna Process since its inception in 1999, the EHEA was meant to ensure more comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe. Between 1999-2010, all the efforts of the Bologna Process members were targeted to creating the European Higher Education Area that became reality with the Bologna Process' decade anniversary, in March 2010, during the Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Conference.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.labournetaustria.at/25-6-12-initiat-minderheiten-roma-an-die-universitat-diskussion/>, accessed on 23.03.2014



## Italy

In Italy the access to higher education (universities and faculties of applied sciences) normally is not for free, students have to pay taxes on the basis of their family's income. The highest levels of education are a right for capable and deserving pupils in Italy, regardless of their financial status, says the Italian Constitution. To this end scholarships, allowances to families and other benefits can be assigned by the State through competitive examinations.

The Presidential Decree of the 24th July 1977 transferred the right to regulate universities to the Regions. The sector is managed by law no. 390 of the 2nd December 1991 (Law on the right to university studies) that says that it's the state's role to coordinate university education, but it's the Regions' duty to remove all financial and social obstacles that limit citizen equity to access university studies.

Besides scholarships and allowances there are also other supporting services, such as accommodation, canteen, extraordinary subsidies, counseling, study halls, cultural/recreational/sport facilities, managed by Regional Bodies for the Right of University Studies. A national association, ANDISU, gathers all these regional bodies.

Sometimes it's the University itself that offers directly these services or even exemption (total or partial) of university taxes, but also religious or private institutions may offer these kind of services.

The law no. 240/2010 reduces to the essential levels the services foreseen in the Prime Ministerial Decree of 2001 and modifies some of the supporting tools, such as scholarships or student loans for deserving pupils.

## Germany

There are no special programs for integration of Roma Students into higher education. In Germany / Berlin, the basic idea is to support each learner to have access to the educational system. FRAMEWORK ACT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION <http://www.bmbf.de/en/655.php> It is a goal of the Federal Government to further improve the performance and competitiveness of research and instruction. This means meeting societal needs while providing the individual institutions with as much room to maneuver as possible. The Excellence Initiative, programme allowances, and many other federal funding programmes for projects sustainably strengthen research at German institutes of higher education. The joint Federal-Länder programmes "Higher Education Pact 2020," "Quality Pact for Teacher," and the competition "Advancement through Education: Open Institutes of Higher Education" are examples of the Federal Government's dedication to high quality academic training. The triad of BAföG, student loans and scholarships meets the demand for individual student financing while ensuring equal opportunities in higher education. <http://www.bmbf.de/en/655.php>.

There are currently 387 universities in Germany with a combined student population of approximately 2.4 million. Of these, 110 are universities or similar institutions, 221 are universities of applied sciences (in German 'Fachhochschulen') and 56 are colleges of art or



music. Higher Education Institutions are either state or state-recognized institutions. In their operations, including the organization of studies and the designation and award of degrees, they are both subject to higher education legislation.

Higher education institutions are either government-funded or government-accredited. In spite of the increasing presence of private HEIs, a large number of which have been established in the last few years, public HEIs remain clearly in the majority. There are 279 government-funded institutions of higher education, compared with 108 private. These are predominantly small institutions offering only a very limited range of subjects, e.g. Business Administration, Media Studies, Design. Almost 94 per cent of all students are matriculated at public higher education institutions. Due to the federal system in Germany, responsibility for education, including higher education, lies entirely with the individual federal states. The states are responsible for the basic funding and organisation of HEIs. Each state has its own laws governing higher education. Therefore, the actual structure and organisation of the various systems of higher education may differ from state to state. The management structures of HEIs vary, as do the regulations governing the accreditation of new degree programmes. Currently, no fees are charged in the federal states.

## Romania

Romania signed the main European and international agreements and documents concerning human rights, minority rights and the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination. These documents represented an important milestone for the policy elaboration on the education of national minorities.

Romania's legal framework and the Law of Education stipulates the right to education as a fundamental right and guarantees access to education and training regardless the ethnic minorities.

There is a tendency to unify the efforts of different organizations at both central (Government, Ministry of Education and Research) and the communities (local authorities, NGOs) in developing common programs to improve school attendance of Roma population. Therefore the Government Strategy for improving the Roma situation gives a special role to the education in all significant measures of improving the situation of Roma population.

In what concerns the access to higher education, Decision no. 430/2001 for approval of Government Strategy in Romania for improvement of Roma situation<sup>20</sup>, in the section E, paragraph no.8 of this normative act, it is stated the following **course of action on higher education**: "*further granting of facilities and special subsidized places for young Roma who want to attend universities and faculties*". The universities and higher education are receiving subsidies for 1 place/study field, reserved for the students from Roma communities. In order to enroll, the students should receive a recommendation from the Roma representative at county level (political party or department of prefecture). For the recommendations, in several

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<sup>20</sup> No.430/2001 Decision from April 25<sup>th</sup> 2001 published in the Official Gazette, Part I, no.252 from May 16<sup>th</sup> 2001



counties are organised campaigns for awareness rising and for encouraging the young Roma to enroll in HEIs and high schools.

