

# **MAKING THE MOST OF EU FUNDS**

**A compendium of good practice of EU funded projects for Roma**

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**Study commissioned by the Open Society Institute**

## *Executive summary*

The purpose of this report was to provide a good practice compendium of EU-funded Roma projects and others working with minority ethnic groups; and to address the programmatic issues arising. 47 good practice examples were identified and described, drawing on twelve programmes or funding instruments: EQUAL, CARDS, culture, social exclusion, anti-discrimination, health, *Leonardo*, both structural funds, PHARE and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. Most examples come from the new member states (principally Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary) and the neighbouring states (western Balkans), with very few from the 'old' 15 member states (mainly Spain). Some good practice examples were compromised by poor evaluation and dissemination.

A number of evaluations have been done of EU-funding instruments for Roma people, principally in the new member states. These were consistent in identifying a number of common problems: many projects were top-down, isolated interventions lacking the proper participation of Roma communities. Complex applications procedures and subsequent operational controls constituted high entry and continuation barriers to community development organizations. Funding was frequently on an insufficient scale to be impactful, while projects were too widely spread, of too short duration, lacking in sustainability, mono-dimensional, lacking connexions to government policies and institutional structures. Rushed and inadequate planning were followed by poor execution. Evaluations were critical of the lack of strategic focus of projects, the failure to tackle 'hard' issues like discrimination and insufficient evaluation and dissemination.

From this, it was possible to develop a model of good practice: projects characterized by adequate preparation, Roma community stakeholders, a bottom-up approach, empowerment, partnership, multidimensionality, a thematic policy focus, institutional linkages, evaluation, dissemination strategies, addressing root causes, a rights-based approach and dealing with 'hard' political issues. The EQUAL programme is probably the best exemplar of some of these principles, especially in scale (typically around €1m). Unhappily, this programme was subsequently discontinued.

The over-riding lesson arising from this is the need to improve programme design so as to promote good practice projects. Regrettably, no mechanisms appear to be in place to absorb the critical comments raised by evaluations nor to act upon them across the series of EU programmes which assist the Roma community. There are a number of ways in which independent funders can compensate for the specific short-comings of EU programmes, or more positively, support the efforts of Roma organizations to influence programme design.

Finally, a guide to accessing EU funds is provided. This looks at funding opportunities over the 2007-2013 financial perspective, focussing on the structural funds, internal operations (PROGRESS, culture, health, education, justice freedom and security) and external operations (Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance) and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights.

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## **Terms of reference**

This proposal responds to terms of reference issued by Open Society Institute Europe which expressed the need for a study that will map best practices, programmes and projects aimed at improving the situation of ethnic minorities, in particular but not exclusively Roma in Europe which fit into the requirements of the various EU funding instruments. The terms required the identification of pitfalls in the programming, implementation and evaluation phases and, if possible, bad practice. There should also be a guide to the relevant EU funding programmes. The overall intention is to provide a compendium of good practice examples which can be replicated, scaled up and used as an inspiration or template for project development by local government, civil society and the European Commission so as to improve the use of funding instruments to better the situation of Roma people.

## **Method**

This research was carried out by the following methods in the course of April to June 2007:

- Search of existing European Union programme databases and publications for Roma and ethnic minority projects funded by the EU, notably within the EQUAL, anti-discrimination, Social Exclusion Programme (SEP), structural funds (e.g. ESF, ERDF), neighbourhood and pre-accession programmes but also related areas (e.g. education);
- Request and recommendations for good practice examples from Roma organizations, networks and experts;
- Request for information and recommendations from Commission officials responsible for relevant programmes and policy areas;
- Search for evaluative material and commentaries available from the Commission, other European institutions, Roma organizations and networks, so as to analyze programming problems and issues relevant to good practice, bad practice, programme design and implementation.

Many persons assisted in this research and they are thanked in the acknowledgments.

## Preface

In the past number of years, the European Union has come to appreciate the extreme problems faced by the Roma people in the Union, including especially those living in new member states and neighbouring states. Concern about the situation of Roma people dates to the 1980s, but a sense of the gravity and scale of the situation was not spelled out till the publication of the landmark report *Situation of Roma people in an enlarged Union* (European Commission, 2004).

The use of funding instruments by the European Communities to tackle poverty, discrimination and social hardship may be traced to the first programme of pilot schemes to combat poverty (1975-80) (European Commission, 1981). Indeed, the first programme included studies of Roma people in Belgium, Germany, France and the Netherlands, in order to improve policy-makers' understanding of the issues they faced. Roma people and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with them were included in the subsequent *Poverty 2* and *Poverty 3* programmes (1984-9, 1989-94). Fresh possibilities opened with the reform of the structural funds in 1989, both through the European Social Fund and through Community Initiative Programmes, the latter being part-designed for and extensively used by NGOs. In addition, some Roma groups may have benefitted from the proliferation of small funding programmes in the 1990s, most such programmes being subsequently condensed into a small number of larger programmes.

Following the revolutions of 1989, the European Communities opened a lengthy period of negotiation for the accession of countries in eastern and central Europe. Under the Copenhagen criteria (1993), new member states were required to conform to certain standards of human and civil rights, which included respect for minorities. This contributed to a broadening of the paradigm in which Roma people were perceived: not just as a problem of poverty and hardship, as in 1981, but as a human rights issue. Moreover, the European Union chose to channel funds to NGOs as part of the accession process under new, accession programmes, such as PHARE and smaller, dedicated civil society and human rights programmes. At the same time, the policy competence of the European Union grew, for the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) provided the Union with fresh legal authority to act to prevent discrimination and to combat exclusion.

Granted the growing recognition by the Union of the situation of Roma people, its own growing competence in the field and its many years experience of the use of funding instruments to assist Roma people, this is an appropriate moment to examine those funding instruments which have proved effective, with successful project outcomes. Although many programmes evaluations have been taken - an evaluation procedure is normally built into all programming process from the start - remarkably little information is available concerning the collective outcomes for Roma people. The European Union has a long tradition (within its non structural fund programmes) of exchange of information, the building of good practice and the transfer of models from one member state to another so as to achieve an overall improvement in policy, public administration and delivery of the public good. However, little work has been done to test such effectiveness in practice.

For the European institutions, the non-governmental community and Roma people, it is important to be able to identify 'good practice'; to know *What works?*; and to replicate, scale up and extend such models to other member states. Conversely, it is important to avoid duplicating models which are unsuccessful, counter-productive, inefficient or which do not work. For the funding community, be that the European Commission and its agencies, or trusts, foundations or government, it is also important to ensure that funding operates in such a way as to promote good practice and drive out bad. Already, it is known that many social NGOs experience considerable difficulty in accessing the European funds and in running EU-funded projects (FM Partners, 2005). The European Anti-Poverty Network has already documented many of the problems that arise when social inclusion NGOs participate in the structural funds, or attempt to do so (EAPN, 2005).

This compendium is an attempt to identify the good practice (chapter 1), make an analysis (chapter 2) and point the way toward more positive futures (chapter 3).



## Part I

### Chapter 1: Good practice

The identification of good practice examples proved to be a problematic undertaking. In summary, the most striking problems were (1) the lack of a 'good practice' standard (2) limited information on projects, especially toward their concluding stages and (3) a geographic imbalance. The methodological issues arising are discussed in some detail in the methodological note at the end of this report. Readers must take these limits and considerations into account. Most of the projects included here are in the ten new eastern and central European member states and neighbouring states: this reflects both a better information flow and, one suspects, a concentration of funding in the region following the report *The situation of Roma people in the enlarged Union* (European Commission, 2004). Within programmes, the level of good practice example was also uneven, a matter which will be analyzed later.

#### 1.1 Examples

Projects are grouped, for convenience, under the headings of different EU funding instruments: EQUAL, European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund, Social Exclusion Programme, Community Programme against Discrimination, Culture, Programme, health programme, *Leonardo*, PHARE, CARDS and European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, in that order. More background and detail on the programmes concerned is given in part II.

## *EQUAL programme*

### **Roma vision**

#### **Budapest, Hungary, EQUAL programme (with PHARE)**

Project: This was an ambitious project, building on cultural and civil society projects originally supported by the PHARE programme. Its initial objective was to find media jobs for Roma and other disadvantaged people, a target being set of 40 jobs. Second, it aimed to establish a Roma television station. Third, it hoped to establish a Europe-wide television network. The project was set up as a direct challenge to the low representation of minorities in the media and to the misrepresentation of Roma and other minorities by many media outlets. The project was led by the Minority and Human Rights Foundation, supported by three other groups in the area of media, disability and democratization and located in the heart of a Roma district of Budapest (district VIII) , giving itself the title of TV8.

In the first phase, 40 people were selected from 150 applicants for intensive media training in theory and practice, being given recognized certification at the end. Students received an allowance and worked in a smart office with state-of-the-art equipment, so they knew they were being treated seriously. They went to media events abroad and got advice from the best media specialists.

While most course participants went on to try to get jobs in the mainstream media, fifteen course participants were subsequently recruited for TV8, which is due to open summer 2007. Studios were built in a converted store, the work being done by the Roma community.

As for the third phase, an international TV station, the Minority and Human Rights Foundation teamed up with international partners in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia, formally establishing a foundation registered in Auschwitz, Poland (where the Polish association has a museum). The members are now carrying out a feasibility study of a satellite-based television service, using studios in the partner countries, to broadcast in the Roma language, protect Roma history and present another perspective.

Value: This is much the most ambitious project examined in the compendium, but one which tackles, head-on, many of the interlinked problems of respect, tolerance, discrimination and diversity, along with practical training in skills. A particularly important feature of the project is that the training programme went for the highest possible level of skills development, thereby

stretching the participants as much as possible and raising their ambition. The training programme, a significant enough element in itself, was only part of a much more ambitious and long-term ideal.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Roma entrepreneurs Bridge project**

### **Encs, Hungary, Autonomia, EQUAL programme**

Project: This is a project of Autonomia, the leading Hungarian NGO with three Roma organizations and the regional technical college. The project started with the idea of training Roma people for self-employment but early research into the local labour market found a very low level of consumer demand for goods and services. The Bridge project first trained a number of employment mediators, whose role was to liaise between local employment, the labour office and the Roma communities. Next, the Bridge project moved on to train Roma people in four activities: metal work, the manufacture of energy-efficient wood stoves, carpentry and stonemasonry. 50 people were recruited and 47 completed the first round of training and received certification as craftsmen from the regional technical college. The carpenters workshop has now been handed over to the Roma community itself and the other facilities will be handed over into a non-profit company.

Following completion of the course, many of the participants began improvements to their own homes, which were often in poor condition, renovating doors and windows and installing energy-efficient stoves. Metal work products are already sold at local fairs and further afield. Because of the rise in fuel prices, demand for energy-efficient stoves has increased substantially. The project is hoping that local government will contract the craftsman for tasks for local government and is also planning the development of a micro-credit facility. The project plans to promote metalwork products by advertising and also hopes that its craftsmen will find a role if, as hoped second homes develop in the area.

Value: This project has already identified three important lessons arising. These are first, the value of a partnership comprising an NGO, the local educational authority and, most important, Roma organizations themselves. The second is that entrepreneurial spirit alone will not create jobs in depressed regions: instead, a broad but not necessarily costly infrastructure must be

provided of facilities, training, marketing and credit. Third, there must be on-going sympathetic support from the local authorities, who have hitherto been much distrusted. This project combined a strong mixture of training and economic development, with, just as important, the handing over of responsibilities and plant to the Roma community itself, a step where other projects often fall short. It also demonstrated an ability to adapt its programme following the initial research.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Employment training for Roma people**

### **'The long road', Italy, EQUAL programme**

Project: The long road of the Sinti and Roma (*Il lungo cammino dei Sinti e dei Romi: percorsi verso i lavoro*) is the title of a project led by the vocational training arm of a large Italian trade union, CISL, in cooperation with local authorities, social services and Roma organizations. The project is located to help Roma and Sinti people in temporary camps in Bologna, Parma, Piacenza and Reggio Emilia. The first step in the project was to provide public information offices in each of the locations, so that Roma people were better able to access public services, especially in the areas of health, housing, education and children's welfare. The second step was to provide personalized training for people living in the four areas, starting with a personal assessment of each participant's needs, skills and aptitudes, followed by training ranging from literacy and numeracy to knitwear, office cleaning, services, crafts, waste disposal and computers. Participants were expected to register at the local employment service. They were provided with counseling and advice throughout their participation in the project. The third phase was a work placement for a period of six months to a year. Such placements were negotiated by the project with local companies sympathetic to the idea. So far, the EQUAL project has organized 25 courses for 161 people, along with 27 work placements. Cultural mediators were appointed to work directly with Roma people to encourage their involvement in the project. An evaluation has been organized with the Faculty of Economics at the University of Bologna.

