



Romani CRISS

Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies



I AM ROMA

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OVERARCHING REPORT

I am Roma project – implementation in Romania

INTRODUCTION

Romani CRISS is the Romanian partner within the “I am Roma” project, financed by the European Commission – DG Justice, Directorate A: Civil Justice and implemented by the main applicant, Municipio de Sintra.

The project was structured in three major components:

Creating a local action group

Since Romani CRISS is working at national level, the group was created at national level as well, but its members were local contacts and partners of Romani CRISS

The action group was directly involved in designing and implementing another component of the project, namely the campaigns.

Campaigns

This campaign was focused on two main subjects: declaration of ethnicity during census (promoting Roma identity) and anti-discrimination.

Capacity building program

The capacity building program represented a very important component of the project: it involved 30 Roma young people who benefited from the Human Rights Academy.



REPORT SUMMARY

I. Creating the local action groups

II. Campaigns

1. Declaration of ethnicity during census

- 1.1. National context
- 1.2. Current action/policies
- 1.3. Issues and challenges faced
- 1.4. Campaign strategy development
- 1.5. Campaign strategic plan
- 1.6. Impact
- 1.7. Media coverage
- 1.8. Recommendations and conclusions

2. Anti-discrimination campaign

- 2.1. National context
- 2.2. Current action/policies
- 2.3. Campaign strategic plan
- 2.4. Media coverage
- 2.5. Recommendations and conclusions

III. Capacity building program

- 1.1. Context
- 1.2. Issues and challenges faced
- 1.3. Impact
- 1.4. Media coverage
- 1.5. Recommendations and conclusions

I. CREATING THE LOCAL ACTION GROUPS

Since the campaign Romani CRISS has designed for 2011 was a national one, focused on census, the Local Action Group included contacts from various local communities: Brasov; Tulcea; Hunedoara; Bucharest - Ilfov; Suceava; Bistrita.

The component of the group was established among the contacts of Romani CRISS, Roma and non-Roma activists, working in Roma organizations. The group consists of 10 persons.

In the period May – July, meetings with the Roma communities representatives, Roma people working in local institutions and representatives of the public local authorities took place.

The meetings had as main purpose to establish the group, as well as to discuss at local level, jointly with relevant representatives of authorities the issue of the data inaccuracy collected during census with regard to the real figure of Roma living in Romania.

Namely, on the 23rd of May a meeting took place in Brasov, where 29 persons participated. On the 10th of June a meeting took place in Tulcea, with the participation of 23 persons. In Deva, Hunedoara county, the meeting was organized on the 22nd of July and 39 persons attended the meeting. The discussions within the meeting enabled a need analysis, which determined the design of the campaign.

MEETINGS IN BRASOV, BRASOV COUNTY, SF. GHEORGHE, COVASNA COUNTY, IN TULCEA, TULCEA COUNTY, IN DEVA, HUNEDOARA COUNTY, IN CRAIOVA, DOLJ COUNTY

The meeting was named “*Roma under the 2011 census – challenges and opportunities*”. The contact person for organizing the meeting was a member of the Local Action Group, Steluta Batar. The prefect of Brasov County attended the meeting. 29 persons participated to the discussion, including health mediators, Roma experts working for Mayors’ offices, etc. The results of the focus-groups conducted by CRISS with regard to the reasons Roma have to refuse declaring their ethnicity within the census were presented. Solutions applicable at County level were discussed, as to increase accuracy of the data collected. Similar meetings took place in Sf. Gheorghe, Tulcea, Deva and Craiova.



Meeting in Brasov, 24th of May 2011



Meeting in Brasov, 24th of May 2011



Meeting in Sf. Gheorghe, 26th of May 2011

Meeting in Sf. Gheorghe, 26th of May 2011



Meeting in Tulcea, 10th of June 2012

A national meeting took place, instead of local meetings, taking into account the group was a national one. The meeting took place in January 28-29 2012. The topics discussed were mainly anti-discrimination and methods on local campaigning on this issue.



National Meeting LAG, 28-29 January 2012



LAG PROFILES

The local action group in Romania is formed of Roma and non-Roma activists and members of Roma organisations that have expertise in different field of actions, such as human rights, education, health and media.

Steluta Batir is the director of Generatia 2008 organisation, situated in the Center of the country. She worked as Roma health mediator in communities in Brasov county for 5 years, conducting information session on access to health and human rights and participating actively in various national health campaigns. She is an accredited trainer on health mediation and delivered numerous sessions on training of mediators and of trainers in this field. Her experience also includes managing a center of monitoring and support for the health mediators' activity in 7 counties.

Generația 2008 organisation is focused on delivering and providing primary social services, educational and public health services in view of addressing the social needs of underprivileged people, families and groups, so that their quality of life would increase and social cohesion and inclusion is promoted.

Doina Fintina is a trained medical nurse whose been running, for the past 3 years, the Counseling and Social Inclusion Centre for Roma in Babadag (a city situated in SE of Romania, where many Turkish Roma reside). She is extremely involved in the Roma community life here and managed several projects within the centre: "Roma youth want to learn, also!" and "Give a chance to grow healthy!" Due the nature of her professional background, Mrs. Fintina is also collaborates with the Roma health mediators in activities for the local Roma community, mainly in the field of providing counseling and information.

Ionut Gagiu is the president of Eltera NGO since 2010. He is experienced in implementation of projects in Roma communities, projects mainly in education (he coordinated intercultural activities in schools), fundraising activities, bridging between the community, NGOs and state authorities and organizing of events. Eltera NGO is a Roma NGO that militates for the improvement of Roma citizens life in all areas of life. Their main focus is on Roma Education and Human Rights.

Elena Gabriela Porumb resides in Ormeniș locality, Brașov county. She was involved in activities to promote education in multi-ethnic communities in 3 local communities. She also worked as community facilitator in a campaign focused on promotion of asserting one's ethnic identity and speaks Romani language.

Marius Rad is a long-time Roma NGO member who works since 2002 at the Thumende Valea Jiului Association, situated in the West of the country. He participates actively in the production of a weekly show about the Roma (in Romani and Romanian language) and the realisation of various documentary films such as "Roma Rights" (a coproduction with TVE for BBC), "Mijn Worker in Roemenie / Mine workers in Romania" (about the social situation of people who live in Valea Jiului), "Romani Buki", "The Judge/ O Krisinitori" and "Rubina"



I AM ROMA

(about the work of the Roma health mediator) or video features on Hadareni (a locality where an inter-ethnic conflict took place in the 90's). He also worked at the Petrosani City hall as an expert on Roma issues.

Tudor Taba, 3rd year student at the Public Administration Faculty in SNSPA Bucharest, had been working in Romani CRISS for the past 2 years. He is experienced in working with youth and children, especially on activities related to education and extracurricular activities, debates, diversity and empowerment. He is also a good campaigner in the field, in the Roma communities, having worked on disseminating information in the field of affirmative measures in education for Roma children, of Roma's participation in the census of population.

Robert Vaszi is the coordinating director of "Equal Chances" Association and one of the most active human rights activists for Roma rights. His experience relates to identification, documentation and monitoring of human rights violation cases of Roma people, as well as community facilitation and development. He was part partner with Romani CRISS, in identifying the first case of school segregation of Roma children to be sanctioned in Romania. The "Equal Chances" Association, based in NW of Romania, was established in 2000. It works in multi-ethnic communities, with Roma population, in Romania in order to consolidate democratic institutions, based on non-discriminatory observing of citizen rights. It intervenes in various fields, such as the respecting of social-cultural and political rights and works specific on combating school segregation, residential segregation and violation of housing rights, hate speech. The projects implemented by the association aim of Roma inclusion in the society as full and equal citizens.

DECLARATION OF ETHNICITY DURING CENSUS

National context

During October-November 2011, the population and housing census took place in Romania.