Another important regulation is the **Law on National Minorities from Romania**<sup>21</sup>. The law defines through the general provisions of Article 2 and Article 3 that national minorities are recognized as constitutive factors of the Romanian state and that this represents any community of Romanian citizens living in Romania from the moment of its formation as a modern state, numerically inferior to the majority population with their ethnic identity, expressed through culture, language, religion, which would like to preserve, express and develop. Section 1 of this act entitled Education of National Minorities provides the following:

**Article 16.** Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to learn their mother tongue, to receive education and training in schools and institutions with teaching in mother tongue at all levels, forms and types of education, under the law conditions;

**Article 17.** The state has the obligation to guarantee within the state educational system:

- a. learning the mother tongue at all levels, forms and types of education under the law conditions;
- b. higher education with teaching in mother tongue, depending on requirements, in universities, faculties, colleges, departments and distinct groups;
- c. postgraduate education in the mother tongue;
- d. the possibility to sustain in the mother tongue the specialty exams, contest exams to occupy the vacancies, to obtain academic degrees, professional titles and various scientific titles in institutions or departments of education in the minority language at all levels, ensuring, if necessary, the translation;
- e. continuing training of teachers in the mother tongue;
- f. the appointment of directors, deputy directors from national minorities in schools where there are sections in minority language of teaching, under the law conditions.

The policies for improving overall school attendance were accompanied by a series of specific regulations dedicated to Roma population. In order to stimulate school attendance of children and youth, the Ministry of Education and Research has developed, since 1998, a coherent strategy. This has resulted in a series of regulation and measures developed in some cases in collaboration with various NGOs, which aims participation in education:

- **The promotion of Roma youth in universities and colleges in order to train a youth Roma intellectuals:**
  - Granting an increased number of subsidized places for Roma candidates in higher education (the measure had started in the academic year 1992-1993 and was extended in the next period by O.MNE. no.3577/1998, no.5083/1999, no.3294/2000 and no.4542/2000).
- **Fostering the formation of Romani language teachers:**
  - Creation of Romani language and literature department at the Faculty of Foreign languages and Literatures, University of Bucharest, from the academic year 1998/1999.

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<sup>21</sup> Law on National Minorities from Romania, no. 502/2005, p. 3



Gallup Report<sup>22</sup> is an important source of additional information related on action for Roma in universities in Romania. The report results are based on qualitative and quantitative research. According to the data collected from the universities (Gallup Study, 2012: 11) 1420 students benefited during 2000-2006 of the places in universities. The admission criterion was identical to the secondary education, namely the certification of the ethnic affiliation by means of a recommendation on behalf of Roma organizations: The candidates applying, at any level, for a place allocated, by positive discrimination, for Roma students. They must submit a recommendation written by the chairman of a duly registered Roma civic, cultural or political organization. (Order 3577/1998).

The distribution of these places across specializations is made by each separate university. The rector office of the mentioned higher education institutions have the autonomy to distribute such places per faculties and specialization divisions and make the decision regarding the registration. (Order 3294/2000).

The Gallup Report is mentioning (p. 15) that beneficiaries of vocational schools and higher education institutions were frequently confronted by difficult situations which affected their performances or even their school attendance rate: financial problems in the family, impossibility to meet the school/academic requirements and the need to take a job while continuing with school. Financial problems seem to have a more drastic impact during college, 75 per cent of college or higher education graduate respondents stated they considered taking a job in parallel with school, 27 per cent lived through moments when their family had serious financial problems.

In what concerns the support mechanisms for students throughout their studies (Gallup Report, 2009: 41) the current laws do not provide any special actions to support the students admitted on the reserved places for Roma people throughout their studies. The beneficiaries of affirmative action may receive, to the same extent as any student on normal places subsidized by the state budget, a series of social or study scholarships. The Constitution itself stipulates that the government has an important role to provide free access to the compulsory education levels, through the scholarships which may be awarded “to children coming from poor families and orphans”. The Education Law also includes provisions regarding the support mechanisms for students. However it emphasizes the role of scholarships of encouraging and stimulating children to obtain high school results. (5) Education may be supported by scholarships, study loans, fees, donations, sponsorships, own sources and other legal sources. (6) The state supports them materially, especially the students who manage to obtain very good study results and prove extraordinary skills for further training for a specific profession. (7) The state and other interested factors will subsidize the high performance activities, at national and international level, of the students. (Law 84/1995) Other regulations were subsequently adopted, regulating the scholarship awarding system for public education. Scholarships for pre-university studies have a dual role: “a form of material support for both social protection and stimulation of the students with very good study and discipline results”<sup>14</sup> As for university studies, scholarships are awarded first as support for students with

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<sup>22</sup> Surdu, M, Szira, Judit (coord.) a.o. - Gallup Organization Romania/Roma Education Fund - Gallup Report 2009



the best academic results, but also to support the students with poor financial conditions.

