



Danube Transnational Programme

DREAM ROAD

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Project co-funded by European Union Funds (ERDF, IPA, ENI)

DREAM ROAD – KEY FACTS

- Project title: **Danube REgion for improved Access and eMpowerment of ROmA Development**
- Acronym: **DREAM ROAD**
- Programme priority P4: **Well governed Danube region**
- Programme SO 4.1: **Improve institutional capacities to tackle major societal challenges**
- Project duration: 30 months (1. 7. 2020–31. 12. 2022)
- Project partnership: **15 PPs / 10 countries** (14 ASPs / 7 countries)
- Budget overall: **€ 2,072,267.40**
 - ERDF contribution: € 1,433,843.75
 - IPA contribution: € 153,788.29
 - ENI contribution: € 173,795.00



PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

1. **Research and Education Centre Mansion Rakičan** (LP, Slovenia)
2. **Institute of Social Innovations** (Czech Republic)
3. **Zala County Regional Development Agency** Nonprofit Limited Liability Company (Hungary)
4. **Nevo Parudimos Association** (Romania)
5. **Amalipe Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance** (Bulgaria)
6. **Roma Adult Education Organisation Burgenland** (Austria)
7. **Institute for Cultural Relations Policy** (Hungary)
8. **Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences Slovak Academy of Sciences** (Slovakia)
9. **Harghita County Council** (Romania)
10. **Municipality of Murska Sobota** (Slovenia)
11. **Covasna County Employment Agency** (Romania)
12. **Roma Inclusion Office** (Serbia)
13. **Know How Centre** (Serbia)
14. **Representation in the Republic of Moldova of the Foundation Terre des hommes Lausanne** – Switzerland (Moldova)
15. **NGO Youth Space** (Ukraine)

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, MAIN RESULTS

Specific objectives:

- To **mobilize and empower members of Roma communities** to become agents of change
- To **strengthen skills and competences of relevant stakeholders** and local communities for effective intercultural communication and implementation of novel solutions
- To **facilitate policy change** through developing strategic partnerships and stimulating development and implementation of novel approaches

Project main result:

Participatory development of **novel interventions** (**learning labs**, know-how platform, trainings) to **enhance digital, informational and functional literacy of Roma** people and establishment of broad alliances in their implementation.

BACKGROUND

- Roma are the largest minority group in Europe - they outnumber the populations of half of Europe's countries. However, **high geographic dispersion makes cooperative action difficult and undermines collective action by Roma and for Roma.**
- Strong representation of Roma in the programme area is marked by **different ways of life and similar underlying challenges.** (Austria vs. Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary).
- Roma communities in Europe today face enormous **challenges to social and economic inclusion** – high rates of **poverty, poor housing**, often in **remote areas with limited infrastructure**, disproportionate **health problems**, lack of access to and poor quality of **education, unemployment or employment of poor quality**, as well as **discrimination**. Compared to non-Roma living near Roma communities, they are significantly worse off in terms of paid work and other social indicators.
- **Roma youth face two-fold discrimination** – as **youth** are most likely to be in **part-time, temporary, and seasonal employment**, and to work in the **informal economy without access to social protection**. They are more vulnerable to the business cycle, often the “last-hired, first-fired.”
- Overall, the participation of young Roma women and men (aged 15–24) in **education has risen substantially** over the last decade. Yet while more Roma are in upper secondary and tertiary education, **the gap in educational achievement remains large**, and **gains in education have not significantly boosted either employment rates or wage levels.**

- **DISTRUST TOWARDS PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND BODIES** – Many Roma have experienced **discrimination in their interaction with state institutions** such as schools, employment offices, or central or local administrative bodies. Such experiences contribute to a widespread impression among Roma that they are **excluded from the principle of equality before the law**.
- **DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT** – The educational paths of many Roma children reflect existing patterns of discrimination and lay the ground for continued discrimination in the world of work. Many Roma children attend **poor quality, segregated schools**. Some are placed **in special needs school for the mentally impaired**, although they are not disabled. In Serbia, the number of Roma placed in schools for mentally disabled is 36 times the rate of non-Roma.
- In mainstream schools, Roma students are **targets of discrimination** by educators and other students. Many Roma youth do not make the **transition into secondary and tertiary schooling**. **Girls and young women, and young Roma with disabilities**, experience the greatest challenges. **Limited education relegates Roma to unskilled jobs in the informal economy or at the bottom of the formal labour market.**
- **DISTRUST in EU initiatives** – Wider recognition of issues central to Roma across Europe began in 1990s, followed by the Decade of Roma inclusion. To meet EU demand, many nation states began introducing Roma strategies, giving rise to national programmes that were entirely financed by the EU – **often, initiatives pursued INDICATORS NOT RESULTS**. Backhanded implementation lead to distrust. In the previous programming period, visible integrated approach came to the forefront.

- **COVID** – Prohibited migration and remoteness eliminated the possibility for many Roma to earn their living through precarious jobs – this led to inability to support families with children and youth paying the highest price. Other COVID related issues: homeschooling – lack of support and access.
- **WAR IN UKRAINE** – Ukrainian Roma face an inability to move due to lack of documents or are not rented apartments in EU countries / given jobs, which calls for institutionalized help that EU member states, such as Poland are avoiding.

- **The need to explore the full potential of communities and their often overlooked members – signaling hope for a better future, breaking poverty and avoiding squandering precious human capital.**
- Lasting and meaningful impact achieved through **involvement of all parties. It is essential to create a culture of non-discrimination within government agencies.**
- Highlight the importance of **EDUCATION, DIGITALIZATION and INVOLVEMENT** all societal actors (for lasting and meaningful impact).
- **LEARNING LABs** as spaces of increasing **functional, digital and informational literacy.**

LEARNING LAB

PUŠČA, MURSKA SOBOTA, SI







LEARNING LAB

AMALIPE, BULGARIA



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PROJECT OUTPUTS

1. **E-Handbook of best practices** of Roma empowerment through implementation of innovative and participatory approaches
2. **Toolbox of smart participatory methods and tools** for stimulating increased involvement and active participation of Roma community members
3. **Learning LABS** for advancement of digital, information and functional literacy in Roma communities
4. **Training for DREAM ROAD network facilitators**, members of the Roma community and/or volunteers with active participation and mentoring roles within the learning lab concepts
5. **Competence development trainings** for public authorities, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders for increasing intercultural dialogue and societal cohesion
6. **Virtual Know-How Platform**
7. **Transnational Danube cooperation strategy** for Roma inclusion through participatory approaches and community empowerment

(tools, strategies, pilot actions, learning interactions)



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