The results of the latest census, conducted in 2002 indicated a population of 535,250 Roma people, representing 2.5% of the total population and the second largest ethnic minority. Romanian language is the mother tongue for 247,570 people (1.09% of the population). Roma represent the ethnic majority in 67 municipalities, but most of them live in localities where the percentage of Roma is lower than 10%. These data are questioned by researchers and civil society activists who believe that we are dealing with a severe under-representation of Roma in official statistics. For various reasons, including fear of stigma and historical memory of persecution, many Roma people refuse to declare their ethnic identity of the reviewer.¹

According to a research conducted by Romani CRISS on these reasons, the following was observed:

¹Liegeois 2008:25; Druker 1997:22; Fleck and Rughiniş 2008:9



I AM ROMA

1. For a category of Roma ethnic identity is fluid and contextually negotiated. Roma is seen instrumentally - either as a possibility to have access to certain benefits (eg, access to special places in education) or, most often as a method used by the majoritary population to restrict access to certain goods and services (employment, education, health). Due to the potential disadvantages, the temptation is to hide their ethnicity, especially when this is easy to do (people living outside the Roma community and who are not heteroidentified as Roma).
2. The ethnicity is sometimes exclusively associated to the Roma culture (language, traditional occupations, customs), leaving aside the geographical origin and the common history. Persons who lost contact from traditional groups are more exposed to not declaring the Roma ethnicity to the census. A particular issue is represented by Roma horaxane, who tend to symbolically separate from the other Roma and to consider as being a Turk minority.
3. Most of the participants couldn't name advantages of assuming the Roma ethnicity – direct or indirect – such as the health or the school mediator, the use of Romani language in local administration, etc.
4. The participants mentioned a series of concerns regarding the data collected within the census: they thought the ethnicity will be written in the identity document and will worsen their access to employment, will increase the stigmatization; the possibility of imposing a tax specifically for Roma; the use of information for the Roma deportation.
5. There is confusion between citizenship, nationality and ethnicity.
6. The operators from the most recent census were, regularly, Roma outside the community, and weren't able to empathize with the Roma. This caused some reticence in assuming the ethnic identity.

The identified problem refers to the low number of Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity officially declared compared to the unofficial number estimated by national and international organizations, as well as by institutions.

Current actions/policies

The National Institute for Statistics, the institution responsible for organizing the census, has involved in addressing the issue of inaccurate data with regard to the ethnicity. Jointly with the UNFPA, the National Institute for Statistics has organized a series of meetings with the civil society to discuss the issue of low rate of Roma declaring their ethnicity. CRISS has attended the meetings organized by the National Institute for Statistics.

After attending a meeting organized by the National Institute for Statistics, in partnership with UNFPA (Sibiu, June 22-24), Romani CRISS has sent a letter to the National Institute for Statistics, requesting the Institute to respond to the recommendation to include in the manual of the enumerators, as well as in the training courses for the enumerators, a section dedicated to the reasons for which some Roma don't declare their ethnicity (Please see *Annex 1 Letter to the National Institute for Statistics*).



I AM ROMA

Romani CRISS has elaborated a short informative note for this purpose – it was included in the folder prepared for the training courses delivered to the enumerators by the Institute (Please see *Annex 2 Informative note for the enumerators*).

After the meeting in Sibiu, Romani CRISS had asked the Institute to inform about the way the decision of excluding the „rom-ungri” and „horahane”² categories out of the list of Roma groups, for the Census (Please see *Annex 3 Letter to the National Institute for Statistics „rom-ungri”*)

Romani CRISS has sent a public letter, making an appeal to the NGOs to register as observers for the census, explaining, at the same time, the necessary administrative steps (Please see *Annex 4 Letter to NGOs – Appeal to register as census observers*).

CRISS has also sent a public letter, addressed to Roma people, both in Romanian and Romani, making an appeal for those who meet the legal criteria, to register as enumerators (Please see *Annex 5 Letter to Roma people – Appeal to register as enumerators*).

After discussing with Roma NGOs, partners, collaborators from the field, as well as with members of the Roma communities, within the field visits carried out, Romani CRISS has recommended to municipalities Roma enumerators (Please see *Annex 6 Template letter of recommendation for Roma enumerators*). 83 enumerators were recommended to municipalities.

Issues and challenges faced

The first challenge faced was selecting the communities. Due to limited resources, it was not possible to conduct the campaign in all communities with significant Roma population. Therefore, the communities were selected firstly, to serve the purpose of research, on multiple criteria: traditional and non-traditional communities, communities with multiple identities (Roma-Hungarians; Xoraxane – Muslim Roma), etc. When selecting the communities it was taken into consideration to identify those where a very low number of people declared their ethnic identity within the last census, in 2002, compared to the unofficial data. After conducting the research on identifying the reasons for which Roma don't declare their ethnic identity, the campaign were designed and conducted, based on the findings of the research.

Campaign strategy development

Did we need a campaign?

It was obvious the campaign component – reaching to communities – lacked entirely from the approach of other organizations and of the National Institute for Statistics. Therefore, it was decided CRISS would tackle this as well, as a complementary measures to all other lobby and advocacy actions. CRISS has conducted focus-groups in Roma communities to analyze the reasons for which Roma don't declare their ethnicity to census. Based on the focus groups' results, it was noticed Roma lacked information on what census is, on the confidentiality of the data collected, etc.

Motivation

²Mixed ethnicity – Roma and Hungarian; Roma and Turks.



I AM ROMA

When planning the campaign, it was established that, besides the informative, educational purposes of the campaign, the focus would be to motivate the Roma to declare their ethnicity without fear of negative consequences.

SWAT Analysis

It was analyzed, together with the expert who designed the campaign, what exactly needed to be changed. The historical background of Roma was taken into discussion and to what extent this affected the census result in the past years. At this point, the potential organizations and institutions which might have had interest in this issue were identified (National Institute for Statistics, Roma local NGOs, European Grassroots against Racism Movement, and others).

Simplicity

The messages CRISS has chosen to communicate within the campaign were simple, in order to reach properly to the Roma audience. Messages which were to be used during the Festival, as well as on campaign materials were brainstormed. The messages were tested on small groups of Roma.

Awareness > Alignment > Engagement > Action

The components of the campaign were designed with the purpose of taking the target group from the state of lack of information, through interest, concern, motivation and finally to a state of reward.

Campaign – strategic plan

Issue:

Low number of Romanian citizens of Roma origin officially declared compared to the unofficial number estimated by national and international organizations, as well as by institutions.

Scope of the campaign:

Identifying possible actions for adequately reflecting the Roma minority within the October 2011 census.

Target group:

Roma communities at local level in the regions: Brasov, Hunedoara, Tulcea, Ilfov, Bucharest.

Proposed activities:

1. Door to door campaign

The door to door campaign was carried out as a mobile caravan, where a team consisting of Roma experts in different backgrounds, with NGO experience, discussed with people, individually, about the census, its importance, ethnicity, questionnaire which was applied by the census, difficult questions. Member of the LAG joined the door-to-door campaign. Also, the advantages of declaring the ethnicity within the census were discussed. Roma communities from

the following localities were included in the campaign: Brasov (Apata and Homorod); Tulcea (Babadag and Valea Teilor); Hunedoara (Petrosani and Orastie); Bucharest – Ilfov (Tunari, Baiculuineighbourhood, Stefanesti).



Door to door campaign in Homorod, Brasov



Campaign in Babadag, Tulcea county

2. Delivering the message of the campaign through Roma public figures

A Roma actress, a Roma actor and a Roma singer, famous in Romania, have been involved in the campaign. They travelled to Roma communities, with the mobile caravan, and discussed about the pride of being Roma and declaring it publicly. Materials used in the campaign were printed with their image and with the messages of the campaign.

Visits of Doinita Oancea, Roma actress, to Roma communities, to discuss about the importance of assuming the ethnic identity



Visit in Babadag, Doinita Oancea and Romani CRISS



Visit to Babadag, Tulcea county, DoinitaOancea and Romani CRISS



Visit to Petrosani, Hunedoara Country, DoinitaOancea and Romani CRISS



Door to door campaign, Romani CRISS and DoinitaOancea – Ilfov county, Stefanesti



Door to door campaign, Romani CRISS and DoinitaOancea – Ilfov county, Stefanesti



Campaign in Petrosani, Hunedoara county – DoinitaOancea and Romani CRISS



Campaign in ValeaTeilor, Tulcea county – DoinitaOancea and Romani CRISS



Door-to-door campaign in Stefanesti, Ilfov county

3. Informative materials

The messages of the campaign were printed on several materials, distributed throughout the campaign. The materials had a practical use, besides the informative purpose (mugs, bags, scarfs).