The positive action program for Roma in higher education will continue. These mainstreamed programs offered dedicated places for Roma for admission to public universities (in the academic year 2010/2011, 555 places have been granted and in 2012/2013 564 places).

### **Additional information related to integration of Roma population in CE Europe. Research on Selected Roma Education Programs in Central & Eastern Europe**

Relevant information related to integration of Roma population in higher education institution we have found in the final report of the above mentioned report, done by a multinational team of researchers, coordinated by OSI Staff (Christina McDonald and Judit Kovacs) and coordinated by expert committee members Tomislav Reskovic, Eva Orsos and Michael Stewart. The report comprise in 222 pages relevant information for integration of Roma population at all educational levels. We are presenting here bellow some conclusions relevant for integration in Higher Education:

- According to the Research on Roma Education in CE Europe, very few Roma successfully complete higher education. Very few Roma successfully complete higher education. Statistics from Bulgaria and Hungary indicate that only 1% of Roma adults have completed a course of study in the university. This compares to 20% of the overall adult population in Bulgaria;
- In Bulgaria, less than 2% of all university students are Roma, with some estimates as low as 0.3%-1% (CEGA, 1999 and Tomova, 1995). In the Czech Republic and Slovakia according to the 1991 Census figures (Roma polled over 15 years old) 45 men (.4%) and 19 women (.2%) had some higher education (Conway, 1996). In Hungary, the rate of Roma higher education graduates is 1% or below. In Romania only 4.5% of Roma adults have attended higher education (Zamfir and Zamfir, 1996).
- In Bulgaria, problems of lower expectations toward Roma students contribute to the lower quality education and lack of preparation for continuing onto higher education (p.38);
- The extreme poverty suffered by most Roma has contributed to relatively low student enrollment patterns – particularly for the non-compulsory years of schooling. Poverty has a direct affect on Roma children's access to school. Although the governments may partially subsidize kindergarten classes, most still require a small tuition fee. As they have few monetary resources available to them, for many Roma even a small tuition fee is too large (Balabanova, 1999). In Bulgaria, for example, the tuition cost amounts to between 30% and 50% of the family's government assistance payments (Tanaka, 2000) (p. 41);
- A similar pattern exists with secondary and higher education. Here, too, tuition costs



associated with enrollment serve as significant barriers.

- In addition to tuition fees, there are other costs associated with schooling that increase the financial burden facing Roma families. These costs are associated with the purchase of schoolbooks and other educational materials, clothes, meals, and transportation. These “hidden” costs are associated with enrollment during the compulsory grades –even when education is ostensibly “free”. Some of the countries do provide subsidies for some of these “hidden” costs, but these subsidies often are decreased in the higher grades. Moreover, the costs of schoolbooks and materials often increase in the higher grades.
- As Roma parents and other adults often lacked schooling, they were not in a good position to assist their children to understand and successfully overcome the novel challenges associated with secondary schools; This was not because Roma parents lacked the interest or commitment to their children, but because they lacked the knowledge and experiences to draw upon;
- By enabling students to identify and work directly with a mentor, the project provided Roma secondary school students the direct assistance they needed to overcome academic challenges, school-related problems, and personal issues, which could affect and ultimately undermine their opportunity to succeed in school. This also improved their attitudes towards public school.
- Finally, it would result in higher enrollment of Roma students in Hungarian secondary schools, higher rates of secondary school completion by Roma students, and higher enrollment of Roma students in university. (p.65);
- At the level of faculties, the percentage of women admitted on special places for Roma students is significantly larger, most likely because most places were allocated to the specializations traditionally preferred by women (e.g., human sciences);
- In the university environment, beneficiaries come from relatively larger families, having 3-4 children. Also, as compared with the beneficiaries from high-schools, the cases in which young beneficiaries come from families with a low educational background are more frequent. The equipment in their households reflect they have better economic resources than beneficiaries from vocational schools, however not as good as the beneficiaries from high-schools.
- The young people have tight connections with the Roma community (15 per cent speak the Romani language at home) and the cases when such places are occupied by non Roma students are not frequent (10 per cent) as in high-schools. (p 15).;
- Regarding the process of accessing the reserved places, one of the frequent observations of the teaching staff and the representatives of non governmental organizations is that the period between the announcement of the reserved places and the end of the registration process for the reserved places is very short (less than a month), which does not allow for an effective information campaign. For the students having access to the reserved places in the secondary education units, the main source of information is the school, namely the teachers: 40 per cent of the beneficiaries of the places in high-schools and 49 per cent of the beneficiaries of the places in vocational schools said they heard about such places for the first time from their form teacher or other teachers. The family, either through the parents who searched for such information, or through their siblings who have benefited in their turn of such actions are the second main source of information (31 per cent for highschools and 27 per cent for vocational schools).