Value: This is a very typical type of EQUAL employment project, demonstrating the key phases of contact, assessment, training and placement. Its ultimate success in finding long-term work opportunities has not yet been tested. It is also an illustration of partnership between trade un-

ions, local authorities and Roma organizations, in this case the partnership requiring a considerable level of investment to make it work effectively.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **The long road in Spain**

### **Spain, EQUAL programme**

**Project:** This is another EQUAL project with a similar title, 'Long road' or 'Lungo Drom'. Based in Murcia, Spain, the project also operated in Catalonia, Valencia and Andalusia. Its objective was to provide practical assistance to Roma immigrants arriving in the region from eastern and central Europe, especially from Romania and Bulgaria. The project was called 'the long road' because immigrants must be resident in Spain for three years before they can receive a work permit. The project was organized by four NGOs with, as their partners, the regional governments of the four regions concerned. The first action of the project was to establish an observatory to follow the stream of migration into Spain from eastern and central Europe, so that its activities could be well based on factual information and quality analysis. Second, the project provided a range of activities for immigrant workers, starting with pre-vocational training (literacy, numeracy, communications, social skills), the Spanish language and then counseling. A creche was provided so as enable the immigrants to go to work and in Murcia, a shelter with a maximum stay period of two weeks. An education pack was distributed to teachers so that they could work more effectively with Roma immigrant children. The project also developed a wider public awareness programme to improve the negative image of Roma immigrants. Outreach workers, who were Roma themselves, were appointed to work with immigrant Roma people and inform them of rights, services and opportunities. The project has raised, with the authorities, the need to change legislation for work permits for adults and for children and the law on child protection.

**Value:** The principal value of this project are its programme of outreach activities - going to the immigrant community, rather than expecting it to come to the project; the use of an observatory to provide a sound information base for its activities throughout; and its preparedness to raise the policy issues arising.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Diversidade - diversity management**

### **Diversity management, Lisbon, Portugal, EQUAL programme**

Project: This is a project working with Roma and immigrant communities in five districts of Lisbon and nearby Amadoras. The partners comprise Roma NGOs, a youth organization, municipal authority, theatre group and women entrepreneurs association. Over the past number of years, these areas have received different flows of people from the former Portuguese colonies, Brazil, eastern and central Europe and Africa as well as many people from the Roma community. Its principal working method is diversity management. This is a double approach, for it involves the empowering of the immigrant community on one hand and new approaches by the authorities and employers on the other. Diversity management sets down a new standard of employment by employers, which involve observation of the law, active practices for equality and non-discrimination, a better understanding of the culture of minority employees, improved human resource management and the matching of individuals to the tasks in hand. Here, Diversidade provides certified training programmes for managers in a range of companies, including the large multinationals. In the area of community empowerment, the project provides, for immigrants, role playing so that they may more effectively resolve situations of conflict or discrimination; and the placement of minority life experience experts in policy-making bodies so as to provide a 'reality check' for them as to whether their policies might or might not work.

Value: There are several features of particular value of this project. It has a twin approach of working with Roma and immigrant communities on the one hand, in an empowering way, while simultaneously attempting to address attitudinal problems on the part of employers on the others. It is also committed to the highest possible training standards in running the diversity management courses for employers and public services. The project is clearly innovative, using techniques of management, theatre and life experience expert to further its objectives.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Living and working together on the border**

### **Linz, Austria, EQUAL programme**

Project: *Living and working together* is the title of an EQUAL project on the Austrian/Czech border which aims to combat racism and discrimination against minority ethnic groups, in practice those arriving in the area from the western Balkans, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Africa. The project was managed by a 9-partner consortium including trade unions, NGOs, employers, the Austrian government and the Euroregio office at Mühlviertel on the border. The project defined for fields of action: research into the labour market for new immigrants; strategies to combat racism; preparation for the labour market; and improved representation of immigrant minorities. Strategies against racism included the opening of an anti-racism contact point, where incidents could be reported (with a report following) and workshops to raise the profile of the issue with the broader public, especially to assuage fears arising from the opening of the labour market to the new member states. Training, especially in information technologies, was provided for new immigrant groups. In the area of equal representation, the project worked to overturn Austrian law which prohibits non-EU citizens from participation on workers councils (which the project believes is illegal) but in the interim to find a model whereby non-citizens could participate in workplace decisions in companies in the region. This issue is obviously of particular importance in workplaces where there is a high number of immigrant workers. Immigrant workers also received training in being a shop steward and in worker representation.

Value: This project combines a powerful mixture of awareness-raising, monitoring, assistance to immigrants themselves, training, an addressing of the practical and political issues arising from discrimination and bringing policy issues to the highest level (e.g. the works council prohibition). It combines a hand-on approach with research and policy work, as well as involved a broad range of partners, from business to NGOs to government. While working for the overturning of the works council law, it has sought practical solutions in the meantime.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Romanian Roma in Ireland**

### **Dublin, EQUAL programme**

Project: During the early 2000s, about 3,000 Roma people came to Ireland from Romania to seek work. Few spoke English or work skills and they had a negative image arising from their begging money for an income. Access Ireland established what was called the Roma Cultural Mediation Project, in cooperation with the education and health authorities, Dublin City University and several other NGOs. The principal intervention was the employment of cultural mediators, drawn from the Roma community, who would work directly with them, assisting their access to health, social and education services, while at the same time relaying back the experience of the Roma community itself. Initially, two mediators were trained, but with a view to their training others. This training-the-trainer course followed a learning-by-doing approach, with site visits to hospitals, clinics and schools.

Value: The value of this project is in its direct work with the particular Roma community concerned, its employment of Roma staff to undertake the work, the manner in which it attempted to overcome what were probably serious language barriers and the rapid response of the project to an issue which developed quite quickly. The partnership was a broad one, covering a range of statutory and voluntary arrangements, with one of the city's universities.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Following our dream**

### **Lisbon, Portugal, EQUAL programme**

Project: This is a project for Roma women in Portugal led by an NGO (Association for the Development of Portuguese Roma Women), with, as partners, the Centre for Studies on Social Intervention, the local authority (which provided a house as a project centre) and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and working in two localities: Seixal and Baixo Alentejo. The purpose of the project was two-fold: to increase the independence of Roma women; and to promote reconciliation between the Roma community and the settled community. The project provided training for Roma women in inter-cultural skills and also trained people to be mediators between the Roma community and the health services. Training in intercultural issues was provided for

staff of public agencies: local authorities, schools, social security offices, primary health care services and NGOs. Within the Roma community itself, the project provides space for a discussion by Roma women of how to reconcile work and family life and such issues as the role of marriage and rearing children in the Roma community.

Value: This project is similar to the Dublin one, in that it works directly to empower the Roma community through training and the use of mediators, focussing in this case on Roma women. It also brings the problem of discrimination and attitudinal change back to the settled community through the programme of training for people in public authorities.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Roma information and employment centres**

### **Pomurska, Skocjan, Slovenia, EQUAL programme**

Project: There are two EQUAL projects for the Roma community in the Slovenian EQUAL programme. Each involves a centre designed to assist Roma people. The information centre is a project with a budget of €355,000 located in a rural area, Pomurska, in Slovenia, led by the Mura regional development agency. The aim of the project is to establish a base, the information centre, which will take a comprehensive approach to the situation of Roma people, addressing the problems of the labour market, discrimination and poor educational achievements. The centre employs mentors who work with Roma people in the locality in school and employment and also in addressing social issues arising. The project also aims to establish a forum of Roma councillors drawn from throughout the country. The employment centre, which has a budget of €438,000, is led by Obsina Skocjan in conjunction with two Roma NGOs and aims to establish a Roma employment service covering a substantial part of the country. The project plans to start with a survey of Roma skills and work preferences and then work with Roma communities to establish a purpose-built training programme geared to those preferences and skills and the needs of the labour market. The project set down plans for the building of a database to match job seekers and employers, to work with both employers and the Roma communities on opportunities for employment, as well as to undertake wider work in combatting discrimination.

Value: Both projects are new, but follow earlier PHARE precursor projects which had positive outcomes in training, job creation and self employment. Both are centre-based, whence they

aim to provide a range of information and employment services. Although both have an immediate focus (information, employment), they also deal with much wider issues of discrimination and image affecting the Roma community. The employment project is ambitious in planning to establish a national employment service for Roma people, while the information service also plans to leave a legacy, in its case a network of Roma councillors.

Source: EQUAL programme

## **Pavee Feens Hawken**

### **Dublin, Ireland, EQUAL programme**

Project: This is an EQUAL funded programme directed to Traveller men. Traveller projects have the impression that the take-up of activities is much higher among women than men and that it can be difficult to engage men in project activities. This was a project geared to help Traveller men in a demonstration project. 31 men were engaged in certified training for self-employment: building work, driving licences, horticultural skills, teleportering, do-it-yourself skills and computers. Pre-vocational skills were also provided to improve reading and writing. A video was commissioned of the training work to illustrate the capacity of the participants to learn new skills. The project was part of an international exchange with Roma groups in France and from this emerged the idea of a quality trade mark or logo which could be used by groups working in the Traveller economy.

Value: This was a small-scale project in improving practical skills to assist Travellers toward self-employment in distinct areas. It was aimed at men, where take-up of projects has traditionally been low. Pre-vocational training was also provided. The documentary and promotional video ensured a dissemination programme, while international links were established to develop further the ideas arising from the project.

Source: Pavee Point

## **Preserving traditional skills in social economy cooperatives**

### **EQUAL, Poland**

Project: Poland has one Roma EQUAL project. Instead of attempting the upgrading of the vocational skills of Roma people, like ACCEDER, this project took a different approach, one of trying to maintain the traditional skills of Roma people through the development of social economy cooperatives. Here the project developed by the International Organization of Migration (IOM) undertook a skill audit of Roma people, defined business opportunities based on those skills, devised business plans, provided training for Roma people in how to run cooperatives, established four social economy cooperatives and gave on-going support and training to assist in the development of the cooperatives. Complementary actions were carried out to raise the awareness of local communities about the work of Roma people in social cooperatives, a general model of cooperative and vocational development was devised, the mainstreaming of the model was encouraged and a documentary film on the project was released. Project partners include the Polish Red Cross and an international social economy network.

Value: The value of this project is that it attempts to respond to the existing skills and traditions of the Roma community, but tries to use them in a new economic setting. The project is based on analysis and audit, the establishment of organizations, the building of the capacity of those organizations, and complementary actions, assisted by international experts. Information is not yet available on outcomes.

Source: UNDP Poland

### **Roma as school assistants**

#### **Southern Finland, EQUAL programme**

Project: This is a €750,000 three- year project developed by the State Provincial Office of Southern Finland to assist Roma students in schools by the provision of Roma teaching assistants. 30 unemployed Roma adults were recruited for the programme and placed in schools where they would not only work with individual students but also work in the schools to improve the knowledge and understanding of the situation and culture of the Roma students. They would

help the students with certification and career options. A particular product intended from the project was the development of a guidelines manual on training for adult educators.

Value: This project, while initially simple in concept, has the merit of working toward a number of different objectives simultaneously. The project combines improved education for Roma students with the employment of previously unemployed Roma adults, the assistant's career development, attitudinal change, concrete products and, it is intended, improved certification, career and educational outcomes.