Bag – message
“Declare your ethnicity openly within the census”

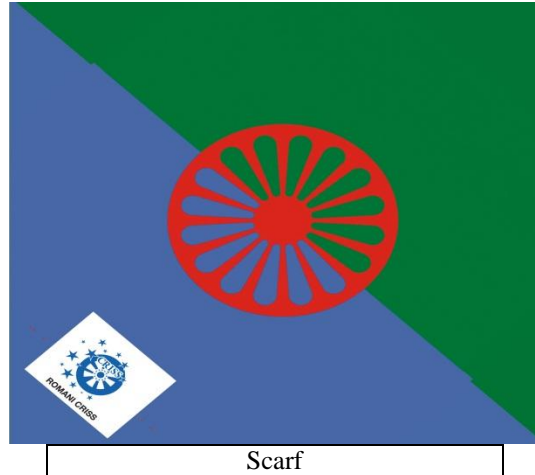


I AM ROMA

Magnets – different messages: Si mistoteaves rom (in Romanian and Romani) – It’s nice to be Roma! Me sem rom/Me semromni (I am Roma); Declara-tideschisetnia la recensamant! (Declare your ethnicity within the census).



Mug “Me sem Rom” (I am Roma)



Project visibility within the campaign

A very important element of the "I am Roma" project was used: the logo, which is the Roma flag, was printed on all project materials, as well as the project title. Since its significance was highly relevant for the purpose of the campaign, this was very valuable: the Roma flag strengthens the sense of identity, as well as the message of the campaign, which was translated in Romani language: "*I am Roma – Me sem Rom*".



I AM ROMA

Content of flyer and posters



Doinița Oancea

DACĂ EȘTI ROM, DECLARĂ-ȚI DESCHIS ETNIA LA RECENSĂMÂNTUL DIN OCTOMBRIE 2011

DATELE SUNT CONFIDENȚIALE !

**Poți beneficia de locuri alocate tinerilor romi
în licee și facultăți**

**Poți avea dreptul de a folosi oficial limba
romani în relația cu autoritățile locale**

**Comunitatea ta poate beneficia de mediator
sanitar**

Campania se desfășoară în cadrul proiectului "I am Roma",
implementat de Romani CRISS cu sprijinul Comisiei Europene



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL JUSTICE



The following materials were produced: Banners – mentioning the Roma dignity march (2 pieces); Bags (1000 pieces); T-Shirts (800 pieces); magnets (1000 pieces); mugs (1000 pieces); scarves (100 pieces). T-shirts, bags and scarves, as well as the banner, were used within the Roma dignity march. Flyers (4000 pieces) and posters (1000 pieces) were produced, with the same topic of the campaign, and were used by the LAG members in their local door-to-door campaign.

Festival – Roma Dignity March “Me sem Rom”

For making the information available at national level and attracting the mass-media in promoting the message, a series of activities were organized within a festival organized in Bucharest. The festival included innovative actions, such as flash mobs. The event was organized in partnership with several Roma local NGOs.

On the 1st of October, a Roma dignity march was organized, in order to emphasize the pride of being Roma and the importance of assuming the Roma identity. Over 500 people attended it.

The following NGOs partnered Romani CRISS in organizing the event: *O Del Amenca, Eltera association, The Association of the Florists in Romania, Gypsy Eye organization, the Roma Journalists Association, Romano Butiq Association, Romano Suno Association, SanseEgale Association, Centre for Counseling and Social Inclusion – Xoraxaj, Roma Youth for Unity, Solidarity and Transparency Association, The Health Mediators Association – ZuraleRomnia.*

Romani CRISS has covered the travel expenses of participants from other localities than Bucharest who attended the march. The opening of the event included speeches from a Roma actress, who encouraged the Roma participants to the march to be proud of their heritage. A Roma child from Babadag (Roma-Turks traditional community) had a speech as well. The representative of a Roma student association has read the speech the US Ambassador has sent to Romani CRISS, on the occasion of the Roma dignity march event. It was important to reach to representatives of all target groups: Roma children, Roma young people, as well as to adults and elder.



Introductory remarks before the march: Iuonas Norbert, representative of Roma Students Association Romano Suno, reading the speech of H.E. Mark Gitenstein, US Ambassador



I AM ROMA

This was the message His Excellency, Mark Gitenstein, Ambassador of the United States to Bucharest gave on the occasion of Romani CRISS event, Roma Dignity March:

Dignity March Letter of Support

The dignity march is a great way to show pride as the Roma community. Roma should be celebrated for their unique cultural history and at the same time embraced as equal and full members of Romanian society. It is important for all Romanians to value Roma traditions, and to realize that this is a multiethnic country. All minorities, including the Roma, are important parts of modern Romanian culture.

The census that begins next year should be a moment to show pride in your Roma heritage. The 2002 census is widely believed to have underrepresented the number of Roma living in Romania. When the census takers come next year, I hope that all Roma proudly claim their heritage and be counted correctly.

I hope that the spirit of pride from today's events will linger and encourage you to speak out when you hear someone make disparaging remarks against Roma. We need to be vigilant and disciplined about such derogatory comments in every day conversations, and strive to say in a friendly way, "excuse me, but that's not right." When discriminatory comments become socially unacceptable, that's a sign that you're making progress in interethnic relations.

For all the participants today, I encourage you to be proud of your heritage and to be proud of your Roma friends. Teach tolerance to your children and when you hear discrimination around you, speak out against it to create a more tolerant country. Slowly but surely, Romania can become a welcoming home for all its minorities.

As Ambassador to the country with Europe's largest Roma population and as your friend, I commend your enthusiasm, hard work, and perseverance in preparing this event and in striving for a more tolerant Romania.

Ambassador Mark H. Gitenstein

George Soros and VadimKolpakov (Roma famous musician in the US, who was part of Madonna's latest world tour) have sent video messages on the same occasion as well.

The video message of Mr. George Soros is available on Romani CRISS official channel on Youtube and can be accessed here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTHwKg7omwE&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=16

The video message of Mr. VadimKolpakov is available on Romani CRISS official channel on Youtube and can be accessed here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCXs1UtYXZc&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=17

The director of Romani CRISS had also delivered a speech.

The participants marched from PiataUnirii to Piata Alba Iulia. On the way, most of the partner organizations had presented short moments: e.g. Gypsy Eye Association, short dance for dignity.

The Roma Dignity March was organized in a European framework. Romani CRISS is member of a European network, founded in 2010 – EGAM (European Grassroots against Racism Movement). The Roma March was an event organized simultaneously in various countries by EGAM members.



EGAM Manifesto in the context of the European event



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Roma, racism, Europe : “Dosta !”, and Roma Pride

One year ago, numerous Romanian and Bulgarian citizens were brutally deported from France because they were Roma.

These acts of violence happened live on TV and yet under the complete indifference, not only of the European politicians, but also of the European civil societies.

For many, they appeared as the latest act of a tragedy that has been going on throughout Europe for several centuries and from which Roma people should inevitably suffer, with the persecutions by the Nazis and their collaborators being the paroxysm, but not the end.

Many have resigned themselves to indifference, because of weariness, because of a lack of political or institutional protection, because they convinced themselves that Roma people accepted or even desired to be dominated.

The evocation of these violent acts is yet unbearable : in Hungary, far right militia have demonstrated in villages, like Gyöngyös, where many Roma people lived and were forced to flee. In Czech Republic and in Hungary, murders and racist crimes are taking place. In many villages, Roma people are separated from the rest of the community because the local authorities have built walls on that purpose like in Tarlungeni or Baia Mare in Romania, Michalovce, Košice, Prešov, or Svinia in Slovakia, Sliven in Bulgaria,... In Serbia, Croatia, Moldova, France and Turkey, violent racial discriminations permeate all sectors of daily life. Forced deportations are taking place to Kosovo and from Germany, Denmark, Sweden, etc.

This disastrous list could endlessly go on to the point that sometimes the feelings of fatality, incapacity and even normality of violence prevail even among us.

These feelings are similar to those that the members of the American gay community felt until the late sixties. They were used to demeaning representations, to marginality, to being denied the same rights as other citizens, to frequently suffer from individual or police violence, only because they were gays.

On June 29th, 1969, like every day, the police raided a small gay bar named Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York City. On that day, a handful of regulars joined by locals decided to say “Enough !”. After four days of confrontation with the police, around 2,000 people organized a march in the streets of New York City : the Gay Pride was born.