- As for the process of accessing the reserved places in universities, there is a poor involvement of the secondary education institutions in informing potential beneficiaries about the opportunities to study on these places: only 11 per cent of all beneficiaries (students or graduates) have heard about these places from their teachers in high-school, 36 per cent stated they heard about such reserved places for the first time from acquaintances or friends and 23 per cent have heard about it from their families. It is important to mention the role of the Roma leaders in making the decision to candidate on these places: beneficiaries made up their minds to go for a special place after discussing with their parents (65 per cent) or with the Roma community leaders (34 per cent). Moreover, in 45 per cent of the cases, beneficiaries mentioned the involvement of a Roma leader from their community as helping with obtaining the papers required for registration.
- In the higher education cycle, the good rapport and friendships with non Roma students are even more frequent: 86 per cent have more Romanian friends, and 93 per cent state they get along well with all or most of the colleagues. In universities, 70 per cent of the beneficiaries state that their colleagues are aware they are beneficiaries of affirmative action, but the ways of finding this out differ: the most frequent way is the display of the list of admitted students highlighting those who were admitted on reserved places (50 per cent of those stating that it is a known fact).
- The relations with their teachers are more diverse, depending on the degree of teachers' tolerance regarding individuals with a different cultural background, but also on their opinion regarding affirmative action. Thus, at one extreme, in the secondary cycle there were situations when the teachers or form teachers put pressure on the beneficiaries to ask for a transfer to another class or another education unit, from the very first days of school. In the higher education cycles, such tense relations between students and teachers are more rarely reported. Most of the times, the Roma students admitted on the reserved places mingle among the others and most of the teachers are not aware of the names of the beneficiaries of reserved places.



## II. Access of Roma population to higher education in the countries of project partners. Selection of best practices

### Austria

The Austrian partner has mentioned that there is no evidence of the effect and effectivity of this approach in detail. Some innovative activities should be mentioned. Since 2011 a group of members from different Roma groups are engaged in cooperation with Roma associations in the issue of higher education for Roma population. A sample of supporting factors as well as obstacles for access to higher education was identified, discussed in several workshops, mostly in the capital Vienna. These group plans to run an Austrian-wide qualitative study in different Roma societies. Involved are e.g. Romano Centro, Vienna; Roma Service, Burgenland; Mikael Luciak, Institut für Bildungswissenschaften der Universität Wien; Österreichische Gesellschaft für Politische Bildung<sup>23</sup>.

The civil society, Roma associations and universities are trying to approach this problem as well, as a sign that this question - the inclusion of Roma youngster in higher education - is still open to further discussions. A podium discussion "Roma and the University"/"Roma an die Universität!" took place on 25th of June 2012, with the participation of Initiative for Minorities, Austrian Association for Political Education and the ORF. The points of discussions where: the causes of insuccess in school and education of Roma children, responsibilities of community, school system, society and social conditions and life standards<sup>24</sup>.

According to the Austrian project partner, considered should be as well the balance between gathering data in detail and an real inclusive approach, as there are to make no difference, and the question, is it possible to be effective in inclusion without data and statistics, but, also referring to aspects of data protection and non- discrimination.

### Croatia

One of the best practice related to HEIs is developed by the University of Zagreb (www.unizg.hr), situated on Trg Maršala Tita 14, Zagreb. The university has started a program of extra-school activities in order to assure a proper insertion of the less-advantaged target groups.

The services are assessed through student services and scholarships tenders and the main goal is to widening participation for underrepresented groups of students, to offer

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.kupf.at/medien/zeitung/2011-2012/142/roma-und-sinti-sterreich-auf-dem-weg-zu-herer-bildung>, accessed on 23.03.2014; ÖGPG-Tätigkeitsberichte 2011

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.labournetaustria.at/25-6-12-initiat-minderheiten-roma-an-die-universitat-diskussion/>, accessed on 23.03.2014



support for students in need on temporary assistance throughout their studies. The students can benefit from psychological counselling, career guidance and career counselling, empowerment workshops, scholarships, support for student with access problems.

The activities planned are:

- Socialization activities (such as sports, participation in a theater group, recreational activities);
- Activities of teaching and improvement of language (such as language, micro-language or literacy courses);
- Activities of legal advice and mediator.