Source: EQUAL programme

## ***European Social Fund (ESF)***

### **Improving access to employment**

#### **Barcs, Hungary, ESF**

Project: This is a €800,000 European Social Fund project to improve access to the labour market for long-term unemployed Roma and non-Roma people in Barcs, Hungary, which involved research into the target group, 18 months employment for 50 long-term unemployed people, training (principally masonry and carpentry) and continuous mentoring by trained Roma mentors. The project was led by DCKSZ, the Organization of Roma Representatives of South Somogy (an umbrella NGO with 43 partner members), with the University of Pecs, the Sociological Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, the local labour bureau and the Barcs technical vocational school.

This project achieved a number of gains in placing some participants in employment. There were a number of problems and learning points. The project should have invested more time in identifying future prospective employers. The trainees allowance was so low as to provide insufficient motivation (indeed, some sought work elsewhere during the programme) and should have been set well above the minimum wage. The project experienced considerable problems with cash flow, delays in payment and excessive reporting requirements. These caused many tensions between project partners and with the beneficiaries. Were it not for DCKSZ's ability to choose partners who could ease the cash flow problem, then the situation could have been critical.

Value: This project illustrated many of the on-going administration problems surrounding the ESF. It demonstrated the wisdom of project leaders selecting partners who have cash flow capacities to sustain projects when ESF funding is delayed. There were also practical lessons in preparing the ground and in setting training allowances.

Source: Tanaka (2007)

## **Pro-active approach to improving schooling**

### **Szirak, Hungary, ESF**

Project: This is an ESF project in Szirak, Hungary, which has a substantial Roma population and was identified for European Social Fund support by the Roma Programme Assistance Network (RPAN) in the Ministry for Education. The project was formulated by the Roma Council in the town with its primary school, where 90% of students are Roma. Because of the generally poor quality of Roma projects proposed for educational support due to the low level of social capital in the Roma community and complex applications procedures, the RPAN has a policy of working pro-actively with Roma schools and NGOs to identify projects and work with them in filing quality applications. The RPAN alerts schools and NGOs to relevant tender opportunities, organizes information days, makes community visits and assists with the preparation of applications. The RPAN has a preference for applications for schools with an NGO or Roma civic organization. This project has not yet started, due to funding delays. One of the lessons arising from the pro-active process operated by RPAN is that constructing local educational partnerships is extremely time-consuming, but nevertheless worthwhile.

Value: This project illustrated the importance of government taking a pro-active approach to generating Roma educational projects. Allowance must be made for the low level of applications capability within the Roma community. Creating partnerships for such educational projects is essential, even if they take time to construct. The project also drew attention to the irony of a state body having to develop procedures to overcome the complexity of the applications process: maybe the applications process could be simplified in the first place?

Source: Tanaka (2007)

## **Exceeding expectations: ACCEDER**

### **Spain, European Social Fund**

Project: This is probably the best known good practice Roma project in Europe and is certainly the largest. It is a €45m six-year programme, developed by the Fundacion Secretariado General Gitano (FSGG) to provide vocational training for Roma people and other disadvantaged groups. A core problem facing Roma people in Spain was the decline in demands for their tra-

ditional skills, combined with their lack of new and more relevant labour market skills (e.g. education, healthcare, culture). The original aim of the programme was to provide vocational training for 15,000 people. To carry out the programme, FSGG set up 47 employment centres in 13 regions, each with a staff of five (mainly mediators) and accessible to the Roma community. The training programmes emphasized personalized training and services, direct links between Roma people and service providers, broader image building of the capacity of Roma people and tackling wider policy issues. The results of the programme greatly exceeded expectations, with the total number trained passing the 17,000 mark at the half-way point in the programme and 28,000 by the end. Following training, 9,000 participants found work (almost 6,000 Roma) , with an even balance between men and women. The programme has a monitoring committee, an active dissemination process and an ethic of transparency.

Value: This ambitious programme has been well-advertised throughout Europe and had brought impressive results, as the figures illustrate. The features which evaluation suggests have contributed to its success are a careful analysis of labour market and training needs, but set in the context of the wider issues affecting Roma people; partnership between NGO and state actors; individualization of the training process; the combination of Roma participation with other disadvantaged groups; and its visibility. ACCEDER was not an isolated local project, but a programme which operated on a national scale and is a classic example of the benefit of scaling up the local.

Source: European Commission

## **Mainstreaming, Finland**

### **Jyvaskla and Eurojoki, Finland, European Social Fund**

Project: The Finnish government took the approach of mainstreaming earlier Roma projects into the European Social Fund. A trio of projects was set up. The first, run by the City of Jyvaskla and costing €842,100 aimed to assist unemployed and disadvantaged Roma people with Kosovan Roma who had recently arrived in the region. The second, run by the adult training centre in Jyvaskla at a cost of €174,000, provided facilities for unemployed Roma people and their families for training and education. The third, developed by the Christian Institute in Eurojoki at a cost of €370,000, provided education, training and citizenship instruction for Roma people, immigrants, people with disabilities and substance abusers.

Value: These projects attempted to mainstream provision for Roma people into the European Social Fund and were characterized by a broad approach of education, training and the provision of facilities. Services were provided not just for Roma, but Roma together with other groups who shared a similar problem of access to the labour market.

Source: European Commission

## **Technical assistance**

### **Rome Programme Assistance Network, Hungary, European Social Fund**

Project: In order to ensure a much improved take-up by Roma organizations of the structural funds, the Ministry of Education set up what was called the Roma Programme Assistance Network (RPAN), subsequently supported by the European Social Fund. A number of staff were recruited for this work, both in Budapest and in a number of regional offices. RPAN staff made more than 120 field visits to inform Roma groups, organizations and local authorities of the opportunities coming in the 2007-2013 structural funds programming period in order to encourage calls for proposals. They met with 470 groups in all.

Value: This is an example of government being pro-active in seeking applications from Roma organizations. In the event, 139 funding proposals were made, of which 111 were approved, valued at €3.4m. The value of the project was that government brought information to the organizations, not only nationally but regionally and will have the additional advantage that the government will have got to know the Roma NGO and other community groups much better in the process.

Source: Roma Education Fund

## **Roma employment and waste management**

### **Raslavice, Slovakia, European Social Fund**

Project: This is a €11,500 European Social Fund project combining economic, social and environmental objectives. Here, in Raslavice, Roma people are employed on a waste management project which involves the reduction of waste, separation of its streams and the composting of organic waste materials. The project has the multiple benefits of providing employment for Roma people, reducing packaging and waste in the district, environmental education and the provision of organic waste for parks and green spaces. The involvement of Roma people in the project has led to an improved perception of Roma people by the majority community and bringing the two into more regular contact. Illegally dumped waste has also been removed, as well as hazardous waste that adversely affected the health of Roma people.

Value: The value of this project has been to combine employment, education, image, health and environmental issues in a practical project that has benefits across a wide range of fields. It shows how a small project and a simple project can deliver multiple benefits across a range of fronts.

Source: Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Bratislava

## **Completing primary qualifications**

### **Markusovce, Slovakia, European Social Fund**

Project: This is a €52,941 second chance education project with a very specific focus: ensuring that Roma and other disadvantaged people complete the primary education curriculum. This project is aimed at sixty 15 to 18 year olds in three municipalities (Markusovce, Rudnany and Porac) who left school early. The project worked directly with Roma and other families to identify the young people concerned, encouraging participation in the project which provided not only a completion of the primary curriculum but also a basic skills course and requalification in a number of labouring activities. Participants were then encouraged to go on to more advanced vocational education with a view to their better re-equipment for the labour market.

Value: The value of this project is that, whilst focussed on a small and identifiable group, it not only attacked the serious problem of early school leaving, but aimed to equip the participants

with a series of onward skills designed to make them more suitable for a wider range of future employment and encouraged their further participation in education.

Source: Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Bratislava

## **Equipping teachers better**

### **Dignified life association, Slovakia, European Social Fund**

Project: This is a €50,000 project to improve the quality of educational instruction by teachers and teachers assistants who work with Roma and other marginalized groups. The project was run by the *Dostojny Zivot* (Dignified Life) association and was directed toward teachers working in primary schools, special schools and kindergartens. 98 teachers participated in a programme of the development of educational skills, multicultural education and human rights awareness. The teachers were encouraged to pursue this training for qualification for secondary education or to undertake university courses and 23 did so. An important part of the project was the dissemination of the pedagogical gains from the project.

Value: The value of this project is to raise the visibility of the importance of teachers being better equipped to work in a multicultural environment. It upgrades the importance of work with Roma children and raises the standard of teaching of Roma, moreover doing so in a human rights context. Teachers are encouraged to see this as an avenue of their career development.

Source: Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Bratislava

## **Career guidance for Roma children**

### **Tusicka Nova Ves, Slovakia, European Social Fund**

Project: Much of the emphasis on the education of Roma children is to prolong the period of schooling as long as possible, but few think of career guidance for Roma children. Here is a €5.2m European Social Fund project to try to get schools thinking of career guidance for Roma and other disadvantaged children, especially at the crucial period at the end of primary school when they consider their future educational and career choices. At present, little such guidance is provided. The purpose of this project is to work with teachers so as to help them to provide

career guidance, set up an information and advisory office, provide career advice information and devise school activities to help students think of their future educational and career choices, but also to challenge students to think of non-traditional careers.

Value: The value of the project is that it introduced a new element into the school system in a systematic way, one that would have the double effect of not only providing practical personal assistance to Roma and other disadvantaged students, but of raising their expectations for their future education and career paths. Examples of similar activities in this field of work elsewhere are not readily apparent.

Source: Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Bratislava

## *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)*

### **Building social, cultural, educational infrastructure**

#### **Slovakia, European Regional Development Fund**

Project: The Slovakian operational programme for basic infrastructure has a measure 3.1 *Building and development of civil infrastructure*, subdivided into sub-measures in the education, social and cultural fields. Here, €222,941 was invested in a series of projects for school buildings (where there was a significant rate of Roma attendance), the development of a primary school for cultural and social events for minority ethnic groups, primary school refurbishment to support extracurricular activities for Roma children, the reconstruction of a psychiatric hospital largely used by Roma and unemployed people so as to provide more humane, therapeutic and modern EU-standard services, modernization of a social services centre, refurbishment of a cultural centre for its better use by marginalized groups, reconstruction of a cultural centre used by Roma people (including the *Romafest* festival) and rebuilding a cultural and information centre used by unemployed and marginalized people.

Value: These ERDF-funded projects are concentrated on facilities used, to a significant degree, by Roma people and other marginalized groups. The refurbishment programmes will significantly raise the standards of the building, demonstrate to the Roma and other users that they are valued, bring facilities up to international standard and enable an expansion of the activities undertaken. By way of complementarity with other EU policies, the refurbishment process is constructed around high levels of energy efficiency in the buildings concerned.

Source: Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Bratislava

## ***Social Exclusion Programme (SEP)***

### **Transnational learning from Hungary**

#### **Autonomia, Hungary, Social Exclusion Programme (SEP)**

Project: *Strengthening local partnerships and action plan to combat poverty and Roma exclusion* is the lengthy title of one of 65 projects funded by the Social Exclusion Programme (SEP) (2000-6). The programme core is transnational policy-focussed partnerships exchanging information, analysis and learning on the effectiveness of local partnerships and local action plans for Roma people combatting poverty. Leader of the project is Autonomia, Hungary and its partners are Pakiv, CEGA (Sofia), Roma Lom (Bulgaria), RAA Berlin and Freudenberg Stichtung in Germany. Some SEP-funded projects have produced remarkably little information or documentation. This is not the case here, for this project has participated in field study learning (Berlin, Stuttgart, Britain), presented a good practice guide of both EU and nationally funded projects (Tanaka, 2006), a *Handbook* and held international seminars. This is one of the few SEP projects to present the international learning arising, this being available in *Policy perspectives* (Tanaka, 2007).