One year after the proclamation of an official anti-Roma policy in France, few days, months and years after the unbearable racist violences the Roma people have been victims of all over the continent, October 1st will be the “European Roma Stonewall”. On this day, we, leaders of the Roma and antiracist European civil society, will take our responsibilities and shout with strength and determination : “Dosta !”, “Enough !”. With pride and hope in a Europe cleared off racism, antisemitism and all racial discriminations, we will march for the first Roma Pride.

We have had enough of racist stereotypes, enough of permanent racial discriminations, enough of forced marginalization, enough of daily life violences, enough of the scapegoat status, enough of racist murders which have been affecting Roma people and communities at the heart of our continent for too long now, Enough !

Together with numerous civil society organizations, committed citizens, famous or anonymous, powerful or weak, we will march at the heart of the main European cities to raise awareness about and to denounce the racism and the racial discriminations Roma people are today victim of all over Europe.

Thanks to cultural events, we will go and meet these who want to know better the diversity of Roma



I AM ROMA

cultures, identities, stories and memories, far from old-fashioned stereotypes and clichés.

Through our joint action, we will give life to the European dream and his founding value of equality. Our claim will be simple and clear : the equality of rights and the equal enjoyment of rights for all individuals living in Europe. In one word : dignity.

Thus, we will lead a European coalition of solidarity and ideal, from Norway to Turkey, from France to Latvia and through Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and many other European countries in order to proudly and loudly proclaim : Roma Pride !

Benjamin Abtan, Secretary General of the European Grassroots Antiracist Movement – EGAM and, per country :

Albania : **Aldo Merkoci**, President de MJAFT ! Movement and **AdriatikHasantari**, President of Roma Active

Austria : **Barbara Liegl**, CEO of ZARA, **Alexander Pollak**, Executive Director of SOS Mitmensch and **Andrea Härle**, Executive Director of of **Romano Centro**

Belgium : **Patrick N’SialaKiese**, Member of the Board of KifKif

Bulgaria : **KrassimirKanev**, Chairman of the Helsinki Committee and **DeyanKoley**, President of the AmalipeCenter for interethnic dialogue and tolerance

Croatia : **Mario Mazic**, Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Croatia

Denmark : **Thomas V. Lytken Larsen**, President of the Center for Positive Integration – CePI, **Anne Nielsen**, Chairwoman of SOS mod racism and **Sofie Amalie Andersen**, Chairwoman of Nyt Dansk Romanetværk

Finland : **Janette Grönfors**, Coordinator of Rasmus, Network Against Racism and Xenophobia and Founding Member of Nevo Roma

France : **Dominique Sopo**, President of SOS Racisme et **EugèneDaumas**, President of the French Union of Gypsy Associations - UFAT

Great-Britain : **Samuel Tarry**, ‘Hope not hate’ Campaign Director

Germany: **SerdarYazar**, Board Member of the Turkish Union in Berlin-Brandenburg (TBB)

Hungary : **Janos Farkas**, President of the Minority Roma Government in Gyöngyöspata and **Erika Muhi**, Director of NEKI

Italy : **Angela Scalzo**, President de SOS Razzismo and **Olga Bala**, Presidente of Partita Romilor

Kosovo : **Raba Gjoshi**, Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Kosovo and **OsmanOsmani**, Director of Initiative 6

Latvia : **AnhelitaKamenska**, Acting Director of the Latvian Centre for Human Rights

Moldova : **NicolaeRadita**, Chairman of the Roma National Center

Montenegro : **Boris Raonic**, Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Montenegro

Norway : **Kari Helene Partapuoli**, Director of the Norwegian Center Against Racism

Romania : **Margareta Matache**, Executive Director of Romani Criss

Serbia : **JovanaVukovic**, Coordinator of the Regional Centre for Minorities and **Maja Micic**, Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Serbia

Slovakia : **Irena Bihariova**, Chairwoman of Ludiaprotirasizmu (People against racism)

Turkey : **SeldaBilcer**, President of Roma Youth Association and **CengizAlgan**, spokesperson of Durde !

Impact

Concretely, in the localities where campaigning actions were conducted by Romani CRISS, more Roma declared their ethnicity compared to the results of the 2002 Census:

Babadag – 1248 Roma declared compared to 168 in 2002

Valea Teilor 69 Roma declared compared to cu 2 in 2002

Apata 536 Roma declared compared to 146 in 2002

Petrosani 627 Roma declared compared to 528 in 2002

Haghig 690 Roma declared compared to 656 in 2002

The number of Roma declaring their ethnicity in the Roma communities where CRISS has carried out campaigns has increased with 111 %, compared to the results at national level, 15%.

Romani CRISS has implemented the campaign in 10 localities in Romania, reaching to approximately 200 Roma in each community.

The Roma Dignity March reached in Romania to more than 500 participants.

The meetings with the local authorities in Brasov, Sf. Gheorghe, Tulcea, Deva and Craiova reached to approximately 20 representatives of local authorities in each county.

In the communities where the campaign was carried out, the target group got a deep sense of what ethnic identity means, stigmatization and discrimination. Having Roma public figures approaching them to speak out and declare their ethnicity empowered them and encouraged them to publicly assume their ethnic identity.

Media coverage



Magda Matache, Executive Director of Romani CRISS, interviewed during the Roma Dignity March

A press release was launched with regard to the Roma Dignity March.



Romani CRISS, together with O Del Amenca Roma Cultural Center Association, Eltera Association, Florist Association in Romania, Gypsy Eye Association, Roma Journalists Association, Romano Butiq Association, Romano Suno Association, Equal Opportunities Association, Counseling and Social Inclusion Center for Xoraxaj Roma, Young Roma Association for Unity, Solidarity and Transparency and ZuraleRomnia- Health Mediators' Association

Bucharest, 1st October 2011

Press release

„Me sem Rom, me semRomni!” Dignity march

Over 500 people from all over the country (from the counties of Brasov, Braila, Cluj, Constanta, Dolj, Galati, Giurgiu, Iasi, Ialomita, Salaj, Tulcea, Vrancea) celebrated today the pride of being Roma at the „Me sem rom, me semromni” Dignity March organized in Bucharest.

Throughout today's action, the organizer requested equal rights for all the people living in Europe, in one word, dignity. It was also sending a message of solidarity with the Roma people from Bulgaria who are facing racist actions against them these days. The message of his Excellency, Mr. Mark H. Gitenstein, US Ambassador in Bucharest, was the following: *„The dignity march is an extraordinary way of proving the pride of belonging to the Roma community. The Roma should be celebrated for their unique history and in the same time, they should be accepted as members of the Romanian community with full rights.”*

Those taking part at the event were Roma from various nations, both traditional and non-traditional, adults and children, Roma and non-Roma. After an emotional debut of the action, when Rodica Tudor sang *a capella* the Roma anthem, the participants chose different ways (older or more modern ones) to express their identity: the flash-mob of the Gypsy Eye Association, short speeches and an artistic moment held by children. The international artist, VadimKolpakov, from Via Romen band in USA, supports the involvement of children in identity assertion: *„the children must have enough information about the history and contribution of Roma in order to be proud and for them to grow as representatives of the Roma community.”*

Also present at the march, the actress DoinitaOancea declared to be proud of her ethnicity. *“I was never ashamed to declare my ethnicity, even if sometimes this caused me troubles. During the census that will take place this month, I hope you and your families will declare yourselves as Roma”*. The message was reinforced by George Soros, who declared to be very pleased to show his support in this day *“of celebration of the cultural heritage of the Roma”* and encouraged us to *“Si mishtoteaven Roma! (Be proud to be Roma!)”*

The event was European and it was organized all over the continent by Roma leaders and antiracist European civil society leaders.

19 publications (daily newspapers, press agencies or blogs) have promoted or reported on the Roma Dignity March.



Adevarul, a Romanian daily newspaper reports³:

“It is the first Roma march in Romania, and the idea belongs to non-governmental organizations which militate for the rights of this ethnic group. The main purpose of the march is to prepare Roma for the Census in October. The leaders of the organizations are trying to persuade Roma to declare their ethnic origin to the enumerators. The march sends a solidarity message for the Roma in Bulgaria and raises awareness on the ethnic tension which is occurring to Southern Danube.”

Hotnews, a news agency, mentions about the march⁴:

“A woman who joined the protest mentioned that this type of manifestation is not enough for combating discrimination, but affirmative public policies are necessary. She added that there are negative characters in every group, but in crisis periods, the whole blame is taken by the minorities, in each corner of this world”.

Romania libera, another daily newspaper in Romania, cites the speeches of Romani CRISS' executive director and of Doinita Oancea, the Roma actress⁵.

