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The National Agency for Roma

Newsletter July 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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Roma**

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***Working Visit
Bucharest, July 5th, 2011***

At Soros Foundation Romania request, Mr. President Ilie Dincă welcomed Mr. Kalman Mizsei, President of Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma, former EU High Representative in Republic of Moldavia and UNPD Regional Director for Europe and for the Commonwealth of Independent States, during the working visit he had in Romania.

The discussion started with the problem of preparing the EU Member States' strategies for social inclusion of the Roma. Issues related to Romanian politics and practice in this respect have been approached, referring to the capacity of accessing and successfully using the European Funds assigned for Romania.

***“First Interim Evaluation of SOP HRD 2007-2013”
July 6th, 2011***

At the MA SOP HRD invitation, Mr. President Ilie Dincă participated to the final Conference of the project “First Interim Evaluation of SOP HRD 2007-2013”. The general purpose of the event organised in Bucharest, on July 6th, was to inform the Monitoring Committee members on improvement the efficiency and effectiveness of SOP HRD implementation, by providing specialists' opinions in the area.

***“The police, the Roma and Sinti: best practices in building trust and
understanding”
July 8th, 2011***

Mr. Ilie Dincă, President of the National Agency for Roma, attended the launch of the OSCE manual “The police, the Roma and Sinti: best practices in building trust and understanding”, organized by General Police Inspectorate in partnership with the OSCE and ODIHR, on July 8th, at the Parliament Palace.

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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With that occasion, a round table was held, presenting the manual's motivation and applicability into practice. There were displayed presentations on the relationship between the Police and Roma communities and on practices and positive initiatives that have contributed to building trust and promoting cooperation between the Police and Roma.

***The E.U. Framework Strategy for Roma
July 21th, 2011***

Thursday, July 21th, 2011, Mr. Alexandros Tsolakis, policy analyst at the Directorate General for Regional Policy – EU Commission conducted a working visit at the National Agency for Roma. Within this, Mr. Tsolakis was welcomed by Mr. Ilie Dincă, the president of the Agency and he met the staff of the Public Policy Unit of the institution, also the managers of the six strategic projects implemented by the Agency and financed by ESF.

The European context of this visit has been flagged by the adoption of the The E.U. Framework Strategy for Roma

The main subjects of the discussions were focused on the elaboration of the new E.U. Government Strategy of Roma Inclusion; the problems encountered by implementing public policies and projects regarding Roma communities, as well as the Romanian best practices in this field. It was pointed out the necessity to elaborate public policies with a higher degree of coherence and applicability, in order to better contribute to Roma social inclusion.

***"Scholarships for Roma high school students"
July 25th, 2011***

Mr. Ilie Dincă attended the National Conference held in Cluj-Napoca by the Resource Center for Roma Communities, at the completion of the project "Scholarships for Roma high school students." The purpose of the project implemented during 2007 - 2011 was to build young Roma elite by offering a four years complex support for 275 Roma students enrolled in colleges or schools of arts and crafts from Transylvania.

During the conference there were disseminated the project results, while the discussions were focused on experience of the participants. Also, options were researched in order to identify ways for project sustainability.



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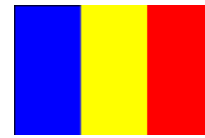
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"School – a Chance for Everyone"

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.

The Conference "Exchange of experience between local networks to prevent and reduce early school leaving", was held during 18-20 July 2011, in Sibiu, as part of the activity no. 13 of the project "School - a chance for everyone" (project ID 4752).

In the opening of the conference Mr. Ilie Dincă, President of National Agency for Roma, made assessments concerning the results of the activities of the project implemented during the school year 2010-2011.

The project manager, Magda Filip, presented the status of the project, informed about the broadcasting of the spot of the project on TVR 1, TVR Info TVR 2 during July 11 to August 13, 2011, and presented the questionnaire aiming to assess the activities undertaken in schools during 2010-2011.

Mrs. Mariana Nica, monitoring expert, presented the situation of graduation in schools as a result of the reports sent by the schools.

The Conference was attended by local collaborative networks of the 19 counties and Bucharest Municipality where project is implemented, established during March and April 2011 at the four regional meetings held in Bucharest, Iasi, Brasov and Galati.

Representatives of the partners, Ms. Carmen Lica, Ms. Elena Mihai, Center for Education and Professional Development (CEDP) Step by Step, Mr. Gheorghe Sarău, counselor, General Directorate for Education in Minority Languages, the relationship with Parliament and social partners, Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports had an important contribution to the debate.

The participants were very active, with a high number of interventions, the exchange of experience was very useful and good practices of some of the participants were a source of inspiration for others. During the discussions were highlighted strengths and weaknesses of various methods of intervention to prevent and reduce early school leaving proposed by the project.



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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***”Participation of Vulnerable Groups in Social Economy”
Social Enterprise Incubator - Facilitating public-private partnerships***

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.

The activity of "social enterprise incubator" aims to stimulate the involvement of associations and foundations in the economy by facilitating public - private partnership in the social economy by providing advice, information and opportunities to exchange experience and promote the social economy.

