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The National Agency for Roma

Newsletter, August 2011

**Projects co-financed from The European Social Fund - Sectorial Operational Programme
Human Resources Development 2007 – 2013
Investing in People!**

- „School – a chance for everyone"
- „Education of Roma children - the path to a stable job "
- „Together on the labor market"
- „Together for a better society"
- „The participation of vulnerable groups in social economy "
- „The national Roma network of local experts, supporting mechanism in implementing the social inclusion of Roma, vulnerable group subject of social exclusion"

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**"Ensuring equal employment opportunities for disadvantaged Roma
groups"**

Public debate, Bucharest, the 18th of August 2011

National Agency for Roma, the Commission on Equal Opportunities of the Senate and the Roma Women's Association "For Our Children" organized on Thursday, August 18, 2011, at the Palace of the Parliament, the public debate "Ensuring equal employment opportunities for disadvantaged Roma groups". The event is part of the activities of the "Equality through Difference. Roma Women's Access on the Labor Market" project, which is co-financed by the European Social Fund - Sectorial Operational Program for Human Resources Development 2007 – 2013 "Invest in people!".

The project is implemented by Roma Women's Association "For Our Children" from Timișoara, in partnership with the National Agency for Roma, "Desire" Foundation from Cluj, "Parudimos" Association from Timișoara, Timișoara City Hall and "Autonomy" Foundation from Hungary.

The meeting aimed to present the results of the debate regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and non-discrimination in the field of employment, the provisions for improving the access to employment for disadvantaged groups, as well as the presentation of the points of view about the policy of equal opportunities and social inclusion of Roma.

The event was attended by representatives of institutions and central public authorities, non-governmental organizations active in gender equality, actors of social inclusion and anti-discrimination field, media representatives.

National Agency for Roma has signed contracts with the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Protection - Managing Authority for Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resources Development for funding from the European Social Fund six strategic projects, implemented at national level.

The total value of these projects – **22.2 million EUR**
out of which
18.65 million EUR
community contribution,
and
3.57 million EUR national
contribution



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Working meeting EUROLINK – House of Europe

The 26th of August, 2011

Mr. President Ilie Dincă attended the meeting for the set-up of the Working Group for Romania, initiated within the program FuturICT Knowledge Accelerator, supported by DG Research, European Commission.

The center of Romania will operate under the Black Sea-Danube Regional Network for Social and Economic Innovation, founded by Eurolink - House of Europe and financed by DG Enterprise - European Commission.

This will provide a special financing line of a number of European hubs, 100 million Euro – worth, in order to stimulate research and innovation in the social-economic field.

The main objectives of the meeting were to identify proposals of multi-national projects in order to apply within the European Commission FuturICT Knowledge Accelerator call, to debate and understanding of working methods and technical process related to this call, to set up relevant consortia by self-proposal and to suggest other international partners and to set up of the forthcoming hub in Romania.

Project implemented by the National Agency for Roma in partnership with the National Agency of Civil Servants and the Roma Party Pro-Europe Association.

The overall objective is the improvement of the partnership relations among vulnerable Roma communities and public institutions at local, regional and national level, in order to increase social inclusion of Roma

“The national Roma network of local experts, supporting mechanism in implementing the social inclusion of Roma, vulnerable group subject of social exclusion”

In order to ensure a broad feed-back of the project implementation at local level is needed, during June and July 2011 a Monitoring methodology of local experts' activity has been drawn up. Starting with 1st of August, the Regional Coordinators have begun the monitoring and evaluation visits. The check-ups are focused on the way in which the local experts fulfilled their attributions within the City Halls, on the activity they developed within the Roma Community, including the Local Working Group meetings.

Up to now, pursuant to monitoring visits, there have been submitted to the project management documents for 2 out of the 8 regions in which the project is implemented. The monitoring and evaluation visits will continue until November 2011, so that all 210 localities where the local experts execute their activities will be monitored.

In the matter of City Halls availability to create a budgeted job position to hire the local experts under an open-ended individual work contract to ensure the project sustainability, we received positive answers from 45 Municipalities.



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"Participation of Vulnerable Groups in Social Economy"

A major specific objective of the project *"Participation of vulnerable groups in social economy"* is to develop the capacity, the skills, the knowledge, the self-esteem and the social support for 20,000 people belonging to vulnerable groups to increase the chances of such persons to participate in the social economy and to integrate and maintain employment.