“We are asking you proudly declare your ethnicity within the census which will be conducted starting with October 20 until October 31”, said Magda Matache to the March participants.

“Doinita Oancea said to the march participants that in her 28 years old he was never ashamed that she has a Roma origin, even if sometimes she had problems as a result of recognizing her ethnic origin.

„What the majority population should know is that delinquency has no color. Nobody should associate Roma to delinquents. Here we have good, beautiful, talented people, people who studied”, said Doinita Oancea”.

Other actions within the campaign were also covered by media: door-to-door campaign in Bucharest, Baicului neighbourhood⁶, meeting with authorities in Tulcea⁷

Recommendations and conclusions

³http://adevarul.ro/news/eveniment/foto-marsul-romilor-bucuresti-ajunge-1_50ad6d1e7c42d5a66394ecd8/index.html

⁴<http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-10289219-fotogalerie-300-persoane-participat-bucuresti-marsul-demnitatii-sem-rom-sem-romni.htm>

⁵ <http://www.romania-libera.ro/actualitate/bucuresti/foto-aproximativ-300-de-romi-au-marsaluit-impotriva-discriminarii-239582.html>

⁶<http://jurnalul.ro/special-jurnalul/reportaje/e-misto-sa-fii-tigan-mesajul-catre-etnie-inaintea-recensamantului-un-rom-din-baicului-daca-scrie-ro-pe-buletin-pai-nu-sunt-roman-594071.html>

http://www.romania-actualitati.ro/romii_incurajati_sa_isi_declare_apartenenta_etnica-34306

⁷http://adevarul.ro/locale/tulcea/tulcea-romii-pregatesc-recensamant-1_50ad56307c42d5a66393387d/index.html



I AM ROMA

The results of the campaign indicated this type of campaign should be continued, not only for the purpose of having Roma declaring their ethnicity within census, but to contribute to the strengthening of the Roma identity and to fight stigma and the effects of stereotypes and discrimination.

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ROMA IN ROMANIA

National context

Despite efforts by EU member-states, international bodies and civil society, discrimination against Roma remains at alarming quotas. Indeed, Roma are at the forefront of discriminatory and racist behavior, not only Romania, but throughout the EU. As the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) indicated repeatedly, Roma is the ethnic minority most vulnerable to discrimination and human rights violations in the EU. One in four Roma respondents to a recent FRA survey reported an average of 4 incidents of assault, threat, or serious harassment over one year.

Current actions/policies

Romani CRISS is involved in combating discrimination, abuse and human rights violations of Roma through strategic litigation. Advocacy action is also one of the methods used by CRISS to protect and promote human rights for the Roma communities.

In order to actively engage in the prevention component as well, Romani CRISS approaches the non-Roma as well, by designing and implementing campaigns for combating discrimination.

Campaign strategic plan

Together with the expert involved in designing the campaign, the approach was to involve public figures in speaking about the Roma issue. People are more willing to listen to the opinions of public figures so having a message delivered through Roma and non-Roma opinion makers was the key of the anti-discrimination campaign.

One flashmob was organized, with the participation of public figure. The flashmob main message was anti-discrimination and promoting equal rights for Roma.

Further, the participants involved in the organization of the flashmob, have recorded video messages, to promote anti-discrimination principles.

A café-style event was organized in August 2012, to commemorate the Roma victims of Holocaust and to discuss with young Roma and non-Roma the serious implications of today discrimination and intolerance.

Flashmob

A flash mob against discrimination was organized – famous actors and public figures were involved in preparing choreography, on a song played by a Roma band. The rehearsals, with a professional choreographer, lasted one week.



Rehearsals for the flashmob





I AM ROMA

Actors such as DoinitaOancea, Ionut Ghenu, Carmen Tanase, MajdaAboulumosha, CatalinCiurdar, MadalinMandin attended the rehearsals and the event itself, which took place on the 22nd of October 2011, in downtown Bucharest. The event was repeated two times, during one hour. A banner with an anti-discrimination statement was posted near the open area where the event took place.



Banner used during the Flashmob action – “Say no to discrimination! I am Roma = I am human”



Anti-Discrimination Flashmob



The event was video recorded and uploaded on the Official Channel of Romani CRISS on Youtube and it can be accessed here:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-m3uFpTjLps&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=5

Anti-discrimination messages from public figures

The Roma actor, MadalinMandin, the Roma actress, DoinitaOancea, the actress MajdaAboulumosha, and actor CatalinCiurdar have recorded video messages, addressing the Roma issue. All videos were uploaded on the Official Channel of Romani CRISS on Youtube and can be seen by accessing the links below

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| MadalinMandin video | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-V-s3m8StPw&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=4 |
| DoinitaOancea video | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKSHNh3AZH4&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=6 |
| MajdaAboulumosha video | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Slrc88GlzlQ&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=3 |
| CatalinCiurdar video | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wzsm-Df2ehg&list=UU79dS-YvaaXrd6oiO-RZt_g&index=7 |

Commemoration of Roma victims of Holocaust

In the context of the Commemoration of the massacre on the 2/3 August 1944, when in “Zigeunerlager” Nazi concentration camp in Auschwitz-Birkenau (Poland) thousands of Roma and Sinti people were killed (elder, women and children), Romani CRISS has organized a commemoration event. The event gathered 50 people (mainly Roma young people, enrolled in high schools, beneficiaries of Romani CRISS programs). It was organized at the Memorial of the Holocaust Victims in Romania. One organization and two institutions have supported the event: National Centre for Roma Culture – Romano Kher, the National Institute for Holocaust Studies “Elie Wiesel” and the Centre for Monitoring and Combating Anti-Semitism.

His Excellency, the Ambassador of Poland, Mr. MarekSzczygiel, as well as representatives of Germany, Sweden, UK, Royal Embassy of Netherlands, Hungary joined the commemoration.

The participants, including Roma from the communities near Bucharest, have joined speeches of 2 Roma Holocaust survivors. Roma young people of high school age have read, both in Romanian and Romani, memories of Roma Holocaust survivors.

The Romanian Prime Minister has sent a message through his councilor, Damian Draghici: *“The Genocide to which the Roma population has faced during the fascist regime is a historic fact which will remain in the public memory and conscience. Our duty, of the civil society, of politicians, and of all who love democracy, is to make sure such thing won’t happen again. What is also really important is to understand the past mistakes in order to promptly react, during*

present times, each time values such as tolerance, inclusion, diversity or liberty are put under question”

After the commemoration, a cafe-style event was organized. The participants have watched a film on the Holocaust thematic, which was followed by discussions on similarities to current issues, impact of the history on the Roma communities, stigma and discrimination.



Commemoration of Roma victims of Holocaust – Holocaust memorial in Bucharest



Testimonial of Roma survivor



Participants paying their respects at the Holocaust memorial in Bucharest

Media coverage

The press has covered the flash mob, mostly, due to the public figures involvement. 20 Romanian online publications mentioned about the flash mob and its purpose. EvenimentulZilei, a Romanian daily newspaper mentions Carmen Tanase and DoinitaOancea, famous actresses, have involved in a flash mob action against discrimination.

The blog Roma Transitions describes the whole event, making the flash mob video accessible as well:

<http://www.romatransitions.org/in-bucharest-a-flash-mob-against-discrimination/>

Roma React blog describes the commemoration event organized by Romani CRISS:

<http://www.romareact.org/reports/view/81>



A press release was launched by CRISS with regard to the commemoration event:

August 2nd, 2012, Bucharest

PRESS RELEASE

Today, 2 of August 2012, Roma Center for Social Intervention and Studies – Romani CRISS, National Centre for Roma Culture – Romano Kher, The „Elie Wiesel” National Institute for The Study of Holocaust in Romania and Center for Monitoring and Combating Antisemitism in Romania, organized a remembrance action of the massacre of 2/3 august 1944 when, in „Zigeunerlager” from Auschwitz – Birkenau (Poland), thousands of Roma and Sinti (elderly, women and children) were killed.

The Roma were victims of mass extermination policies of the Nazi Germany, but also occupied and allied states, and the number of the Roma victims reaching up to 1.5 million, according to the historian Ian Hancock. In Romania, the official number of Roma deported in Transnistria by the Antonescu government is about 36 000.

