

POLICE AND ROMA: TOWARD SAFETY FOR MULTI-ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

PROGRESS REPORT 2006

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This ongoing programme of OSCE-sponsored activities is designed to assist OSCE participating states to implement the recommendations on policing in the *Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area*. The programme of activities is being coordinated by the UK-based NGO 'European Dialogue' on behalf of the Contact Point for Roma & Sinti Issues (CPRSI) at ODIHR. European Dialogue is working in partnership with CPRSI, the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU), Governments of OSCE Participating States, Roma NGOs and other relevant bodies to implement the programme of activities. To date the following activities have been implemented:

Systematic Assessment in Romania

A 'Strategic Initiative on Roma and Policing in Romania' is being undertaken by the Romanian Government in partnership with the NGO Romani CRISS, and with the assistance of expert consultants from the UK. The main aim is to develop a 'good practice' model for undertaking a 'systematic assessment' of policing policy and practice relating to Roma, with reference to the OSCE recommendations and international human rights standards. A full report of the assessment exercise is in preparation.

Resource Manual

A comprehensive Resource Manual has been prepared to assist police and NGOs in participating states to implement the recommendations in the Action Plan. The manual consists primarily of a compilation of documents providing guidance on improving relations between police and Roma/minorities, together with practical examples. Further examples are being added as new documentation becomes available. The Resource Manual can be accessed on the website of European Dialogue, as below.

Regional Workshops

A series of regional workshops is being undertaken to promote the implementation of the recommendations and to identify issues and good practice. Reports and other documentation from these events are being added to the Resource Manual as they become available.

- An international seminar was held in Wroclaw in **Poland** in 2004 to disseminate the results of a variety of initiatives in Poland and to promote further cooperation between police and NGOs.
- A workshop in **Russia**, bringing together police and NGOs, was organised in November 2005 by the NGO Romano Kher in partnership with the Moscow City authorities.
- A regional workshop in the **Balkans** was organised the OSCE Mission in Skopje in June 2006, and attended by representatives from OSCE Missions and Governments from throughout the region.
- A transnational workshop focusing on **Western Europe** will be held in late 2006 in the UK, and will be designed particularly to address policing issues relating to travelling communities.

Bucharest Conference May 2006

An international conference was held in Bucharest, Romania on 4-5 May 2006 on 'The Implementation and Harmonization of National Policies on Roma, Sinti and Travellers'. The conference was organised jointly by the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Government of Romania. Policing was one of three topics on which the conference focused, and a special working group was held on this subject. Presentations from the conference, including on initiatives in Slovakia and Hungary, have been added to the Resource Manual.

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