The best practice addresses the access to the educational system, the commitment to the educational system, a better transfer through educational levels.

## Italy

The project “Fuochi attivi” is a project promoted by the Fondazione romani Italia (Italian Roma Foundation), situated on Via Rigopiano, 10/b – 65124 Pescara, Italy ([www.fondazioneromani.it](http://www.fondazioneromani.it), <http://politeiaromani.fondazioneromani.it/>).

The duration of the project is 16 months (<http://www.fondazioneromani.it/it/fuochi-attivi>), is implemented on **national level and is financed by regional funds and private donations**. The best practice described below is promoted only by a group of Italian Roma activists (8 students) who are enrolled at university. They are collaborating with 8 Italian regions (out of 20).

The problem addressed by the activities consists in a low awareness regarding the proper use of right to vote process and “Fondazione Romani Italia” foundation intends to invest in the professionalism of its members and to remove obstacles and disadvantages of social stigmas and “self-stigmas” of and against Roma population and aims at empowering Roma people to express themselves and communicate better, to play an active role in society, culture and politics.

The “Fuochi attivi” project aims at the promotion of active citizenship of Roma population. It provides a course to increase the potential of responsible participation by getting to know and by claiming one’s own and the others’ rights.

The course fosters encounter and intercultural awareness by increasing community welfare and by strengthening the potential and the capacities of citizens and communities.

The activities of the project consists mainly in:

- an awareness raising campaign, entitled “Politeia romani” in order to sensitise the members of the Roma communities in Italy to exercise their right to vote autonomously
- a course entitled “Fuochi attivi”, addressed to Roma university students, that fosters active citizenship in Roma communities.
- more specific aims of the “Fuochi attivi” course are:
- to develop knowledge, capacities and attitudes that are necessary in order to promote and protect the rights of citizenship;



- to understand and analyze the reasons, expressions, consequences and impact of social and institutional indifference and distortion against Roma;
- to develop competences concerning communication methods and practices for the correct dissemination of Roma culture. To foster actions towards the promotion of rights of communities and people in the territories they belong to.
- to experiment, analyze and evaluate approaches and instruments towards possible job insertion and work in general;
- to support and reinforce the definition of one's role as an active citizen who can contribute to strengthen the Roma communities;
- to create and sustain the development of a network of Roma activists through the creation of communication channels at a private level or between the communities.

The course "Fuochi attivi" is a promoted by a group of Roma university students that implementation of seminars and workshops in 5 areas:

- History / Sociology
- Education / Politics
- Psychology / social area
- Communication / Mass media
- Labor policy

The duration of the course is 16 months and is scheduled as follows: 2 days per month: (frontal lessons, conversations and workshops with all the participants of the course, in the 5 areas described above) and 4 days a month internship in the area where the participant lives, in order that foresees activities to be carried out at private social enterprises. The program provides also a scholarship to the students of the course, with an amount of 5000 Euro for the period of 16 months. The monthly amount is €312,50 which is divided in 2 parts: € 200,00 scholarship and € 112,50 reimbursement of expenses.

The good practices addresses the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020" (COM 2011(173), Brussels 5.4.2011), namely that: „Member States need to ensure that Roma are not discriminated against but treated like any other EU citizens with equal access to all fundamental rights as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.“ and Member States must "give Roma (like other EU citizens) non-discriminatory access to education, employment, vocational training, healthcare, social protection and housing“.

One of the main objectives of the Italian strategy for Roma inclusion (Strategia Nazionale d'Inclusione dei Rom, dei Sinti e dei Caminanti, Attuazione Comunicazione Commissione Europea n. 173/2011) is to ensure access to education without any discrimination, to ensure the improvement of the living conditions and the active participation in society of the Roma population, as well as the full use of their rights.

The good practice addresses also one of "The Common Basic Principles for Immigrant Integration Policy in the EU adopted by the Justice and Home Affairs Council in November 2004", such as "Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society" and "The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration“.



## Germany

### BAFÖG

German universities are usually free for students. Giving out student loans and grants is seen as a means to pave the way to higher education for children whose parents can't afford to fund their children's education otherwise. The federal law that regulates these student loans and grants is called "Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz " (Federal Training Assistance Act) or "BAföG" for short, and the loans, grants, and combinations thereof are usually referred to simply as "BAföG" by students (as in "I'm getting BAföG"). Eligible groups include high school students, part-time and full-time university students, second path 2 education students (i.e., those starting to study after having been in the workforce), and students of schools for professional training. Eligibility dependent on parent income The eligibility for student loans is (usually) dependent upon parent income, as parents are required by law to fund their children's education (including higher education), and therefore students could theoretically sue their parents for funds for their education (although this is rarely done for obvious reasons).