Mr. Manolache, a Holocaust survivor, shared his story to those present at the event, regarding the deportation of the Roma in Romania: *„We were deported in 1942. Put in cars like cattle. There, where we arrived, at Bug, we had no food or water. My grandparents died there and children died. It was a life of slavery.”*

„They embarked us in freight cars and took us to Transnistria”, says Mr Constantin, also a survivor of the Holocaust, attending the event. „There they put us in stables. There was no food, water, medical assistance. After some time, we all had to perform forced labor. Not long after, an epidemic of typhus broke and more than half of us died. Every morning, the gendarmerie came and took us to work, and the dead were put in carts and thrown into the trenches and then covered with earth. Four members of my family died on the same day: my mother, 30 years old, my uncle 21 years old, my grandparents 57 years old. At least 50 people died every single day. I stayed there 2 years....., 700 days. Had we been treated like animals, we would have lived a life of luxury. We did not have any human condition to live. Death was the only solution to escape that horror, that misery”.

Fifty people attended the ceremony, including His Excellency, Mr. Marek SZCZYGIEL, Ambassador of Poland, representatives of German Embassy, Swedish Embassy, United Kingdom, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Hungary, as well as representatives of the Government and civil society, Roma and non-Roma youth.

„The genocide faced by the Roma population during the fascist regime is a historic fact which will remain in the public consciousness. And our duty, of civil society, of politicians and of everyone that embraces democracy is to assure that. But what it is really important is to understand and realize the mistakes of the past, so that to act promptly in present anytime values like tolerance, inclusion, diversity or freedom is questioned”, said the message of the Romanian Prime Minister, delivered by Mr. Damian Draghici, state counsellor, attending the event.

The participants held a moment of silence in the memory of the victims of the Holocaust and then watched a thematic movie, followed by a short debate.



Recommendations and conclusions

Changing perceptions is a heavy process, which involves engagement in efforts on a long process. This type of campaigns should be carried out continuously. The idea of involving public figures to promote anti-discrimination messages gives results. Promoting the Roma identity through public figures is also an action with great impact. It impacts positively Roma, who identify themselves with role models.

Capacity building program

National context

Roma in Romania lack cultural and social elite groups, which can cooperate for the interest of the Roma communities and to advance the specific interests of this ethnicity, with a tough historical background. Therefore, it was necessary to try to build a youth network professionally trained, talented, and motivated to civically engage for the Roma communities in Romania. The communication opportunity built by bringing the people together, along with attending a human rights oriented training course have been aiming to contribute to form such network.

Issues and challenges faced

The main challenge was the high number of applicants, interested in the class. The challenge was properly managed by CRISS by using an adequate selection procedure.

The announcement was circulated at the beginning of November 2011. The announcement got to grassroots, but also to the Roma business sector

The participant's profile

→ Letter of intent and Curriculum Vitae

The letter of intent was supposed to have maximum 500 words. The candidate was asked to propose ways to get involve in supporting the Roma communities, within the volunteer activity he/she would undertake, after participating the training course

The CV of the candidate had to be submitted in Europass format and to have maximum 3 pages.

→ 2 recommendations

The recommendations had to be issued by persons who knew the academic or professional activity of the candidate (employer, teacher, training from training courses, etc). The recommendations had to have maximum 300 words and to include information on the activity which made possible for the reference person to know the candidate, abilities which recommended the candidate to attend the



I AM ROMA

course, as well as the contribution the candidate could bring to the volunteer activity he/she would carry out after attending the course.

The following aspects were considered when selecting the 30 participants:

- Autonomous achievements?
- Proved involvement in civic activities
- Potential of involvement in community projects

51 applications were received. The selection committee has used a selection grid to select 30 participants, according to the criteria established.

Description of the capacity building program

The program was announced on Roma networks, student networks, as well as in universities. *(Please see Annex 7 Announcement of the Human Rights Academy program).*

The course, entitled Human Rights Academy, was organized in partnership with Amnesty International and FXB Center for Health and Human Rights – Harvard University.

Partner information

Amnesty International is a global movement, with more than 3 million supporters, members and activists from more than 150 countries, who militate for stopping human rights abuses. The Amnesty International vision is that every person benefits from the rights ruled in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, as well as in other international human rights standards. Amnesty International is independent from any government, political ideology, economical interest or religion and is financially supported mainly by members through public donations.

Romani CRISS is the strategic partner in Romania of Amnesty International, since 2009.

FXB Center for Health and Human Rights within Harvard University is the first academic center which is exclusively focused on the dynamics between health and human rights. Founded in 1993, through the support of Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Association, the center is a world leader on applying advocacy initiatives for including human rights norms in the international health policies.

The program benefited from the participation of the following trainers: Helle Jacobsen, from Amnesty International, Arlan Fuller and Sarah Dougherty, from FXB Center for Health and Human Rights – Harvard University, PhD Mariana Sandu – Roma historian, Prof. PhD Daniel Barbu, Prof. Mihaela Miroiu, gender expert, Prof. Liliana Popescu, both from the University of Political Science, Cristi Mihalache, Roma Education Fund and Isvan Haller, from the National Council for Combating Discrimination.



I AM ROMA

Mariana Sandu is a Sociology PhD, graduate of the Interdisciplinary Master Degree courses at “Ecole Doctorale Francophone” – AUF (Agence Universitaire Francophone) and of the History-Geography University. Starting with 2001 she activated as a teacher, counsellor for public information and mainly as a program assistant or coordinator in the field of improving the access to education of Roma children and youth.

Helle Jacobsen holds a Master degree in Culture and Communications. She has been working for Amnesty for almost 6 years, with Activism, strategic campaigning and lobby. Her expertise includes mainly the anti-discrimination area: LGBT Rights, minority rights - Roma and muslims, as well as on the War against terror.

Arlan Fuller is the Director of Policy and Programs at the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights and has a Research Associate appointment at the Harvard School of Public Health. He has expertise in international policy, human rights, US government affairs, and legislative strategy. Prior to his current appointment, Mr. Fuller served as a public affairs consultant to the Citizens Trade Campaign, where he advised grassroots labor and trade organizations on strategy for legislative campaigns on trade policy, including the Chile and Singapore Free Trade Agreements. He has also been a consultant to the Formosan Association for Public Relations, a Taiwanese-American organization, where he worked with the Taiwanese government in coordinating their legislative efforts in the US Congress. Mr. Fuller was the Legislative Assistant for international relations and trade policy to Congressman Sherrod Brown, a senior member of the House International Relations Committee. In this role, he was responsible for the Congressman’s policy campaign to increase USAID and State Department funding for global health efforts, as well as organizing a legislative strategy with the House Democratic Caucus on trade policy issues. Mr. Fuller also worked for Senator Edward Kennedy, serving on the Senator’s Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee staff, and focused on National Institutes of Health grants. Mr. Fuller received his BA in economics from the College of the Holy Cross. He holds a master’s degree in peace and conflict studies from the University of Ulster, Northern Ireland, and a JD from Boston College Law School.

Sarah Dougherty is a research associate supporting the FXB Center. She is on the legal staff at the Institute of Justice and Democracy in Haiti, and is a legal analyst for Partners In Health/Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti’s prison health advocacy initiative. Dougherty holds a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law and a Master’s in Public Health from Tufts University School of Medicine.

Laura Grunbergis a Sociology PhD, writer, professor and active in the feminist movement in Romania, being for several years the president of AnA – Society for Feminist Analysis. She published in the area of gender sociology, organizational sociology, the research interested being connected to topics such as: gender and education, gender and mass media, gender and culture, multiple discrimination and others. Currently, she is an associate professor in Bucharest University, Sociology and Social Assistance and Political Science – within the National School for Public and Administrative Science, as well as program coordinator within UNESCO-CEPES.

Daniel Barbu (born May 21, 1957) is a Romanian political scientist, publisher, essayist, journalist, and professor at the University of Bucharest's Faculty of Political Science. The head of the Research Institute at the University of Bucharest, and former dean of the Faculty, he was



I AM ROMA

also director of Realitatea Românească, a daily newspaper, in 1991-1992. He is the author as of June 2007 of eight books and many more articles on political science, and a contributor to the magazine Sfera Politicii.

Liliana Popescu is a university lecturer within the National School for Public and Administrative Science. He holds a PhD degree in the field of political theory (Manchester University, Governing Department, 1996).