Value: This international project is an attempt to reach an overview of the effectiveness of local action against poverty in general and the use of action plans in particular. Its comprehensive documentation (guide, handbook, study trip reports) indicates that it has come to close quarters with this objective. Assembling an international understanding of the issues involved and making an appropriate analysis is not easy, but this project appears to have achieved such a challenging objective. *Policy perspectives* is a critical account, outlining what has been achieved, as well as looking at how much is still to be done.

Source: Tanaka (2007)

## *Community Programme to Combat Discrimination*

### **Developing quality education with the teachers**

#### **European Trade Union Confederation, Brussels, Programme against discrimination**

Project: This is a project led by the European Trade Union Confederation in Brussels, Belgium, which brings together projects in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Hungary and worked through the teacher unions in these countries. Its aim was to achieve a higher level of priority for improving the education of Roma children and to develop national action plans in each country designed to improve the quality of Roma education. The project specifically aimed to train 75 trainers in how to run multi-cultural classes (25 trainers in each of the three countries concerned), who would each in turn commit to training a further ten more (total 750). In the first phase, the project identified common problems affecting Roma children in Bulgaria, Slovakia and Hungary. Second, seminars were held in each country to make the connections between education, patterns of discrimination and the European directives now prohibiting such discrimination. The training work was accomplished and national action plans were devised in each country. Manuals were published in the appropriate languages *Developing non-discriminatory quality education for Roma children*. Unlike the previous examples, full documentation was provided of all the stage of the project (Rømer, 2007).

Value: This project is interesting because it tries to work through one particular group, teachers, to achieve its objectives, but to do so across a number of fronts: research, information, training and action plans. Moreover, all the results intended appeared to have been achieved, on schedule and the outcomes appropriate disseminated. There was a high level of practical outputs, such as training manuals and national action plans, which provided the basis for work long after the project ended.

Source: European Commission, Programme against discrimination

## **TRAILER: taking the legal challenges**

### **Britain, European Dialogue, programme against discrimination**

Project: This is a transnational project from the Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination (2000-6). TRAILER in English stands for Traveller and Roma Action for the Implementation of Legal and Equality Rights. It was hosted by an organization in Britain, European Dialogue, with partner organizations in Slovakia, Ireland, Romania and Bulgaria. The overall aim was to improve the operation of the 2000 European directives against discrimination through a number of methods, such as training, seminars, monitoring, documentation, legal assistance, litigation, study visits, training manual and action plans. The project had a number of distinct phases, which included building the capacity of the Roma community and its NGOs; training of judges, prosecutors and lawyers; and monitoring legislative developments, including the taking of test cases. As part of the project, the Romanian partners encouraged Roma people to use administrative and legal channels to challenge discrimination, the Slovak participant provided legal advice for such challenges while the Irish participant ran a course to 'make the law understandable to Travellers'. As part of the training, Slovakian NGOs worked with attorneys so as to enable them to be more effective in representing Roma people in the courts. The project partners brought eight test cases in Slovakia, two in Bulgaria and one in Romania.

Value: The project's final report appears to confirm the validity of the strategy followed and it presented a number of recommendations for taking the work forward. The combination of community development, support for NGOs, training and monitoring presents a strong mixture of action across the field. This was the first project of its kind which encouraged direct challenges to discrimination through the legal system.

Source: European Dialogue

### **Roma schools: improving the quality of education**

#### **Calabria, Italy, Programme against discrimination**

Project: This is a project from the Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination (2000-6). Called *Schooling for the Roma too* (in Italian, *Una scola anche per i Rom*), this project was led by an NGO in Calabria, Italy, with partners in Paris, Grenoble, France; Messina, Italy; Lim-

erick, Ireland; Brussels, Belgium and Toledo, Spain. The project started by identifying teachers who worked with Roma children, so as to document the key education needs facing Roma children. Advice, strategies and resources were devised accordingly and presented to the teachers. The project went on to examine teacher training for Roma children and how they could be more aware of their special needs. The project also worked on broader issues, such as discrimination, parental involvement, student motivation, discipline and behavioural difficulties.

Value: This project has the merit of tackling the Roma issue at its root, namely primary schooling. A radical improvement in primary schooling, coupled with tackling the related issues, holds out the potential for a significant improvement in the situation of Roma people. A problem, though, is that results of this project do not appear to be available or disseminated, which must significantly limit its impact.

Source: European Commission, Community Programme against Discrimination

## **Combatting discrimination in public services**

### **FSGG, Madrid, Spain, Programme against discrimination**

Project: This is a project in the Community action programme against discrimination (2000-6), hosted by the Fundacion Secretariado General Gitano, Madrid, with partner organizations in the Czech Republic, Northern Ireland, Hungary, Romania and Portugal. Its aim was to promote anti-discrimination approaches within public services, awareness-raising among key stakeholders, and the empowerment of Roma associations, with a focus on the 2000 anti-discrimination directives. The main method chosen was a national seminar on the legislation and its impact in each participating country, followed by an international one to gain an overview, with the results circulated in each participating state, including in the Roma language.

Value: This project is attractive, for it promises to gather in the state of play on the anti-discrimination directives at a key point in their evolution, with the promise that the information arising will be widely disseminated to prompt renewed action on the issue. As was the case in the previous project, results of this project do not appear to be available or disseminated, which must significantly limit its impact.

Source: European Commission, Community Programme against discrimination, FSGG

## **Improving economic opportunities, vocational training**

### **Germany, Community Programme against discrimination**

Project: This project, led by the Berliner Institut für Vergleichende Sozialforschung, aimed to improve economic opportunities for Roma people in Europe in general and to improve vocational training opportunities in particular. The project, funded by the Community programme against discrimination, had partners in Italy, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. The project aimed to collect information on vocational training programmes and programmes for economic integration, as well as the organizations providing them and, with Roma groups and communities, analyzing those which work. A specific aim is to draw up criteria to set up indicators to raise the standards for future programmes.

Value: The value of this project is that it attempts to examine, in a systematic way, a broad range of provision of vocational training and economic training projects for Roma people, analyze them, find out what works and set future standards. It is an attempt to learn across boundaries and to improve quality, moreover doing so with Roma groups themselves. As was the case in the previous project, results of this project do not appear to be available or disseminated, which must significantly limit its impact.

Source: European Commission, Community Programme against discrimination

## **Discrimination, education and segregation**

### **Helsinki, Finland, Community programme against discrimination**

Project: This is a project in the Community programme against discrimination led by the International Helsinki Federation of Human Rights and involving a number of European Roma networks. The aim of the project was to document the problems of discrimination in education in a number of countries (Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania) and to assess government programmes for Roma children there, specifically their attempts to end segregation. Following this, the project planned to provide advocacy training for educational activists and build up the capacity of Roma activists to influence educational policy. The project aimed to put forward recommendations for the improvement of Roma education, translated into local Romani languages.

Value: The value of this action research project is the combination of information gathering, analysis, and recommendation with a programme of capacity-building and training for educational activists. It is focussed on one field of policy and action, with a specific concern around one aspect of policy (desegregation). This should be distinctive enough to make possible a identifiable impact. As was the case in the previous project, results of this project do not appear to be available or disseminated, which must significantly limit its impact.

Source: Community Programme against discrimination

## *Culture programme*

### **Affirming minorities through culture**

#### **Ireland, Poland, Netherlands, Spain, Greece, culture programme**

Project: this was a project funded under the culture programme but co-funded by the Directorate General for Employment & Social Affairs. It involved projects in five countries addressing different, disadvantaged target groups: Ireland (Dublin, Traveller community), Poland (Armenian immigrants), the Netherlands (Maastricht, African and Asian immigrants), Spain (Murcia and Barcelona, north African and Latin American immigrants) and Greece (Cyclades islands, Albanian immigrants). The project committed the participants to a number of concrete projects, which they were to share with their colleagues. These included the construction of a multicultural centre on Santorini, Greece; a meeting place for different cultures in Murcia; and in Ireland, the cultural heritage programme. The project had a number of outputs: workshops, video, photographs, cultural events, research and four reports. The Irish project involved an oral history unit, the collection of hitherto-unrecorded Traveller history, a film, a collection for scholars and a docudrama of now disappeared everyday life on a Traveller campsite in the 1950s. The project also identified examples of the way in which culture played an important role in affirming the value of minority communities all over Europe and suggested ways in which this could be extended in the future.

Value: This is the only specific example of a Roma cultural project, although others do touch on cultural issues. These took a number of different forms, ranging from the construction of facilities (e.g. Greece, Murcia) to the compilation of a documentary record (Ireland), complemented by a number of other events, but all were important in valuing the distinctive culture and tradition of Roma people and sharing it internationally.

Source: European Commission, Directorate General Employment & Social Affairs

## **Health programme**

### **Improving health policies**

#### **Madrid, Spain, EU public health programme**

Project: This is the only Roma project funded by the European public health programme known to us. The project is led by the Fundacion Secretariado Gitano (FSGG) in Spain, with partners drawn from Italy, Slovakia, Portugal, Greece, Romania, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria, most from the non-governmental sector. The aim of the project was to gather information on the health of the Roma community across Europe, make a comparison to the health of the settled community and identify the principal determinants of Roma health or ill-health. The project, also called SASTIPEN in Spanish, intended to specifically look at the problem of take-up of health services by Roma people, with a particular interest in the role of community leaders, Roma women and social mediators. Next, the project aimed to look at how health policies for Roma people could be improved. The project envisaged national working groups on Roma health policies, transnational working groups, national and international seminars and the training of stakeholders, including health professionals and mediators.

Value: This project is a systematic attempt to examine and act on one crucial field of work concerning Roma people, health, combining analysis, policy work, transnational sharing, looking at specific critical groups, a gender dimension and training so as to improve policies and delivery for the future. So far, only preliminary results are available. The project identified the lack of Roma-specific health data as a specific problem; second, that the system of health mediators, which the project believes is a valuable one, is greatly under-utilized; and third, that knowledge of the situation of the Roma community amongst health professionals was very low, but that training work has the potential to address this problem.

Source: FSGG, Madrid

## ***Leonardo* programme**

### **Improving training, education for young Roma people**

#### **Madrid and Barcelona, *Leonardo* programme**

Projects: These are three projects in Spain in the *Leonardo* vocational training programme. The first project, in Barcelona, was an attempt to improve the quality of training and education for Roma people by making it more culturally specific. To do this, new training material was devised by education centres, Roma organizations, teachers, women's groups and educational professionals working together, tested out and then adapted in the light of experience, the project envisaging the compiling of a CD-ROM to distribute the results. The second project, in Madrid, involved the preparation of vocational training materials to assist young Roma people into the world of work, producing a manual for trainers. The first project was run by the Fundacion Secretariado Gitano, the second by a women's association. The third, run by the University of Barcelona, aimed to identify the connections of young Roma people to the information society so as to define a programme of information society training that would put them on an equal footing to other young people.

Value: These were three Spanish projects geared to the specific educational and training needs of young Roma people. All were tightly focussed on particular needs: cultural-specific education, vocational training and the information society. Results, though, do not appear to be available.

Source: *Leonardo* programme

### **Education and employment for young Roma people**

#### **Prague, Czech Rep, *Leonardo* programme**

Projects: These are two Czech projects, both located in Prague. The first involves a number of Roma organizations in a project directed to improving the qualifications of young Roma people aged 15 to 25 years. The main thrust of the project is to improve the basis of educational knowledge of the Roma community: educational aspirations of Roma parents, their sources of infor-

mation on education, role models, access to education and existing competences of young Roma people. This information base is compiled on CD-ROM and presented to educational bodies, public services and media, accompanied by conferences and public debates, so that with the knowledge gained, there may then be an improvement in education for Roma people which the educational authorities would then act on. The second project was geared to break the high rate of unemployment among young Roma people, six times the national average. This has a number of phases: research to analyze the situation in more detail, the devising of training modules to provide skills to a pilot group of students and then an evaluation. Successful elements would be identified with a view to extending the programme to larger numbers.

Value: These were two *Leonardo* projects designed to improve the educational situation of Czech Roma people during the accession process. The first one was an open-ended project, which had the advantage of improving the broad knowledge base, without prescribing the direction in which future services should go (though with the risk that nothing might happen). The second was an experimental project with distinct research - test - evaluation phases with a view to extending the outcomes, if successful. Results do not appear to be available.