In July 2011, within the project, five round tables were held in the counties of Brasov, Sibiu, Mures, Dolj and Gorj, on the theme "Facilitating public-private partnership to develop and support local social enterprises." The event was attended by representatives of local councils, municipalities, prefectures, County Agencies for Employment, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the project partners, local community leaders, NGOs in each county.

The objective of organizing the round tables was to provide information about the projects' activities and to find, together with the participants, ways of collaboration in order to bring real benefits to the local communities.

It was presented a document with proposals for developing the social economy in local communities, particularly addressed to local authorities. The document is published on the projects' website <http://www.economiesociala.anr.gov.ro/pdf/a3/RecCL.pdf>
These events represented a great opportunity for establishing ways of collaboration between all parties involved, in order to facilitate local partnerships.

In the next period there will be held roundtable in all counties in which the project is implemented.
www.economiesociala.anr.gov.ro

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

The project is coming to an end and the implementing team is concerned about ensuring its sustainability after the funding stops. Official letters were sent to 210 city halls through which is certified that each local expert was qualified and owns a nationally recognized certificate for this occupation.

The „local expert on roma issues” qualification certifies that the graduate has the ability to mediate, counsel and guide roma population, to collaborate with different institutions, to plan community related activities, to monitor the interventions in the community and to apply for European Social Fund financing, within a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary team that serves the local public authorities and roma communities functioning. Until the end of July 2011 there were received positive answers from 38 city halls regarding the availability to create a budgeted position within these institutions in order to employ the local expert on roma issues with a labor contract of indefinite duration.

The expert's activity within the City Halls concentrated on elaborating local action plans. These action plans, initiated by the local experts, will be submitted for adoption to Local Councils, at the proposal of Local Working Groups, and will be introduced into the state budget project for the current year. This approach represents a sustainability item for this project.

In addition, the local experts started the activity of writing project proposals. This activity is supported by the regional coordinators. Until the end of July 2011, 84 project proposals were elaborated.

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



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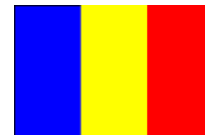
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Education of Roma Children - the Path to a Stable Job

1,228 Roma students have met in a camp in Sinaia to learn, but also to enjoy the beauty of the region. This activity represents the second stage of training (sessions 3 and 4 of training) and was organized starting with 14 July 2011 within the "Education of Roma children - the path to a stable job" project implemented by the National Agency for Roma.

This activity was organized for the 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 80 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 The Peleş Castle. The children made a tour of Sinaia, and among the lessons they were relaxed by playing football or table tennis, listening to music and dancing.



Project implemented by the National Agency for Roma in partnership with The Education Fund for the Roma in Hungary, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, The Foundation Resource Center for Roma Communities and the Association Pakiv Romania.

Positive results were recorded both in terms of perspective 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 negative impression about Roma students into a positive one.

"In this training session we had the pleasant surprise of noticing students with good training, with the vision of future, but also students whose precarious situation is reflected in their level of knowledge. I did not expect to have a large number of students with interest to improve their knowledge, but I was wrong."- teacher. "I was pleasantly surprised by their interest [of the students] for these sessions, by their desire of self improvement "- teacher.

"Students are generally enthusiastic to learn new things, working in teams, to be admired. The evolution of these children will be conditioned largely by how they perceive the world and therefore, this children deserves to receive more options in terms of education"- teacher.

The overall objective is to increase the level of education of Roma children in rural and urban environment and the development of human capital, in order to include them in a modern and flexible labor market by ensuring access to education and reducing early school leaving phenomenon.



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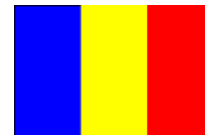


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Together on the Labor Market

Educational support for Romanian Language and Math for Roma students

In July started the implementation of personalized intervention plans for 39 beneficiaries of educational activities from Center of Socio-Occupational Inclusion Craiova.

The main focus of these educational interventions was the additional support for Romanian Language and Math classes and educational counseling. The interventions will be carried out for two months by the help of education specialists of the project and the schools.

Those interventions are part of school retention activities foreseen in the project “Together on the Labor Market”.



Final meeting for monitoring and assessing the transfer of ACCEDER model



In Madrid, between the 13th and the 15th of July 2011, took place the final meeting for evaluation of the project “Together on the labor market”, this was the last stage of monitoring process for transfer of the ACCEDER model.

The meeting was held with experts of Fundacion Secretariado Gitano (FSG), National Agency for Roma (NAR) experts – management and central team and coordinators of centers for socio-occupational inclusion. During the sessions FSG and NAR experts evaluated the process of transfer and implementation of ACCEDER model.

Also, there were analyzed and assessed aspects regarding the training of the experts hired by NAR.

The objectives of every training stage were revised by FSG experts, taking account of all the components: mediation/education, counseling, vocational training, coordination.

www.proiect-ippm.ro

The main objective of this project is to promote social inclusion of Roma people in the employment area at national level by implementation of ACCEDER model in Romania, which was a best practice program funded by European Social Fund and implemented in Spain

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