Istvan Haller graduated Geology in Cluj University in 1987 as well as Law in 2010. He worked as a geologist (1987-1990), journalist (1990-1993) and human rights activist (1993-2007). Since 2007 he is a member in the Steering Board of the National Council for Combating Discrimination. As a journalist, he researched the collective violence against Roma communities, continuing the investigation activity for Pro Europe League, sending the first cause from Romania to the European Court for Human Rights, for which the court has emphasized the racial discrimination (Moldovan and others against Romania). Mr. Haller is the author of numerous studies in the field of discrimination.

Delia Niță is the Anti-discrimination program manager in the Centre for Juridical Resources in Bucharest. She is conducting initiatives, advocacy and training projects, elaborates reports for EU bodies and represents the position of the Centre for Juridical Resources on issues regarding discrimination in Romania. Mrs. Niță holds a Master Degree in human rights from the Manchester University, UK.

Cristi Mihalache is Project Manager of the Roma Education Fund Romania Foundation. He graduated the National School of Political and Administrative Studies in Bucharest, Romania with a BA in Public Administration, and holds an MA degree in Human Rights from the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. Currently he is a PhD candidate with Faculty of Political Science of the University of Bucharest. Mr. Mihalache has been involved in activities related to public relations, international advocacy, grant administration, capacity-building and training with organisations such as Romani CRISS, European Roma Rights Centre, and Open Society Institute. Also, Mr. Mihalache has been involved in the programming process related to social inclusion actively contributing to the elaboration of the Joint Inclusion Memorandum and the National Development Plan 2007-2013 in Romania. He acted as a consultant for the Management Authority for the Sectorial Operational Programme Human Resource Development (MA SOPHRD), the institution managing the European Social Fund in Romania, as well as for other Technical Assistance projects on issues related to social inclusion of Roma and other vulnerable groups. Beginning 2007, Mr. Mihalache has acted as a consultant on EU structural funding for the Roma Education Fund.

The trainers have prepared in advance of the course:

- readers for the participants
- short texts to be debated within his/her session
- 3 multiple choice questions out of the content of his/her session to address the participants in the final test

The participants were from the following **regions**: Bucharest, Reghin (Mures County), Vaslui, Marginenii de Jos (Prahova County), Gurusada (Hunedoara County), Brasov, Iasi, Craiova (Dolj County), Lazareni (Bihor County), Constanta, Timisoara (Timis County), Campina (Prahova County), Barcanesti (Ialomita County), Ormenis (Brasov County), Lechinta (Bistrita-Nasaud County), Arad, Filipestii de Targ (Prahova County), Braila and Medgidia.

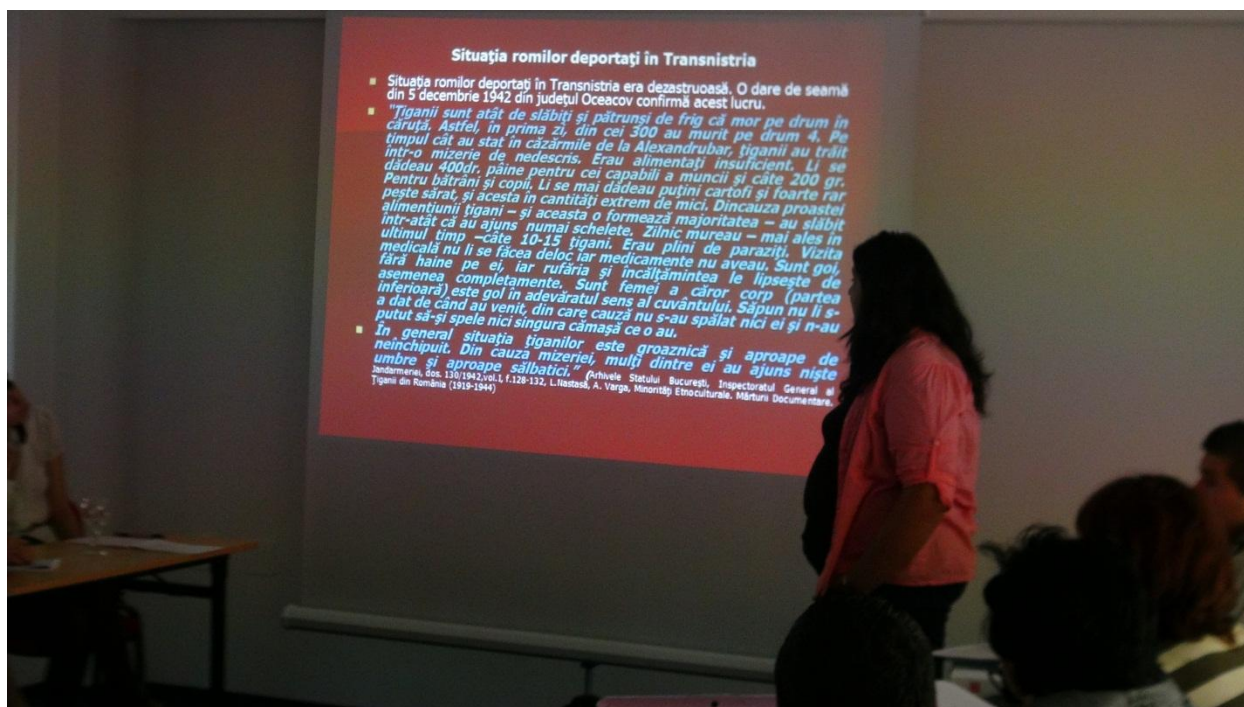
A brochure was developed for the participants (*Please see Annex 8 – Human Rights Academy brochure*), which included:

- Agenda of the event
- Logistical information (map with the hotel and conference room addresses, transport information, etc.)
- Events description

The topics of the course were the following: human rights campaigning, human rights and access to health care services, international and national legislation protecting human rights, school segregation, Roma history, gender equality in the Roma communities, Roma and the public discourse in the Romanian society.

Multiple Choice questions for each session addressed to participants by trainers– final test

Roma history



| Q | A |
|--|--|
| First document which indicates the presence of Roma on Romanian territory is from: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1385 – signed by Dan I - 1388 – signed by Mircea cel Batran |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no such document - 1414 – signed by Alexandru cel Bun |
| Which was the statute of the Roma on the Romanian territory in medieval times? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “iobagi: - Neighbours - Slaves - Thieves |
| How is the Moldavian ruler known to be of Roma origin? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PetreȘchiopul - Mircea Ciobanul - Ștefan Răzvan - Aron I Țiganul |
| What were the occupations of the following Roma categories? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rudarii - zlatarii - lovarii - spoitorii |
| How were Roma called in Transilvania during Maria Tereza time (1740 - 1780) ? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - neubanater - ujmaghiar - ciganes |

Stereotypes and prejudices against Roma



| Q | A |
|--------------------|--|
| “Tigan” is a word: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - of Indian origin - of Greek origin - which means “thief” |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - which means “impure” - which means heresy, out of the societal hierarchy |
| <p>Which of the following statements are true?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stereotypes belong to the cognitive sphere and prejudices belong the attitude sphere - Prejudices belong to the cognitive sphere and stereotypes belong the attitude sphere - The stereotypes are created through a natural process, through which people get to know reality and build categories - Romanian have their self-promoted stereotype as being tolerant and open - Prejudices involve negative evaluations targeting a group, grounded on the stereotype image of the group |
| <p>Which of the following statements are false?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of Romanian perceive Roma as a homogenous group - Only 10% of Roma in Europe are nomadic - Roma women have a particular gift for making spells - One of the main reasons for which Roma were made slaves in the Romanian countries was that they were good craftsmen |

School segregation



| Q | A |
|---|---|
| Which is the type of legislative instrument, currently applicable in Romania, which forbids school segregation? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Circular - Order - Law |
| Which is the juridic precedent in the American system which statuated the „separated but equal” doctrine? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roe vs. Wade - Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District - Plessy vs. Ferguson |
| What was the desegregation technique used in Bulgaria? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Magnet school - Founding new schools - Mixing and bussing |

National legislation protecting human rights



| Q | A |
|-------------------|---|
| Discrimination is | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A different treatment which is sanctioned as a contravention - A different treatment based on a criteria which affect a right without an objective justification - Different treatment prohibited by criminal legislation |

| | |
|---|--|
| Discriminated persons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can file a complaint in front of the National Council for Combating Discrimination and, if the NCCD retains discriminatory act in the cause, he/she can file a complaint in front of the civil court - Can file a complaint only in front of the NCCD - Can file complaints simultaneously to the NCCD and civil court |
| Moral damages after discrimination was retained | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be obtained through civil courts - Can be obtained through the action lodged in front of the NCCD - Cannot be obtained, because discrimination doesn't cause moral damages |

Gender equality in the Roma communities



| Q | A |
|---|--|
| The following statements are linked to Biological aspects – B Cultural aspects – C Biological and cultural B/C | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women give birth, men don't - Women live, averagely, more than men - Most of the medical nurses are women and most of the state presidents are men |
| Multiple discrimination represents joining 2 or more sources of discrimination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes - No |



I AM ROMA

The Human Rights Academy participants have joined several events during the program:

Press conference

The Human Rights Academy had an official opening, during a press conference. Two publications of Romani CRISS have been launched during the press conference: **“Roma and the Public Discourse in Romania. Best Practice Guidelines”** publication and the **“Stereotypes, prejudices and ethnic discrimination: Roma’s perspective”**. The press conference was announced as being part of the Human Rights Week actions, on the occasion of the International Human Rights Day.