Source: *Leonardo* programme

## **Improving work opportunities for Roma**

### **Perpignan, France, with Spain and Romania, *Leonardo* programme**

Projects: This is a 3-in-1 project for Roma people run simultaneously in Perpignan France and also in Spain and Romania. A common methodology is used to learn of attitudes to work among the Roma community, aspirations and training needs, drawing up a programme of training accordingly with a view to equipping people for local labour markets. Following evaluation, a training guide was to be devised. The intention was that the project as a whole be informed by the different experiences of three quite different locations. Mediators from the Roma community were to be used throughout the project.

Value: This was quite similar to the second Czech project of research - training - evaluation, but based in three different places so as to maximize learning. Outcomes do not appear to be available.

Source: *Leonardo* programme

## *PHARE programme*

### **Social economy and waste disposal**

#### **Iancu Jianu, Romania, PHARE programme**

Project: Humanity Rom began as a music and dance cultural NGO for Roma people in Iancu Jianu in 1993. This expanded its work to the extent that it developed the first public waste disposal service for the town. In 2004, in a joint project with the town council, Humanity Rom attracted PHARE funding to improve the employment situation of Roma people in the town. The local authority assisted in the application process, subsequently transferring the waste disposal service to the NGO, along with land for offices on a 25-year lease, a truck and a guaranteed 10% of income. The management body for the service comprises Roma people, non-Roma people and the local authority. The service itself goes out to all the townspeople and, while the majority of employees of the service are Roma, not all are.

Value: Evaluation of the project attributes its success to two main factors: the requirement in PHARE for partnership applications; and the making available of technical assistance to develop not only proposals but the partnership underpinning the project. Not only that, but the partnership built has proved enduring, so that Humanity Rom is now in its fourth joint such project. A crucial element here appears to be the preparedness of the local authority to delegate responsibility to a Roma NGO to actually deliver a service.

Source: Tanaka (2007)

### **Building NGO capacity**

#### **Amalipe, Bulgaria, PHARE programme**

Project: The Amalipe centre, one of the best known organizations working with Roma people in Bulgaria, obtained PHARE funding (2005) in order to improve the participation of the Roma community in decisions affecting them. The project covered funding for a database on the situation of Roma people in 20 municipalities in Bulgaria; an information base on Roma organizations working there; data on public authorities working with Roma people; an analysis of the

position of the political parties on the situation of Roma people; and support for a network of Roma organizations in south-eastern Europe in which Bulgarian Roma groups could participate.

Value: This project had the merits of combining information gathering on Roma people, the organizations working with them and the relevant public authorities, all essential pre-requisites for engaging in the policy process; a mechanism for engagement with the political parties; and a network beyond the country itself in which Roma organizations could participate. The value was that the project combined some of the most important building blocks for participation in the political process.

Source: Amalipe Centre, Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria

## **Construction, housing and utilities**

### **Pricas, Romania, PHARE programme**

Project: This is a small PHARE - funded project for the villages of Pricas, Turdas, Spini and Rapas in the Pricaz commune, where there was a substantial Roma community living in very poor housing conditions, without proper water or sanitation. The project was developed by the O Del Amentza, an NGO, in cooperation with the local authority in Turdas and in close consultation with the Roma community. The work was undertaken by member of the Roma community and the project involved the demolition of houses, re-building, the introduction of wells and water, the introduction of gas and refurbishment. The €43,000 project was subjected to intense monitoring and when it was evaluated, it was found that many cashflow and contractual issues had arisen over problems in the construction work, but that 400 people had been re-housed in 60 much-improved apartments. A number of problems are known to have emerged subsequently, principally in the areas of maintenance, trying to find new work for the Roma people engaged in the project and in the high costs of utilities provided ( water, privatized electricity). O Del Amentza subsequently ran a certified course in road repairs and applied for money for maintenance. The evaluation identified critical success factors as the enlightened approach of the mayor of Turdas and the capacity of O Del Amentza which had been built up by the Open Society Institute.

Value: This project was typical of a number of housing, sanitation and health projects developed by the PHARE programme in Romania and Bulgaria. Although the construction experienced numerous problems (many construction projects do), the outcome was a positive improvement in the standards of living of several hundred Roma people in these communities. The PHARE requirement of a partnership between the authorities and the local communities appears to have played an important role, as was the capacity of the NGO O Del Amentza, which was able to handle such a challenging project. But perhaps the greatest value from this project is the evaluation, which found the problems which emerged some time after its completion, such as the need to sustain the project to cope with the subsequent problems concerning the impoverishing effect of the cost of utilities and maintenance.

Source: Impreuna Community Development Agency, Romania

## **Job shops for Roma people**

### **Impreuna, Romania, PHARE programme**

Project: This was a three-stage, PHARE funded project managed by the Impreuna Community Development Agency. It started with a micro-project of €2,500 to pilot a job agency for Roma people, employing 12 people to try to find jobs for Roma people in a small urban disadvantaged area, Plopeni, Prahova. Second, following a labour market analysis, vocational training was organized by Impreuna for 370 Roma people in partnership with the national employment office and in collaboration with NGOs in Cluj, Iasi, Gatli and Craiova in the areas of waitering, word processing, bricklaying, plumbing and dress-making. 'Job shops' were established in which mediators tried to link job-seekers with employers. Third, what was called the Roma Inclusion Centre was established (€18,000) and this helped 120 Roma people to find work. It follows course participants for at least six months, to ensure they get work. Now it is intended to set up a number of inclusion centres in other counties by 2008. The project was developed in collaboration with international partners (e.g. Spain, Ireland) and was promoted intensively in the media so that it could become well known both to Roma people and employers.

Value: This project illustrated the ability of an NGO to develop a substantial project from very modest beginnings with a pilot. Like the previous project, it was evaluated in some detail, so that it was possible to identify the critical success factors. Here, they appear to have been the system of partnership working (lead NGO, other NGOs, government); the use of a research

stage to precede project building; international collaboration; publicity and dissemination; and personalized services (mediators, follow-up).

Source: Impreuna Community Development Agency, Romania

## *CARDS programme*

### **Power-sharing in multicultural municipalities**

#### **Macedonia:<sup>1</sup> CARDS programme**

Project description: This is a €94,000, one-year project to improve the quality of political life in four designated communities (Struga, Kicevo, Debar and Gostivar) which comprise significant numbers of minority ethnic groups. Specifically, the purpose is to try move local decision-making from being based on votes, in which some communities are perceived to 'win' and others are perceived to 'lose', to a more consensual style of politics. Two experts are appointed from each town (total: eight) and given intensive training in political observation and consensus building. The team of eight operates together to monitor the decision-making processes in each of the four towns where they will watch for:

- The way in which minorities are involved in decisions which have a distinct impact on them;
- Measures which improve tolerance (or promote intolerance) between the minority communities;
- How the allocation of municipal budgets affect the situation of minorities;
- The distribution of posts in local authorities and the representation of minorities in them.

After the project is concluded, it is hoped that the monitoring team will become a NGO to build on the knowledge and experience gained, involving the minorities, mayors, local authority officials, political representatives, NGOs and social partners (e.g. business sector).

Value: The value of the project is that first it confronts the 'hard end' of political problems affecting the Roma people, namely decision-making at local level, where prejudice and discrimination can often be most apparent. Second, although it has a monitoring role, which many local authorities might find threatening, its avowed aim is to work through consensus-building, avoiding 'winner' and 'loser' decisions and achieve a high buy-in from all the various partners. Third, although the project was a short one of only one year, the investment was front-loaded for a project that could continue, at much lower cost, once the funding period was over.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Macedonia' is used in this report as a convenient shorthand for the 'Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' and should not be interpreted as making a political statement.

## Triangle

### Macedonia, CARDS programme

Project description: this is a €200,000 18-month project to bring together two universities in Macedonia (South Eastern, Tetovo; St Cyril and Methody, Skopje) as well as an international partner (the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands). The aim is to involve university students from different ethnic backgrounds in the law faculties of the two universities there to:

- Analyze Macedonian law concerning the treatment of minorities;
- Recommend amendments to Macedonian law to bring it into line with European standards;
- Publish an almanac of their research and proposals;
- Draw in a wider public through thematic seminars and public workshops.

Students participate on a voluntary basis, 30 from each university, all from the third academic year, with three working groups, each with a different academic advisor. It is intended to form an academic students committee to continue the work of the project after the end of the funding.

Value of the project: Projects for the revision of the law normally involve high-level government and legal experts. Here, this project entrusts the process to students who, in a structured, informed and collaborative way, will conduct the analysis and make the recommendations and, moreover, do so on an interethnic basis. The project offers speed, low cost and participation over more traditional approaches. The project is likely to stimulate students to develop a long-term interest in the application of law in general and human rights law in particular to the situation of ethnic minorities.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## **Youth tolerance campaign**

### **Macedonia, CARDS programme**

This is a €900,000 18-month project to improve ethnic tolerance among young people, at a time when lifelong attitudes are still in a process of formation. The aims of the project is to:

- Run a nationwide public information campaign on ethnic tolerance geared to young people;
- Establish a national youth strategy;
- Establish a national youth parliament;
- Train journalists in reporting issues of youth and tolerance;
- Assess to prospects for establishing a national youth coalition, one based on interethnic respect.

The campaign will work with existing NGOs, media, teachers and the Ministry for Education, with a working group to define and plan activities and stimulate cooperation. Two focus groups will be run to refine the media images.

Value: The value of the project is that it links the development of youth organizations in Macedonia, now at a formative stage, to the need for tolerance and multiculturalism, setting a positive climate at the beginning of this process. The campaign brings in a wide range of actors and works through a variety of new institutions under construction (youth parliament, youth strategy).

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## **Public administration certificates**

### **Macedonia, CARDS programme**

Project description: This is a €1.8m, 14-month programme aimed at providing 600 public administration certificates for 600 prospective minority public servants in three cities in Macedonia. First, there is an open advertising process for trainees, run by the Central Civil Servants Agency. Second, after 600 people are chosen, they participate in a year-long training pro-

gramme on how to work in the public service, being also provided with counseling. Although some training is carried out by external institutions, especially computer training, most is provided by existing civil servants. The ultimate aim of the project is to improve the level of representation of minorities in the public service. The course does not guarantee a place in the public service, but it is an attempt to level the playing field. It is known that a number of Roma participants in the programme subsequently did successfully enter the public service.

Value: This project addresses a core problem facing the Roma community and other minorities, which is that most public service decisions affecting them are taken by people who are not Roma or minority members, nor do they understand their situation. Roma people and minorities are poorly represented in the public services in local, regional and national government and this is part of the process of redressing the balance and creating equality of opportunity. The delivery of the training by existing civil servants exposes the civil servants to minority community member and improves their buy-in to more equal opportunities.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## **New technology, local services and human rights**

### **Macedonia, CARDS programme**

Project description: This is a 18-month, €100,000 project to improve the fluency of Roma people in new technologies, linked to improving the quality of municipal administration. The project, which is located in the strongly Roma districts of Bitola and Bair, works as follows:

- The establishment of an internet and multi-media centre where Roma people are invited to learn word-processing, computer, internet and related media, both informally and through more formal learning. It has four Roma staff and will build up a DVD library. Participants will be invited to use the computers to access educational content;
- The setting up by the municipal authority of a Citizens Information Centre, staffed by Roma officials, to assist people obtain information about their rights as citizens, entitlements, with all appropriate forms for filing to the public authorities.

The service is provided by the local authority. There is a pilot period of six months for both services so that adjustments can be made before they go into full operation.