In August 2011, the partner in the project Târgoviște to Europe Association announced the graduation exams for the organized training courses for 134 Roma students, as follows:

- skilled worker in crop culture, held from the 20th of May to the 6th of August 2011, Amărăștii de Jos village, Dolj County;
- skilled worker in construction structures, held from the 20th of May to the 6th of August 2011, in Amărăștii de Jos village, Dolj County;
- skilled worker in crop culture held from the 23^h of May to the 16th of August 2011 in Segarcea village, Dolj county;
- assembler confectioner of textiles, held from the 17^h of May to the 5th of August 2011 in Ciorani village, Prahova county;
- electric welder, held from the 1st of June to the 12th of August 2011 in Isaccea village, Tulcea County;

Roma Social Development Foundation Ramses announced that it has 12 professional training classes with 28 students of ongoing courses, a total of 336 students Roma people, which will be finalized in September 2011.

Projects` results at the end of August 2011:

- A report of research to identify vulnerable groups and the problems they face, the opportunities for income-generating activities and job creation, published on the website and distributed nationally;
- Research-based selection of 30 communities in 30 counties where project activities are implemented;
- There was organized a conference to promote the project on May 14, 2010 and launch the project web page that includes updated information www.economiesociala.anr.gov.ro and scholarships in which social enterprises operate;
- There was organized a training session for 30 local coordinators on 29 October 2010;
- There was organized an information session on October 30, 2011 for the mayors of 30 communities selected to implement project activities;
- There were developed and published a manual for social inclusion and the training curriculum for 300 specialists in the social economy;
- 313 people benefited of vocational training courses for specialists in the field of social inclusion and within the practical stage they offer counseling for 20,000 people belonging to vulnerable groups in how to obtain a job, from March 2011 until 31 December 2011;
- 4066 people were counseled to get a job in the working program organized for labor support;
- 1084 people received vocational training courses in the following prisons: Bistrita, Gherla, Ploiesti, Târgsor, Colibași, Codlea and Mărgineni and in 15 communities in 11 counties;
- There were organization five round table meetings in the counties of Brașov, Sibiu, Mureș, Dolj and Gorj, with the theme "Facilitating public-private partnership to develop and support local social enterprises" to identify local resources in order to create social enterprises and partnerships to support these social enterprises after the completion of the project.

www.economiesociala.anr.gov.ro



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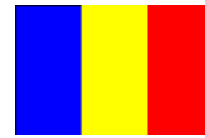
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“Together, for a Better Society”

In August, the project “Together for a better society” became a source of generating structures that give people jobs and give communities the chance to develop by accessing external funding both internal as well.

Thus, up to now there have been established 13 associations and 25 departments in the social economy already functional associations, with the object of activity: activities aimed at both professional development and personal development of disadvantaged groups, increase training and qualification of these people by improving skills, abilities and personal skills as a result of integration of vulnerable groups following the labor market; advising vulnerable groups to improve confidence and self-esteem, factors which promote social inclusion; contacts and collaborations with people from the medical field, education, industry, government; promotion of equal opportunity and treatment between men and women belonging to vulnerable groups; promoting partnerships and collaboration with and between organizations and the establishment of public-private partnerships; setting up branches in major regions of Romania, regional resource centers for social economy; training experts from the



regional resource centers in the social economy and social inclusion; signing partnerships to promote social economy by region and county support groups; developing of social economy projects; developing of social economy structures and specific activities with the consequent generation of employment opportunities, flexible and modern environments; concern for achieving necessary funds; other forms of organized action to achieve the purpose of the association.

Also this month, 41 conferences were conducted in order to complete the project, one in each county. The purpose of these events was to bring together representatives of local government, civil society representatives, mayors of towns benefiting people who have attended professional training courses, leaders and representatives of Roma communities and of the media to disseminate the project results and present opportunities for Regional Centers for Promotion and Development of Social Economy.

Also the web e-learning platform was finalized this month. The platform can be accessed by all 40 experts. The platform contains 7 units concerning social economy and it presents 10 examples of good practices. After each unit there is an auto evaluation test that every expert has to take. This month all the experts have past the final examination on the e-learning platform obtaining good scores.



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“Together on the Labor Market”

According with ACCEDER model (tool provided by Fundación Secretariado Gitano, the transnational partner in the project, for describing the custom course of a beneficiary in the project), depending on the personal potential, professional experience and level of education, the beneficiaries have participated in the following activities: professional orientation / counseling, training / vocational training, intermediation in the labor market, educational activities.

Beneficiaries involved in the professional orientation / counseling attended group sessions on professional orientation on the labor market, individual sessions for professional orientation and counseling, sessions on developing a resume and a letter of intent, sessions on sustaining an interview, practice sessions of social skills and work, individual and group sessions on the active search for jobs.

Involving the target group in the activities of professional training / vocational training is a result of participation of beneficiaries in the information campaign about vocational trainings / counseling.