The following press release was issued by CRISS:

December 12th 2011

Press release

Politicians’ public discourse and ethnic discrimination: Roma’s perspective

Today, Romani CRISS launched the **“Roma and the Public Discourse in Romania. Best Practice Guidelines”** publication and the **“Stereotypes, prejudices and ethnic discrimination: Roma’s perspective”** research in the context of the International Human Rights Days. The press conference continued with the official opening of the **Human Rights Academy**, a training course implemented by Romani CRISS in partnership with Amnesty International and Harvard University FXB Center for Health and Human Rights.

“Roma and the Public Discourse in Romania. Best Practice Guidelines publication was conceived due a need of Romani CRISS foundation, as well as probably of many Roma ethnics, felt strongly in the last years to stop the denigrating bias against the Roma in the Romanian public space. We came to realise that we have to communicate to political leaders the legal and historical arguments on the negative consequences of the use of racist and xenophobic elements in the political and public discourse, at level of Romanian society, in general, but to offer concrete solutions to assure the human dignity of minority groups’ members is respected” declared Magda Matache, executive director of Romani CRISS, about the publication.

“The words are important. This is a certainty which, unfortunately, doesn’t appear in the Romanian public space and discriminatory statements remain unsanctioned. One should be aware that the words are the working tool of politicians, journalists and opinion leaders. Human rights have become the laic religion of our society and this is completely true” said the author of the guidelines, Prof. Phd Daniel Barbu.

http://www.romanicriss.org/PDF/Indrumar_de_adresare%20politicieni.pdf

The need for these guidelines is also visible in the **“Stereotypes, prejudices and ethnic discrimination: Roma’s perspective”** research which shows that Roma believe that public persons’ discriminatory behaviours and attitudes influence negatively the non-Roma’s general attitude towards the Roma people.



I AM ROMA

The quantitative research, conducted at a national level, for a representative sample made up of 607 Roma adults, also reveals that the Roma participants in the study recognise in great measure that discriminatory situations that affect the Roma, HIV/AIDS infected people, LGBT, the elderly and pregnant women. The Roma feel most discriminated against when they apply for a job, or when they compare the remuneration they receive for their work to the remuneration that Romanians receive for theirs. Over a quarter of the interviewed Roma felt discriminated against when requesting medical assistance, emergency medical assistance, medical examination, medical treatment, or surgery. One out of ten respondents stated that their family doctor refused to offer them home medical assistance; and one out of twenty Roma declared that they were refused at home medical examination by the family doctor.

The two publications were released within the International Human Rights Day that Romani CRISS chose to celebrate with its partners and the 30 participants, during a week, at a Human Rights Academy, with Amnesty International and Harvard University FXB Center for Health and Human Rights. Other events scheduled this week as a debate at the Romanian Parliament with political parties on implementation of the Political Parties Charta for a non-Racist Society and a Video – conference at the USA Embassy in Bucharest with reverend Elbert Ransom, former assistant of Martin Luther King, attended by the participants of the Human Rights Academy.

For further information, please contact us.

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Public discourse on Roma in Romania

=Implementation of the Charter on European Political Parties for a non-racist society

The Human Rights Academy participants have joined a debate in the Romanian Parliament on the publication of CRISS Roma and the Public Discourse in Romania. Best Practice Guidelines.

Video-conference USA Embassy in Bucharest

A video-conference was organized, with the support of the USA Embassy in Bucharest, with reverend Elbert Ransom, former assistant of Martin Luther King. The Human Rights Academy participants was able to engage in a debate with reverend Ransom on the Afro-American civic movement in US and the similarities with the Roma situation in Europe.

Other activities

During the intercultural evening, the participants got to know each other better through presentations of customs, dances and traditions.

The films „*Bullied: a student, a school and a case that made history*”, „*Eyes on the prize*” and „*Our School*” were screened and the participants debated after watching them.

The participants received diplomas for the participation and for their activity during the program, signed by all partners (Romani CRISS, Amnesty International and FXB Center).



Award ceremony of Human Rights Academy



Quiz and evaluation session



Award session



Right to health session, FXB Center for Health and Human Rights representative

Debate in the Romanian Parliament



Debate following the evening session of film screening



Impact

On the 10th of December 2011, Romani CRISS has sent a press invitation, for the official opening of the Human Rights Academy, in the context of the International Human Rights Day. The subject was picked up in 10 online newspapers.

The participants' evaluation was based on the trainers' observations and on the multiple choice questionnaire. The training's evaluation was based on evaluation forms filled in by participants.

Results of the evaluations:

The evaluation of the trainers was based on the following system:

- 1 – Unsatisfactory
- 2- Satisfactory
- 3- Good
- 4- Very good
- 5- Excellent

| Trainer | Points (Average) | Observations from participants |
|-----------------|------------------|---|
| Mariana Sandu | 4.5 | “The information she presented was full of emotion” “Very clear chronological way of presenting the information” |
| Helle Jacobsen | 4.39 | “Innovative campaigning methods” |
| Arlan Fuller | 4.30 | “Thorough knowledge in the health area” |
| Laura Grunberg | 4.52 | “Very well structured presentation, accessible and well exemplified” |
| Daniel Barbu | 4.47 | “Good documentation and precise arguments” |
| LilianaPopescu | 4.60 | “Concrete and clear data, with explanation for applicability” |
| Istvan Haller | 4.78 | “Very passionate, motivational and dedicated” |
| Delia Nita | 4.08 | “Very interactive” |
| CristiMihalache | 4.69 | “Very good professional” |



Other observations of the participants, with regard to the overall program:

- The video-conference with Reverend Ransom was highly appreciated, considered to be the best component, by some of the participants. Many of them found similarities to the experiences of the Afro-American and of the Roma communities.
- The debate within the Romanian Parliament was a unique opportunity, as some participants mention in the evaluation forms.
- The topics chosen for the program were considered appropriate and necessary for preparing human rights activists, who work in the Roma communities
- The session of Roma History was considered to be very resourceful, and many participants believed a longer training specifically on this this topic would be extremely useful
- The participants were satisfied with the preparation of the training course, with the quality of the materials and with the entire logistical component assured by the organizers
- A few participants suggested that such a significant amount of information should have been presented and debated on a longer period of time

Recommendations and conclusions – Human Rights Academy

The program was successful and its main advantage was that in was built as an annual event. Unfortunately, although fund-raising efforts have been carried out by Romani CRISS to organize the event in December 2012 as well, no resources are available at the moment for this purpose.

The recommendation for the main I am Roma project applicant is to evaluate the available resources in the project, and if possible request a budget reallocation in order to support the Human Rights Academy in Romania in 2013 as well.

Both partners, Amnesty International and FXB Center for Human Rights – Harvard University have agreed to a potential partnership for the future event.

Recommendations and conclusions – I am Roma project

The initiative was very successful in Romania. The activities impacted directly the Roma beneficiaries: in the Roma communities where the campaigns on declaring the ethnic identity within the census the number of Roma assuming their ethnicity in front of the enumerators was 111% higher compared to the results from the most recent census. Further, the beneficiaries of the capacity building program, according to the evaluation of the program, found the information and the methods used very resourceful and useful for their activities and work in the Roma communities. The campaign for changing the perception of the majority population with regard to the Roma is part of a larger perspective and actions CRISS needs to conduct continuously, but represented a very creative start for this type of campaigns.