Value: This example has the merit of addressing two serious problems facing the Roma community: lack of familiarity with the new technologies and difficulties accessing official information about rights. Here, the local authority is bringing the services directly to Roma people themselves, using Roma staff so as to improve their user-friendliness. A pilot period is set down, giving the opportunity for changes to be made for improvements.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## **Theatre projects: *Bridges for culture and Children's puppet theatre***

### **Macedonia, CARDS programme**

Project description: Here are two projects. The first is a one year, €100,000 project designed to increase the participation of minority groups in inter-ethnic theatre. This will be done through the Children's Theatre Centre, Skopje, by inviting the participation of 30 children from three municipalities (Kumanovo, Delcevo, Skopje and Debar) to participate in theatre, training them as actors, researchers, scriptwriters, set and costume designers. The students will be invited from different ethnic groups in the 15 to 18 age range. They will also learn about writing drama, media skills, public speaking and performing, with a view to presenting a number of productions to which school children, teachers and parents will be invited. About 7,200 people are expected to see the performances. Discussion after performance will be encouraged.

The second is a €200,000, two-year project to bring children's puppet theatre to 12,600 children, parents, teachers and others in 12 cities throughout Macedonia. It is designed primarily around the 7 to 9 year age range. This involves the creation of a team of children and young people to conceptualize, design and produce three pieces of children's puppet drama which deal with inter-ethnic themes and convey messages of common humanity, inter-dependance, human rights, mutual respect and combat stereotyping, performances being followed by dialogue on the themes raised.

Value: These projects address several aims simultaneously: the investment of resources in the culture of minority communities, investment in the theatre teams of the future and the bringing of such a theatre to a wider audience. Although governments throughout Europe support theatre by minority communities, the first project is a comprehensive programme of investment in a

crucial and formative age group, 15 to 18, covering the entire range of skills associated with theater production. The second is an attempt to convey a series of pro-social messages while also building up the capacity of children and young people to bring drama through the full production process.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## **Decentralization for human development**

### **Macedonia, CARDS programme**

Project description: This is a €100,000 project running over two years to improve the participation of the Roma community in political life. Located in Bitola, the aim is to ensure the greater participation of Roma people in local government and coincides with legislation to reform local government passed in 2005. This is done by:

- A study circle of 20 young Roma leaders to analyze the principal problems facing the Roma community in the locality, meeting quarterly;
- Polling and surveying of the Roma community on the key issues affecting their members, in order to identify problems, challenges and attitudes to civic participation. This is done by a research group;
- Establishment of a Roma Representative Council to meet monthly to deal with the issues of the day. It has 11 Roma representatives and a small number of representatives of local government, state agencies and NGOs. Its specific role is to liaise with local government and lobby for changes to improve the situation of the Roma community. It is also tasked to liaise closely with the study circle group and research group;
- Bringing the outcomes of these activities to the wider community.

Value: This project tackles the question of participation of the Roma community in local government through a variety of connected methods: research, polling, Roma representative council. It has the advantages of rooting community action in the in-depth views of the Roma community itself. Not only that but the project develops Roma leadership through the study circle

and establishes a representative council to be part of the local government process. Moreover, there is a requirement to bring the project to the wider community.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## **Improved knowledge by young Roma women of their history and customs**

### **Tirana, Albania, CARDS programme**

**Project:** This is a €15,000 project to work with 200 Roma women aged between 13 and 200 in the suburbs of Tirana in the area of history and tradition. The project was entrusted to the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). In the preliminary stage, the YWCA made an assessment of the level of knowledge among young Roma women, finding a lack of knowledge, attributed to only a limited educational experience. In the second phase, the YWCA team provided information on Roma culture, language, heritage, customs, encouraging them to develop their speaking and writing skills. The focus on tradition also encouraged the young women to go to their parents and grand parents in search of further information. An important outcome of the educational work was the formation of a Roma Women's Forum, the first NGO of its kind in Albania, with a focus on developing leadership among Roma women.

**Value:** This project links a number of themes: improving education, knowledge and respect of Roma tradition, inter-generational solidarity and doing so in such a way as to improve the self-image of individual Roma women and simultaneously develop practical educational skills. This is a small project financially, but one which could probably be replicated using material already developed. The formation of a women's forum was a positive organizational legacy.

Source: European Agency for Reconstruction

## *European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)*

### **Human rights**

#### **Macedonia, Democracy & human rights programme micro-projects**

Project: There were five EIDHR micro-projects for the Roma community in Macedonia:

- Project to raise public awareness of Roma issues, €40,000, with platform discussions, seminars, TV programmes, public meetings, for 12 months;
- Civic education workshops, a 9-month project costing €13,000 for Roma children and young people, to introduce them to issues of civic participation;
- *Images*, a 7-month €24,000 campaign to address negative images of Roma people by working with journalists, teachers, government officials and social service administrators;
- Protection and promotion of Roma rights, a 12-month, €34,000 project for workshops, TV programmes, civil legal aid and training of human rights activists to take cases of human rights violations, with at least 1,500 beneficiaries.
- Rights of Roma women, a 12 - month, €32,000 project to gather information on human rights abuses of Roma women, 30 workshops for human rights awareness, free legal advice, crisis hot-line, with at least 700 beneficiaries. The project was aimed not just at Roma women but also at officials in social services and law enforcement agencies.

Value: Although termed micro-projects, for NGOs they provided substantial funding to enable meaningful work for at least a year. These projects had the merit of confronting the 'hard end' of the treatment of Roma people - namely human rights abuses, interaction with the legal system, the particular position of Roma women, public prejudice and the role of the media.

Source: European Commission, DG Enlargement

## 1.2 Concluding comments

Here are 47 examples, drawn from twelve different funding instruments. The information provided in each has often been incomplete and much less than desirable, but sufficient to identify value and lessons learning. Thematically, they crossed a wide range, from education to employment, human rights to discrimination, education to infrastructure. They varied in scale from some quite small-scale projects with less than a hundred beneficiaries to large ones with over 20,000, such as ACCEDER. They vary too in ambition, some having quite limited, self-contained, concrete and important objectives, while others were quite ambitious (e.g. Roma Vision).

It should be mentioned that there are good practice examples from other funding programmes and which came to attention during this research. These come from:

- Projects funded by the United Nations Development Programme. An example is Albania, where the UNDP has developed a minority capacity building and advocacy programme (including training with Roma people, organization and public administration, as well as advocacy activities), a monitoring programme for the national Roma strategy, research (report *At risk - the social vulnerability of Roma in Albania*) and a project to improve participatory planning for local infrastructure development, *Empowering the vulnerable communities of Albania*.
- Projects funded by national governments (e.g. health programmes for the Roma community run by the governments of Spain and the Czech Republic; the Romani CRISS health mediators project in Romania; the project for the eradication of shanty towns in Aviles, Asturias, Spain (Guy, 2006);
- Projects funded by the Roma Education Fund (e.g. secondary school scholarship and mentorship programme);
- Projects funded by the Open Society Institute (e.g. Women and youth project, Skopje, Macedonia; identity papers project run by Romani CRISS in Romania).

From these, good practice material is available (e.g. Ernst & Young, 2005; Stegeman & Costongs, 2004).

## Chapter 2: Analysis

Here, we look at the issues arising from the case studies drawn from EU funding programmes, starting with an analysis of the examples (2.1) and then what programme and project evaluations tell us about good practice (2.2). Conclusions are drawn (2.3).

### 2.1 The examples analyzed

Examination of the case studies shows a number of striking features:

First, most are drawn from a limited range of countries. There are three main country groups to consider. First, most case studies come from five countries in eastern and central Europe: Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia. This probably reflects both the higher number of Roma people in these countries compared to others and the priority given to assisting Roma people following the Commission report *Situation of Roma people in an enlarged Union*. Second, there is a significant number of Roma projects operating in EU neighbouring states, such as Macedonia, although here the emphasis is more on human rights and Roma as one of a number of minority groups assisted. Third, there is a small number of projects in the old member states. Spain is the dominant country here, followed by Ireland. Some isolated projects have been identified in Portugal, Italy, Germany, Finland, Austria and Britain, but quite a number of countries in the 'old Europe' are not represented at all. The high level of representation of Spain and Ireland may reflect the investment in building up the non-governmental community working with Roma there in the 1990s.

Second, a serious problem is the absence or limited amount of project evaluation or dissemination. Very few projects appear to have published, either during their lifetimes or subsequently, any outcomes of their activities. Although all projects appear to have commitments to dissemination and evaluation, in only a small proportion of cases does this actually happen. This is not a function of the timing of the projects listed for some projects here came from the 1994-9 period yet no evaluations were available, whereas, by contrast, some 2004-6 projects have already produced detailed reports. Efforts at dissemination and evaluation appear to depend entirely on the commitment of personnel in individual projects.

Third, the good practice examples come from a limited range of programmes. Most of the examples came from EQUAL, the European Social Fund, PHARE, EIDHR and CARDS, with a

small number from the Social Exclusion Programme, the Community Programme against Discrimination and *Leonardo*. No examples of good practice were readily identified in the URBAN programme, although its approach should have lent itself to some level of Roma involvement, nor in cross-border programmes. In the light of programme analysis, next, we shall return in 2.3 *Conclusions* to see whether this concentration in certain programmes can be explained.

If we look at the projects themselves, we observe a number of important features and pick out some projects which illustrate these issues:

- Most tackled what may be 'soft' issues. This does not mean that their projects challenges were in any way easy, to the contrary, but many did not confront bigger issues around discrimination, unequal access to power and resources or decision-making within the political system. Some did address the 'hard' political issues and these were found mainly in the CARDS programme, the human rights programme and some projects in the Community Programme against Discrimination (e.g. TRAILER). A small number of 'soft' projects also took on some 'hard' issues, the best examples being *Long road* (EQUAL, Spain) which took on the issue of work permits and *Living and working together* (EQUAL, Austria) which confronted the issue of works councils.

- Some projects appeared to have a policy of leaving a legacy. It is unclear whether this was built in from the beginning of the project or emerged in the course of its evolution. The idea of legacy-building is most evident in CARDS funded projects, examples being the monitoring NGO (CARDS, Macedonia), a core body of students with a human rights knowledge (CARDS, Triangle, Macedonia) and the Roma Women's Forum (CARDS, Albania).

- Only a small number appear to entrust the Roma community with substantial added value once the project is concluded. Here, there is a small number of examples, such as the handing over of workshops at the end of the project (Bridge, EQUAL, Hungary) and the social economy waste disposal project (Iancu Jiana, PHARE, Romania). This means that a project can have a much more permanent, enduring value.

- Very few projects appear to mention the building of the capacity of the organization during the project, or its leadership development. Granted the importance of 'the social entrepreneur' in the development of NGOs, it is surprising that the issue is given so little attention. Few mentions were encountered of funding which enables an organization to refine its skills, capacity or abilities through training or any form of systematized learning. Exceptions were the Roma rep-

representative council in *Decentralization for human development* (CARDS, Macedonia) and *Building NGO capacity* (Amalipe, PHARE programme) .

- Most projects are single-phase. Hardly any appear to go through a test or pilot phase, exceptions being *New technology, local services and human rights* (CARDS, Macedonia) and *Job shops for Roma people* (Romania, PHARE). This raises the question as to whether programming should have more room for an experimental phase, followed by a 'main phase', but this option does not appear to be readily available.

- Few projects seem to provide self-critical commentaries or learning points, exceptions being *Improving access to employment*, (Hungary, ESF) and *Construction, housing, utilities* (Romania, PHARE). This is understandable, for projects are always anxious to prove themselves and the correctness of the design on which they are based - but improvement will more likely follow from projects mature enough to say 'Next time we would do this differently'.

- One area where there appears to be genuine difference of approach is in labour market integration. The main trend in labour market integration projects is to equip Roma people to participate as equals in the main labour force, hence an emphasis on re-skilling and learning new skills and technologies (ACCEDER would be the conventional model here), but it is evident in other projects, such as *Mainstreaming* (ESF, Finland) and *Improving access to employment* (ESF, Hungary). Others have taken a different approach and point to the endemic problems of discrimination which Roma people will experience when they try to enter and stay in the mainstream labour market, arguing instead that a more effective approach is to build up the Roma social economy, with Roma people working in their own social economy enterprises, developing a broad range of self-sufficient skills from production through to marketing and trading. This approach is more evident in *Preserving traditional skills in social economy cooperatives* (EQUAL, Poland) and the Bridge project (EQUAL, Hungary).