Training courses on professional / vocational guidance organized through the project were selected based on the options made by the beneficiaries of the project and taking into account the offer of jobs available in the labor market and targeted the following jobs: manicure – pedicure 192 graduates; trade worker – 231 graduates; entry operator, validation and processing data – 143 graduates; blacksmith fitter prefabricated fitter – 54 graduates; hairdresser – 85 graduates; asphalt worker – 217 graduates; carpenter – 56 graduates; barber and hairdresser – 127 graduates; hoteliers – 30; security guard – 37; construction painter worker – 84; waiter – 40; restaurant worker – 30; heating maintenance worker – 30. In total, **1356** persons graduated qualification courses through the project.

Individuals seeking employment received psycho-socio-professional counseling, consultation and monitoring in order to include them in the labor market and job maintenance for those already employed. These actions have involved a preliminary diagnosis, tutoring sessions, making a professional path for each person and monitor individual progress made individually for each person in different stages of the process. In this respect took place depth interviews with each beneficiary, creation of a professional path for each individual, activities to learn techniques to search for a job using all resources and available tools, including inter-human relations.

Prospecting and monitoring job offers in a mediation system for private and state companies were made by the management activities, market research for employees and employers, meetings with different institutions and economic operators.

In all eight regional centers, Alba, Braila, Bucuresti-Ilfov, Calarasi, Cluj, Craiova, Iasi and Timișoara were identified children / young people who require educational support and were developed activities within the educational component of the project.

These activities have been channeled in several directions: identify Roma students who are in danger of drop out school, implement specific measures to encourage students / youth to continue their studies for a number of 450 beneficiaries were provided educational kits, register people who have not completed compulsory education in the "Second chance" program.

Results:

At the end of August 2011 over 6.400 people were informed and included in the database project, including:

- 2700 – people informed and included in the project.
- 1356 – people who have completed professional training courses.
- 759 – people employed.
- 816 – people oriented socio-professional.
- 873 – people enrolled in educational programs.



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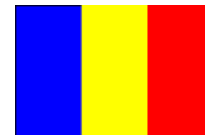
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“Education of Roma Children - the Path to a Stable Job“

Over 2000 Roma students met each other in a camp in Sinaia to learn, but also to enjoy the beauty of the region. This activity represent the second and the third stage of training (sessions 3, 4, 5 and 6 of training) and was organized starting 14 July 2011 under the "Education of Roma children - the path to a stable job" project implemented by the National Agency for Roma.



This activity was organized for benefice of Roma students following to sustain national assessment tests in next school year (2011-2012). In this camp students were prepared under the supervision of 84 teachers. The children also took part to cultural activities - arts and sports. Contests and mountain climbing were pleasing to all, especially since among the places visited was Bran Castle.

Positive results were recorded both in terms of perspectives of students and teachers. The children were very excited and left the camp with more information and full of self confidence. Participating teachers appreciated mainly students' desire to learn and also largely changed their preconceived impression about Roma students into a positive one.



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"School - a chance for everyone"

The project "School - a chance for everyone" proposes a set of measures that contribute to the prevention and correction of early school leaving.

The project is being implemented in 19 counties: Alba, Bacău, Botoșani, Brașov, Brăila, Buzău, Călărași, Dâmbovița, Galați, Giurgiu, Ialomița, Iași, Ilfov, Mureș, Suceava, Teleorman, Tulcea, Vaslui, Vrancea and Bucharest in 115 schools.

Partners in the project are Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Centre for Education and Professional Development Step by Step, Community Development Agency 'Together' and International Association Step by Step.

Until august 2011 the following results have been achieved:

- ✓ 1.000 people included in "second chance" education programs;
- ✓ 1.200 beneficiaries of afterschool services;
- ✓ 7.000 students have benefited from measures preventing early school leaving;
- ✓ 5.000 parents have benefited of training and counseling services;
- ✓ 400 teachers trained in inclusive education;
- ✓ 200 people trained for after school services, an interregional network of Roma NGOs has been set up;
- ✓ 20 networks of local cooperation have been set up;
- ✓ 100 protocols of cooperation have been signed between ANR, schools, town halls for each of the localities where the project is implemented in order to continue to work for prevention and correction of early school leaving.

During august 2011 the spot of the project has been broadcasted on TVR 1, TVR Info TVR 2, as part of the information and awareness campaign on the importance of education.

Project implemented by the **National Agency for Roma** in partnership with Ministry of Education, Research and Youth,

"Step by Step" Education and Professional Development Center,

The Community Development Agency Together,

"Step by Step" International Association.

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