For low-income families, BAföG loans take over when these obligations can not reasonably be met by parents. BAföG-loans are usually given out half as zero interest loan (to be repaid only after the receiver exceeds a certain income level after graduation) and half as grant money to university students. High school students get the full amount as grant money if they are eligible. The current maximum amount per month (for a university student) is 585 euros (until Sep 2008, then 643 euros). This can be lowered gradually if student or parent income or student assets exceed certain amounts. Thus the amount paid out can be lower than the maximum amount and even loans of 1 euro per month are given out if the calculation returns that amount. Such low grants seem nonsensical at first, but they are usually accepted by students (loans can be refused by the student), because eligibility for a BAföG loan (even at the minimum of 10 euro per month) makes the student eligible for some other benefits like cut-rate telephone service or waiving of public television licence fees (which otherwise are paid by everyone who manages a household).

Generally, BAföG loans are independent on student achievement or grades at least for two years. After that, a certain minimum grade level has to be met and proof of participation in required, but ungraded courses, needs to be provided to stay eligible. Change of field of study is allowed once during the first two years without becoming ineligible. For university studies, every field of study has predefined a maximum study duration (usually around five years), after which the student becomes ineligible for BAföG.

Further funds can be granted as low-interest loan for another two years if certain criteria (like reasonable likelihood that the student will graduate during that time) are met. To qualify for BAFöG, one must generally be a citizen or permanent resident of Germany and/or have lived in Germany for five consecutive years. There are some exceptions.[1] Other than with BAföG you can also finance your studies with Bildungskredit from KfW, Bildungsfonds, or a Scholarship.

However, in most cases to qualify for a private loan, one must have German citizenship, have EU citizenship and have resided in Germany for three consecutive years, or have graduated from a German secondary school. Eligibility independent from parent income,



in some cases, like most notably if the student has worked full-time for a number of years before returning to student status, BAföG eligibility is calculated independent from parent income, because parents' obligation to fund their children's education ends once the children enter the workforce full-time. In those cases, only student income and assets are consulted for BAföG eligibility and amount calculation. <http://www.bmbf.de/en/892.php>.

## Romania

The program "Roma professionals for medical system" ([www.profesionistiro.ro](http://www.profesionistiro.ro)) is a project that was financed by European Social Found. In this period 400 young Roma, students of medicine high schools and faculties, or students that were interested for this specific field, open to prepare for admission exam to such higher education institution.

The main goal is to develop a professional elite of Roma ethnic group, capable to give dynamism to the inclusion process of their members. The project promotes an alternative occupational model for the young Roma in professions with high qualification and high social prestige.

The program of academic scholarships "Roma Professionals in Medical Care System" was implemented in the academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, developing a concept initiated by Open Society Institute and Roma Education Fund, implemented in Romania and in other countries from Balkan area since 2008.

Another action related to the project was the development of an integrated coaching and counseling system, with tutors and mentorship in medical care field for a number of 500 young Roma students. Other 400 young Roma will be part of a program for personal development that will help them to overcome the problems and to accept open their Roma origins.

The same project is increasing the quality of medical assistance in 40 Roma communities, for contribute to a better care and to raise the trust of the in medical system. In these 40 communities, 1000 members of Roma communities are volunteering.

Some other results: support delivered through 60 tutors and 30 mentors at national level, 11 summer camps for Roma students, 2 information campaigns for awareness raising. As well, 1 advocacy campaign for initiation of cooperation with over local authorities and county councils will be initiated, in order to raise the number of positive actions.

Nowadays the promoters want to encourage the private companies, the social society at local level to support further the students. Was created a guide for implementation of scholarship programs that could assure the multiplication of project all over Romania, in different local communities. For this purpose, was started an advocacy campaign for fund raising at local level for the future scholarships.



### III. Integration of Roma students. Research and interviews

This self-assessment instrument has been designed in order to enable the partners to assess in which extent are developed and applied policies and practices for an open access to Higher Education of **students** from under-represented ethnic groups (Roma **students**) (See Annexes). In formulating the questions we have consulted the Self-Study Instrument on Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education developed by IAU (International Association of Universities [www.iau-aiu.net](http://www.iau-aiu.net)) and adopted many of them. More details

on the activity of the IAU on equitable access and success you can find under [www.iau-aiu.net/node/10](http://www.iau-aiu.net/node/10).

We have questioned 8 universities in relation with good practices provided for Roma **students**. These universities are from Finland, Greece, Romania, Italy and Croatia and they offer Master degrees and PhD degrees studies, and all of them are public institutions.