- Gender issues are the focus of a small number of projects, but possibly less than one would hope for : examples of projects conscious of the gender dimension are *Improved knowledge by Roma women* (CARDS, Albania), IIDHR Macedonia and *Following our dream* (EQUAL, Portugal). One project, interestingly, attempted to address the marginalized situation of Roma men (*Pavee Feens Hawken*, EQUAL, Ireland).

- Some projects have an eye to other European policy areas and broader agendas, which may not have any direct connexion to Roma or exclusion issues - but which may in turn open doors to new connexions, partners and ideas. Examples which come to mind are those which address

the world of the media (Roma Vision, EQUAL, Hungary), energy efficiency (Bridge, EQUAL, Hungary) and waste disposal (Slovakia, ESF).

- Innovation is a distinct feature in many of the projects, but is most evident in the EQUAL programme, where it was a required feature of projects. Examples are life experience experts (Divercidade, EQUAL, Portugal), Roma as school assistants (Finland, EQUAL), public administration certificate (Macedonia, CARDS) and career guidance for Roma children (Slovakia, ESF). One of the most evident innovative features was the use of 'cultural mediators', which was developed by a number of projects (e.g. *Romanian Roma in Ireland*, EQUAL programme; *Job shops*, PHARE, Romania; *Long road*, EQUAL, Italy).

Not all projects have to be innovative. Some do not make strong claims for themselves as 'innovative' but nonetheless are fresh attempts to come to grips with persistent problems (e.g. *Equipping teachers* and *Completing primary qualifications*, Slovakia, ESF). Taken as a whole, the 47 projects give a good idea of the range, scale, breadth of current use of EU funding instruments.

## 2.2 Programmes analyzed

The terms of reference of this compendium included a search for programme evaluations which could shed light on good practice in EU funding for Roma projects.

Programme evaluations requested in the course of the research did shed light on a number of aspects of good project design and practice. Let us take them chronologically. Most are recent and most come from eastern and central Europe, mainly from the later stages of the PHARE programme (see part II). PHARE did not provide significant funding for Roma projects until the very late 1990s and these later evaluations may have been prompted by criticism, by Roma organizations, of shortcomings and problems arising. Indeed, granted the anodyne tone of many evaluations of EU-funded programmes, a striking feature of these evaluations was their critical nature.

EMS (2004) made a detailed assessment of the value of the PHARE programme for Roma people and was specifically charged with identifying good practice and lessons learned. This evaluation came to the following conclusions on PHARE interventions:

- The areas of intervention were imbalanced, most projects going to education (33%) and infrastructure (27%), with declining and small proportions for employment (10%) and health (3%), but with no overall sense of how these priorities were determined;
- Many projects were over-ambitious, scheduling too many activities over too short periods, with no relationship to the capacity of the organization concerned;
- Many projects were top-down, isolated interventions, unconnected to each other, achieving short-term gains, doing little for Roma integration and ultimately under-achieving.
- Complex applications procedures constituted high entry barriers for smaller, community development NGOs, the type most likely to deliver more participative approaches;
- Many employment projects were traditional labour market interventions of upskilling for a labour market where Roma people were likely to meet with discrimination. A more productive approach might be to build up social economy enterprises. The failure to address discrimination meant that many of the gains of upskilling were wasted.
- The managing of funds through intermediary organizations (Czech Republic and Slovakia) worked well - these are the equivalent of global grants within the structural funds. Such an approach should be recognized as good practice.

EMS put forward a range of recommendations for programming to be strategic, with projects linked to larger-scale actions for systemic changes; for enhancing the role of NGOs; for the improvement of partnership working; for the use of the bottom-up approach and direct ESF-type interventions toward the social economy.

Guy & Kovats (2005) made an extremely critical assessment of EU-funded Roma projects in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, most under the PHARE programme:

- Funding was on insufficient scale to be impactful, especially granted the depth and complexity of need in the Roma communities;
- Funding was often too limited, too widely spread, or of too short duration to achieve any level of effectiveness;
- Projects lacked sustainability: both groups and participants were likely to revert to their previous situation once the intervention was over;

- The influence of Roma people over projects was insufficient, especially during the often too-short planning phase. There must be significantly more consultation.

The authors concluded that these lessons must be learned 'to ensure future EU-funded Roma programmes are more successful'. There was a profound gap, they said, between the high-level programme aims and realistic on-the-ground measures that would improve the situation of Roma people.

Guy (2006) made a critical appraisal of PHARE projects which returned to some of these themes. To be successful, he argued, Roma projects must:

- Be part of a broader policy framework for the inclusion of Roma people;
- Have strong institutional support. Although some countries had established national offices for Roma affairs, they had low status and capacity, insufficient to influence other ministries;
- Adopt a bottom-up, participatory approach.
- Be on a significant enough scale to be effective.

He drew attention of the inexperience and lack of preparedness of the Roma sector, implying the need for a substantial development in its capacity. He identified the critical success factors for Roma projects:

- Political consensus
- A national institutional framework, matched by local implementation systems
- Multi-dimensionality, with client-centred, integrated services
- Pathway approaches to social inclusion
- An orientation around issues
- Development of the professional capacities of the actors.

Interestingly, these projects were echoed by the Roma Education Fund (2007) which warned of projects which did not take into account the wider policy and governmental framework in which they worked, so that localized projects, even if good, ran into a discrimination and institutional resistance. Programme financing must be linked to policy reform.

Returning to our narrative of EU-funded Roma projects, the issue of capacity was brought up by Impreuna (2005) in Romania, which described the process of application to European Union funding as extremely demanding, complex, laborious and requiring of a high level of expertise. Because there is no screening system of applications before the approval process begins and because of the rigorous insistence on technical compliance with procedures, even a small mistake in an application form will result in complete invalidation. As for the projects themselves, Impreuna made the following comments:

- Programmes were often determined in a top-down manner and did not avail of either proper field research or a good knowledge of the target group. Design errors arose from inadequate, ill-researched, non-participative preparation: for example, vocational training was offered, even when pre-vocational training might be more appropriate; computers were provided, when met-alwork training was needed.
- Objectives were often unclear, indicators imprecise and evaluators had no basis on which to make a meaningful judgment on whether projects had achieved their objectives or not.
- 'Dissemination and replication of positive examples and good practice are often neglected by the donors'. It is important, it says, that there are separate and sufficient funds for monitoring, evaluation and disseminating the results.
- Mono-dimensionality. Single sector approaches (e.g. health, housing, education) will have limited effect unless related projects are tackled at the same time e.g. segregation and discrimination. Projects should therefore be multidimensional.

It is interesting that the 'old' Europe made the transition between mono-dimensionality (a feature of the *Poverty 2* programme) and multidimensionality, a requirement in the *Poverty 3* programme) as far back as 1989. Impreuna's comments were echoed in neighbouring Bulgaria: there, evaluation of an important Bulgaria PHARE educational project illustrated the negative outcomes of poor project preparation, insufficient consultation, inadequate organizational capacity and unsatisfactory execution (Kolev, Krumova and Zahariev, 2006).

Although a recurrent theme of these commentaries was the importance of linking projects to national policies for Roma people, the mere existence of such policies was insufficient. Such policies must be well designed and, most important, implemented efficiently. In the view of NGOs, the failure of the governments of both Bulgaria and Romania to implement plans for the improvement of the situation of the Roma people undermined the gains achieved by individual

projects. In its analysis of the Bulgarian situation, Amalipe (2006) drew attention to two basic flaws: the government expected implementation to be successful without the allocation of additional resources or institutional frameworks; and there was a lack of commitment by the political élite. Not only that, but government had invested little in establishing a good rapport with the NGO community.

We conclude the programme evaluation with three contemporary commentaries. The first comes from Krumova (2007), who in her analysis of the PHARE *Ethnic minorities labour market integration project* remarked on the failure to research or understand the education or training needs of the Roma community, the targeting of the project toward some Roma communities while ignoring others, the failure to involve local authorities in the project either as partners or on the organizing committee and the treatment of the Roma community as 'an object and not as a real partner in design and implementation'.

The second comes from the Autonomia good practice example (part I) where some effort went into the analysis of *What works?* for Roma projects:

- The importance of multidimensionality: 'problems confronting Roma are complex and require integrated approaches';
- Well constructed partnerships of NGOs and statutory bodies can work well, but they take time to build.
- The use of mediators, especially when drawn from the Roma community, is important for the improvement of communications, especially when statutory authorities are involved;
- Roma people have weak representation and political influence, so projects must address inequalities of power (Tanaka, 2006).

Third, and finally, Ivanov (2007) made a number of serious criticisms of EU-funded Roma projects in the region. Arguing that the Union has had a poor return on its €275m investment to date in Roma projects, he said that:

- Programmes and projects lacked a strategic focus.
- Many projects failed to tackle discrimination. Single-focus projects (e.g. health, education) soon ran into walls of prejudice and discrimination and as a result made only short-term gains.

- There was insufficient evaluation: 'Projects are undertaken, completed and then very often repeated without any measure of what has been achieved, what lessons have been learnt in relation to policy development, or how implementation could be improved'.

- There was poor coordination, with projects carried out in isolation of each other and with no formal links. The potential for added value during the implementation phase and valuable post implementation learning was thus lost.

Moving on, EMS (2004) made a wider evaluation of programmes in eastern and central Europe, extending into other EU funding programmes (e.g. *Leonardo*) and also beyond the Roma community, with a specific injunction to identify good practice. EMS identified as good practice project which:

- Impacted at policy and regulatory level;
- Built new models of participation and partnership;
- Linked to European networks;
- Budgeted adequately for management, implementation and dissemination;
- Created increased visibility of issues;
- Developed new concepts, models, standards and governance systems which governments absorbed.

EMS returned to criticisms of programme management raised by Impreuna. Several programmes, they said, had weak, unreliable or inadequate systems of monitoring or evaluation, while at the same time they imposed needless and disproportionate administrative burdens. Multiplying financial controls, they said, did not necessarily reduce fraud, while more effort at evaluation and dissemination would actually improve management. Many of EMS criticisms were directed at programme management, rather than at projects and they were especially critical of inadequate government support structures. Independent agencies worked best, while by contrast keeping programme management 'in house' within the public service worked worst. They were also critical of the single-stage application processes, which meant that there was only one preparation period, rather than two.

Moving beyond the region, to EU funding throughout the Union, a number of commentaries have identified problems with specific programmes. First, Prisma (2003) drew attention to the

lack of funding for cultural projects to affirm the value of minorities. Social inclusion programmes had little room for a cultural dimension, while cultural programmes had little room for a social inclusion dimension - yet cultural action could play an important role in building confidence, respect, capacity and combatting racism and discrimination.

Ernst & Young (2004) had useful comments to make on the Community Programme to Combat Discrimination. They strongly criticized projects that were diffuse and localized, suggesting the need to re-orientate the programme around human rights, the protection of victims of discrimination and bringing the issues into the heart of the legal system. They drew attention to the problem of low level of expertise in projects and the absence of a policy approach from many project leaders. Dissemination of results was weak, few drafting reports, while the dissemination phase was confused, poor and limited to the parties involved and participants.

This Community Programme against Discrimination will continue as a strand in the new PROGRESS programme. Another PROGRESS strand will be social inclusion, the descendant of the recently concluded Social Exclusion Programme (SEP). Here, the mid-term evaluation had some important and relevant observations to make (Abraham *et al*, 2005). Their view of the transnational projects was that they showed little evidence of learning, they had poor visibility, lacked results and their failure to distribute outcomes was a major weakness. There was no forum where strategic issues arising from the programme could be brought. This last point actually has an important relevance for Roma programming, in a related context, for Ivanov (2007) has pointed out that the main group of Commission officials coordinating policies, programmes and policies for Roma people, namely the Roma inter-service group, has no structured system for Roma representation, participation or input, nor a system for communicating its views and experiences to the Roma community.

