



The Roma in Sweden – from South to North

The Swedish ESF Council has been granted funds from the Equal programme for the development partnership “Roma in Sweden – from south to north” (Romer i Sverige – från syd till nord). The vision for the development partnership (DP) is an open, egalitarian and gender-equal labour market, free from discrimination and structural barriers, for Roma of working age, with a particular emphasis on young Roma women. The aim is to find new methods to open up the labour market to the Roma population and influence attitudes, approaches and values in both the majority society and the Roma minority population.

DP currently consists on a national level of nine partners, spread over large parts of Sweden: County Administrative Board of Stockholm, Södertälje municipality, Munkedal municipality, Lund/Staffanstorp municipality, the Swedish Integration Board, the Ombudsman Against Ethnic Discrimination (DO), the Roma National Congress, the National Congress Roma International and the National Congress Roma in Europe. The partnership, which represents an extremely broad range of knowledge and experience, is to jointly develop methods to remove obstacles that lead to discrimination and exclusion of Roma in the labour market. The project will run between 2006 and 2007.

In the municipalities, concrete work on developing methods is taking place through six local sub-projects. Based on the activities of these sub-projects, methods are to be

developed and support services designed that can contribute to positive development by increasing Roma participation in working life on equal terms. At both national and local levels, the common denominators for DP's work are a diversity and gender equality perspective, empowerment and participation.

DP is also active at European level. There is transnational cooperation linked to the overall national DP. An agreement has been signed with development partnerships in Finland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, France (Reunion Island) and the UK (Scotland). The aim of this cooperation is to exchange ideas, experiences and knowledge, to cooperate on a joint method that will be documented in a joint end product, and to influence decision-makers at local, national and transnational levels.

Equal

Equal is a programme launched by the European Social Fund that aims to counteract exclusion and discrimination in working life. Using EU funds, it supports development and implementation of new ideas to give all people the same chances in the world of work. In Sweden, Equal is run by the Swedish ESF Council.



Sub-projects



Young Roma women work together to create an enterprising lifestyle

What is most striking about the sub-project in Lund/Staffanstorps is the focus on a group of young Roma women who currently live their lives in parallel with society. Becoming visible as individuals is one stage in the development and forms the foundation for the work. The idea is for the women to muster the courage to formulate individual professional goals in a safe environment, taking help from each other.

Greppa livet

Greppa livet (Grasp Life) in Södertälje aims to raise the profile of the municipality's Roma and give authorities and other local actors information on their situation. The aim is to increase knowledge and understanding. Through this work, opportunities are created for Roma to make their way through the educational system and onto labour market. Greppa livet aims to bolster and involve Roma so that they gain the strength to break their isolation and, in consultation with the authorities, make plans that will help raise their quality of life.

Socio-cultural and labour market integration of an ethnic minority

The sub-project in Munkedal municipality works with various methods regarding how to approach the problem of Roma integration in the labour market. These include social mobilisation, language tuition, training in the caring professions that encompasses work-related learning, and the creation of role models.

Mobilisation of Roma

The National Congress Roma in Europe mainly works on spreading information internally and externally on DP's work and results along with the other national Roma organisations. The work takes place

primarily in Skåne, Stockholm, Göteborg and Norrköping. The National Congress Roma in Europe aims to mobilise the Roma population. Collaboration over group boundaries is to be established in the form of cultural exchanges and "future workshops". The aim is to set up new meeting places for the various Roma groups.

Reduce alienation, create jobs

The National Congress Roma International mainly works on spreading information internally and externally on DP's work and results along with the other national Roma organisations. The work primarily takes place on the east coast of Sweden, from Södertälje to Skellefteå. The goal of the National Congress Roma International is to reduce alienation among Roma, create jobs, increase motivation to work, improve self-esteem and prevent discrimination by providing information.

Roma bridge builders

The Roma National Congress mainly works on spreading information internally and externally on DP's work and results along with the other national Roma organisations. The work takes place primarily in Malmö and Göteborg. The aim of the Roma National Congress is to increase the participation of the Roma population in society and to influence the structures in the Roma cultural code that constitute obstacles to participation. The Roma National Congress also wishes to increase knowledge in schools and among other parties of the circumstances and customs of Roma.

Project coordination

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