Three of them charge tuition fees and only one reduces fees for under-represented category of **students**, namely **students** with low family income including the Roma **students**. Only one university provides scholarships for Roma **students** or other under-represented groups, especially **students** with low income. Regarding the mention of equitable access for **students** from under-represented groups in the mission statement, four out of five universities stated they did so. Three out of five universities have a specific action plan to address equitable access – mostly for **students** from under-represented ethnic groups (e.g. Roma **students**) and orphan **students** or **students** from placement centers or family placement – and three of them have action plans which include specific programs for **students** from under-represented groups. The average number of how many Roma **students** are enrolled in the universities is 35.

With regard to institutional administrative structures, there are only two universities having an office/individual whose main responsibility is the improvement of equitable access. Four out of five universities mentioned that there is no specific budget allocated to the improvement of equitable access. In terms of providing special consideration to applicants from under-represented groups at the time of admission, only two universities affirmed that they do so, interviews being the most utilized in this situation.

Regarding the academic support activities which have been put in place in order to increase the access of under-represented groups at the university programs,



two universities stated that they have regular contact with secondary schools with large number of **students** in target groups. The results also show that there is no usage of identifying processes for the specific needs of the **students** from under-represented groups.

Some universities provide academic support in order to respond to the specific needs of the **students** from under-represented ethnic groups and Roma and most of them are: tutoring/mentoring/peer mentoring; specific support for **students** with language needs; specific support for **students** with other language needs, psychological counseling, career guidance and counseling; and empowerment workshops.

In terms of financial support only two universities provide subsidized meals, subsidized accommodation and only one provides grants.

With regard to social support, most of the universities provide psychological counseling and only two provide career counseling or extra-curricular activities. Three out of five universities stated that they provide alternative study/learning paths and these are: curriculum specifically designed for and about **students** from under-represented ethnic groups; distance education courses; and mentoring.

In order to respond to the diverse learning needs of the **students**, most universities put in place E-learning measures and evening classes and also have implemented strategies in order to prepare graduate **students** to be active citizens.



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## Annexes



### INTEGRATION OF ROMA STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS.

#### INFO GATHERING TOOL

*The ERNE project is a contribution to the implementation of the National Roma Inclusion Strategies so as to maximise chances of success for Roma integration, by means of exchange of experiences and of best practices via a network. The purpose of this network is to analyse good practices contributed by project partners in four crucial educational areas: pre-school, school, higher and vocational education. Special attention will be brought to issues of accessibility, reduction of early leaving and progressing from one educational level to the next ( [www.erne-project.eu](http://www.erne-project.eu) ).*

*The questions below are intended to guide you in delivering relevant information related to the access of Roma students in Higher Education System in the partner countries. This self-assessment instrument has been designed in order to enable the partners to assess in which extent are developed and applied policies and practices for an open access to Higher Education of students from underrepresented ethnic groups (Roma students). This self-assessment instrument has been designed in order to enable the partners to assess in which extent are developed and applied policies and practices for an open access to Higher Education of students from under-represented ethnic groups (Roma students). In formulating the questions we have consulted the Self-Study Instrument on Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education developed by IAU (International Association of Universities [www.iau-aiu.net](http://www.iau-aiu.net)) and adopted many of them. More detailson the activity of the IAU on equitable access and success you can find under [www.iau-aiu.net/node/10](http://www.iau-aiu.net/node/10).*



*The information can be gathered through organized focus groups or by sending the questions to HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) or relevant stakeholders that can access the informations, as for ex. NGOs in Roma field, student's NGOs a.o. The selected good/best practice and the recommendation for the respective educational sector will be published on the project website and will be disseminated during public conferences in the partner countries of the consortium.*

*Thank you for your support!*

*For online version follow the link:*

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zLti27I7DO2kYLc5w0y5bAgnQLkFxH19Tk4pHt5yjmg/viewfo](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1zLti27I7DO2kYLc5w0y5bAgnQLkFxH19Tk4pHt5yjmg/viewform)

[rm](#)

For the partner representative, responsible for gathering the information gathering/self-assessment process, please indicate:

Name:

Position:

Contact details:

Please indicate person participating in the completion of the focus group/ self-assessment process:

Name:



Position:

Contact details:

## I. Institutional Information and Profile

Name of the Institution:

City:

Country:

Language(s) of Tuition/ Instruction:

1. How many students are enrolled at your institution as of the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year?

.....

2. Please mark the degree level offered at your institution:

- BA/BSc (1<sup>st</sup> cycle) level
- MA/MSc (2<sup>nd</sup> cycle) level
- PhD (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle) level
- Other (please specify):

3. Your institution is: (Please select one)

- Public
- Private

## II. Financial Considerations

4. Does your institution charge tuition fees?

- Yes



No

5. Does your institution waive/ reduce fees for under-represented category of students, including the Roma students?

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate for which category of students your institution waives/ reduces fees, what type of fees are taken into consideration and for which criteria? (e.g. students with low family income)

.....

6. Does your institution provide financial assistance (other than waiving / reducing fees) to Roma students or from other under-represented groups?

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate the kind of financial assistance offered and for which group: (e.g. scholarships for students with low income).

.....

### III. Equitable Access mentioned in strategic documents of institution

7. Is the issue of equitable access for students from under-represented groups mentioned in the mission statement?

Yes

No

8. Is the issue of equitable access for students from under-represented groups mentioned in the university charter or other regulatory document?

Yes

No

9. Does your university have specific action plan(s) to address equitable access?

Yes

No

10. If yes, indicate which under-represented group(s) is/are targeted:

(Please select all relevant categories)



- Students from underrepresented ethnic groups (e.g. Roma students)
- Students with low socio-economic status
- Students with children
- Orphan students or students from placement centres or family placement

11. Does the action plan include a specific program for students from some categories of under-represented groups?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please indicate if are measures formulated for Roma students.

.....

12. Please indicate the number of students enrolled in your institution, with Roma background.

13. With regard to institutional Administrative Structures, is there an office or an individual whose main responsibility is to improve equitable access?

- Yes
- No .

If yes, is such an office or individual mandated to work at:

- Institution level
- Faculty level
- Department level

14. Is there a specific budget allocated to improving equitable access?

- Yes
- No .

If yes, please indicate the main source of the funds

- Institutional budget
- Specific Government Program
- Foundations
- Private sector/industry sponsored program
- Other, please specify:

15. Does your institution systematically track applicants from under-represented groups at admission?



- Yes
- No

16. Does your institution offer special consideration to applicants from under-represented groups at the time of admission?

- Yes
- No

If yes please mark such special considerations or alternative admission options (Please select all relevant options):

- Interviews
- Different weighting of criteria
- Quotas or targeted admission numbers
- Other, please specify:

17. Regarding the potential students from target under-represented group, what outreach and academic support activities have been put in place to increase their access to your university programs? (Please select all relevant activities)

- Regular contacts with secondary schools with large numbers of students in target group (s)
- Pre-admission counselling
- Flexible/ Multiple academic pathways from high school through to postgraduate study
- Assistance with application preparation
- Pre-enrolment programs offered during long break between academic sessions
- Assistance with examinations preparation
- Alternate examination arrangements
- Counselling or recruitment in schools with large numbers of students from low socio-economic background
- Other kind of activities, please specify:

18. Where is the impetus for choosing to target this/these group(s) coming from? (Please select all relevant options)

- Government policy
- Institutional mission



- Civil Society (NGOs/ Trade Unions/ Human Rights Organisations/ etc.)
- Employers
- Other, please specify:

#### IV. Successful participation, retention and graduation

19. Does your institution use a process to identify the specific needs of students from under-represented groups?

- Yes
- No

20. Does your institution provide *academic support* as service that your institution provide to respond to the specific needs of students from underrepresented ethnic groups and Roma? Please select all that are provided:

- Preparation for academic life (i.e List target group(s): writing skills, library use, study methods, etc.)
- Special orientation sessions
- Tutoring/ mentoring/ peer mentoring
- Academic advisors
- Specific support for students with language needs
- Specific support for students with other learning needs
- Tutorial services
- Other, please specify.....

21. Does your institution provide *financial support* as service that your institution provide to respond to the specific needs of students from underrepresented ethnic groups and Roma? Please select all that are provided:

- Subsidized accommodation
- Subsidized meal
- Full subsidized (accommodation + meal)
- Equipment or transport support
- Grants and bursaries



- Loans
- Other, please specify.....

22. Does your institution provide *social support*? Please select all that are provided:

- Extra-curricular activities
- Careers counselling
- Specific services for disabled/ chronically ill students
- Psychological counselling service
- Peer monitoring
- Other, please specify .....

23. Does your institution offer alternative study/learning paths?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please indicate what kinds of alternative study/learning paths are offered (Please select all that apply):

- Curriculum specifically designed for and about students from underrepresented ethnic groups
- Preparatory courses for entrance examinations
- Distance education courses
- Extra tutorials
- Mentoring
- Other, please specify .....

24. Does your institution provide academic and career counselling through specialised centres?

- Yes
- No

## V. Education delivery modes and outreach



25. Has your institution introduced special measures and/or new delivery modes to facilitate access to learning by learners from under-represented groups?

Yes

No

26. Which of the following measures has your institution put in place to respond to the diverse learning needs of students? (Please select all options that apply)

E-learning

Mobile campus (es)

Evening classes

Other, please specify:

27. Does your institution have a strategy for preparing graduated students to be active citizens (democracy and tolerance classes, community volunteering and community outreach?)

Yes

No

VI. Please add any information that you think is relevant for the subject of the project: integration of Roma students in higher education.

.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for completing the questionnaire and sending it to the.....Email:.....