Phillips, Bouvier, Kuhn & Farquharson (2005) evaluated projects funded under the racism, xenophobia and discrimination theme of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights. This found that best practice was most likely when:

- Projects were well rooted in and trusted by the communities in which they served, with a participatory approach;
- They had a coherent design and a sound analysis of the situation in their country;
- A rights-based approach was used;
- They linked the local to the national;

- A sufficiently long time-frame was in use, with five years suggested;
- The Commission operated a proportionate, flexible and transparent management system, the authors being sharply critical of the extravagantly time-wasting nature of its procedures.

These commentaries raise a number of common themes, which we shall bring together in the next chapter. The criticisms made are by no means unique to EU programmes for Rorke & Wilkins (2006) noted similar points in their analysis of OSI's own activities (*Roma inclusion - lessons learned from OSI's Roma programming*).

### 2.3 Concluding comments

If there is one general and over-arching lesson arising from this chapter, it is the close connections between *good practice* and *good programme design*: it is difficult to have one without the other. The good practice examples in chapter 1 came mainly from those programmes which have an emphasis on empowerment, the bottom-up approach, scale, links to national policies and connections to institutional frameworks. These may explain why projects from EQUAL, CARDS and the human rights programme feature so prominently in chapter 1. Indeed, it is at this stage of hindsight that the merits of the EQUAL design are apparent, notably:

- Preparation
- Partnership
- Empowerment
- Thematic focus
- Influencing policies, especially those addressing discrimination and gender
- Innovation
- Transnationality and sharing of information across borders.
- Scale
- Institutional linkages

The last two deserve additional comment. First, EQUAL projects were, for NGOs at least, substantial in size, with average budgets around €1m, enabling meaningful work to be done over time. Second, the European Commission (2004) believed it important to provide 'structures and tools for transferring good practices and key stakeholders, both at national and European level', this being done by the establishment of 17 thematic working groups to ensure the uploading, of the lessons learned, into the European institutions.

This evaluative context also makes us more aware of the limitations of the good practice examples. A number of good practice examples were good practice only by design - but they failed the test when it comes to dissemination and results, as noted by the evaluation of the Social Exclusion Programme. To that degree, they are only partial examples of good practice. One SEP Roma project, the Hungarian one shown, went to impressive efforts to document, analyze and disseminate, but it was the exception.

The emphasis of the evaluations on capacity-building may help to explain the prominence of Roma projects in some countries more than others, especially in the case of western Europe, where Roma projects have built up because of investment in capacity in leading NGOs, notably FSGG in Spain and Pavee Point in Ireland, and, one suspects, because of the entrepreneurialism of their leaders. The paucity of projects from other countries, may, conversely, indicate a lack of investment in such capacity - building.

One of the evaluations (EMS, 2004), whilst critical of PHARE, made the mitigating point that at least the programme offered, to NGOs and other project leaders, the opportunity of 'learning by doing'. Having said that, there is a dreary repetitiveness in many of the criticisms of the operation of PHARE and other programmes (e.g. top-down approach, insufficient preparation, the demands on programme execution, lack of links to national policies and institutions etc). A real question arises as to the capacity of the European Union funding apparatus to learn from the lessons that have arisen and the capacity of the programming process to absorb the recommendations made by evaluators and other critics. On the positive side, there is some evidence that partnership working (requiring NGOs and statutory bodies to work together) has improved in the later stage of PHARE. The critical comments made of the Community Programme against Discrimination by Ernst & Young (2004) were clearly taken to heart, for the second round of funding under the programme shows a distinct re-orientation around the discrimination legislation and, coincidentally or not, a dramatically higher proportion of Roma projects.

But to what degree have the other lessons learned from the good practice examples, the bad practice criticisms and the evaluations been learned? Here, the experience is less encouraging.

- No published papers appear to be available indicating whether or how the Commission intends to absorb the lessons arising from the many evaluations made of Roma projects and programming instruments;
- Despite the gap which has elapsed since the SEP evaluation (Abrahams, 2005) and the present, dissemination remains poor, suggesting a lack of quality control by the programme managers within the Commission;
- The current putting in place of the 2007-2013 round of the structural funds shows a remarkable lack of preparedness by the Commission to intervene to drive up the quality of programme design. This is evident if we look at the activities of the European Anti Poverty Network, which advocated in a series of high level and strategic actions that for the programming period for 2007-2013, that there be an involvement of social inclusion NGOs in operational programme design, significant use of global grants through intermediary funding bodies, the making available of technical assistance for social inclusion NGOs and the inviting of NGOs onto monitoring committees (EAPN, 2005). There is only sporadic evidence that this has happened.
- An especial concern arises from the EQUAL programme. EQUAL appears to have been one of the most successful generators of good practice examples. Yet, before even an interim evaluation was completed, the *Third cohesion report* proposed that EQUAL be eliminated from the new, 2007-2013 programming period, unlike the other Community Initiative Programmes LEADER+, URBAN and INTERREG, for which specific continuation arrangements were put in place. Later, the Community Strategic Guidelines made provision for EQUAL to be mainstreamed, but without specifying how. It is not clear whether this be done and at least one member state proposed, in its draft operational programme for the European Social Fund, not to do so (e.g. Ireland).
- The social economy has also been a casualty of the simplification of the funding process. This is an important issue, because social economy projects have a particular value in supporting Roma entrepreneurship. Despite this, the social economy directorate in the Commission was closed and its functions scattered. The only significant funding stream for the social economy became EQUAL and then it, too, was concluded.

A significant impediment to driving up the quality of Roma projects and programming that impacts on Roma people is the lack of a system in place to make this possible. Ironically, within the Commission, there is now an interservice group for issues affecting Roma people, but it is not known if it has undertaken any activities along these lines - indeed, its existence is not advertised through any of the Commission's standard information outlets. Ivanov (2007) has already made some valid criticisms of its composition and working methods. There is also, since 2006, a high level advisory group on ethnic minorities, but it is unclear if it has either the inclination or the authority to address this issue.

Several programme evaluations, especially Impreuna (2004) drew attention to the 'bureaucratic' requirements around programming. Such problems are by no means unique to the NGO sector working with Roma people: to the contrary, they are universal across the non-governmental sector, as catalogued by FM Partners (2005) in *Striking a balance - efficiency, effectiveness and accountability*. The links between good practice (or bad practice) and the administrative system in place have not often been explored, but it may be worth spending a moment doing so here. The current system of administration has the effect of valuing:

- Projects with a high level of administrative capacity, skills and personnel;
- Applicants able to provide unassisted 'one shot', technically compliant proposals;
- Financial compliance as the most important administrative attribute, more so than non-financial accountability, evaluation and dissemination;
- Quantitative monitoring more so than qualitative;
- Organizations able to withstand significant problems of cash-flow, delay and uncertainty.

The degree to which this drives out good practice may have been underestimated, especially in the community development field, where resources to meet these four features are likely to be least available. Whilst community development organizations are fully in favour of accountability, they are not well equipped to meet the full weight of burden of recent compliance requirements and no allowance is made for their somewhat different situation. These burdens can reach absurd proportions (JRCT, 2003) and present extraordinary situations. As Impreuna noted, the applications procedure is such that a high-quality, well-prepared, consultation-based proposal may be turned down because of a minor technical irregularity while a poorly prepared but technically compliant application will be accepted in its place. Once a project is under way, the administrative burden is wholly focussed on financial regularity and compliance, to the ex-

clusion of such issues as quality of management, planning, dissemination and evaluation. In other words, the programme environment tilts the projects in a direction in which they are likely to achieve *less*, rather than more, for their beneficiaries. This must be rebalanced. It is possible, following *Striking a balance* that changes may be made to improve the situation, but it is too early to judge. Logically, there are only two ways to resolve this problem: either reduce the burdens to a more appropriate level, or, alternately, equip NGOs with substantial extra administrative capacity to handle them (which is a questionable use of scarce resources).

## **Chapter 3: Conclusions**

Here we look at how good practice examples may be defined, bad practice and programming pitfalls identified (3.1), good practice replicated, scaled up and used as an inspirational template (3.2) and then draw out implications (3.3) before making some concluding remarks (3.4).

### **3.1 Good practice and bad practice**

From both the good practice examples in chapter 2 and the analysis in chapter 2, it is possible to identify the manner in which good practice examples can be developed. Then we will look at the issues of replication, scaling up and use as a template (3.2). This builds on the previous chapter and is done diagrammatically:

Good practiceBad practice

Adequate preparation

Rushed preparation to meet deadlines

Roma community stakeholders

Absence of, or only token consultation

Bottom-up approach, empowerment

Top-down approach

Partnership

Lack of statutory - NGO mixture

Multidimensionality

Monodimensionality

Policy, thematic focus

Lack of policy dimension

Institutional linkages

Absence of connexions to government

Evaluation

Evaluation not carried out

Dissemination strategies

Dissemination not a priority

Transnationality

Isolation from outside world

Innovation

Absence of new thinking

Address root causes

Addresses symptom of problem only

Dealing with 'harder' political issues

Addressing only 'soft' social issues

Rights-based approach

Lack of rights focus

Legacy

No attempt to leave legacy

Leadership, capacity development

No leadership, capacity development

Drawing up such a system is relatively straightforward, granted our knowledge of good practice in chapter 1 and the subsequent analysis (chapter 2). What is more difficult is to look at how such good practice can be scaled up and bad practice avoided, next.

### 3.2 Replication, scaling up and use as a template

Several of the projects outlined in chapter 1 invite replication and scaling up. The issue of scale was highlighted as an important one by numerous project evaluations. Projects must be of sufficient scale to:

- Prepare properly;
- Involve the Roma community in design and management;
- Follow a bottom up approach;
- Develop partnership;
- Operate in a multi-dimensional way;
- Set out a policy focus with a number of distinct themes;
- Build institutional linkages;
- Address root causes;
- Set in place evaluation and dissemination strategies;
- Follow a rights-based approach;
- Face up to harder issues of discrimination and political change;
- Be able to manage the administrative requirements imposed.

None of this is to say that there is no value in small-scale projects, or micro-projects - clearly there is - but that only limited, discrete outcomes and impacts can be expected from them. Small, discrete projects, with applications decided quickly, can enable valuable short and medium-term work to be done at short notice and is a proven and valuable tool in community development.

In looking at chapter 1, several EU funding instruments stood out and achieved at least some of these requirements and we should itemize them here:

EQUAL projects, for their innovation, bottom-up approaches, transnationality, appropriateness of scale;

Social Exclusion Programme projects, for their focus, policy themes, dissemination, documentation and transnationality;

The projects in the Community Programme against discrimination, for bringing issues into the judicial, administrative and political system;

PHARE, for the range and scope of activities funded;

EIDHR, for imaginative micro-projects;

CARDS, for innovation, addressing 'hard' issues, focus and legacy ;

The European Social Fund for multidimensionality, innovation, scale and range;

The Culture programme for empowerment and affirmation.

As may be seen, EQUAL probably scores consistently highest on our model, with other elements to be found among different projects elsewhere. So in summary, in looking for a template of 'good practice', we need to ask prospective projects whether they have the capacity or interest to:

- Prepare properly, following a bottom-up, empowering approach;
- Involve the Roma community in design and management;
- Develop partnership and build institutional linkages;
- Work multi-dimensionally, with a policy focus, addressing root causes;
- Set in place and execute evaluation and dissemination strategies;
- Follow a rights-based approach, addressing inequalities in political power;
- Be able to manage the administrative requirements imposed;
- Create a legacy and
- Develop leadership and capacity.

### 3.3 Implications for funders

This good practice model above serves as a useful basis for setting down criteria both for funders to adopt and for projects to follow. The main onus for doing so falls on funders. It is easy to blame projects for their multiple inadequacies, for following 'bad' rather than 'good' practice, but 'bad' practice is more likely to be the outcome, not of intrinsically 'bad' projects, but of the funding environment and régime which encourages, approves and supervises them. There is a sense in which 'programmes get the projects they deserve' and we examined earlier how bad procedures drove out community development projects likely to be best at empowerment and how the imperative of financial compliance drives out issue-based dissemination and evaluation. The principal implications for the EU funding instruments which we have seen are:

The need to reduce the entry and subsequent participation barriers for community development organizations working with Roma people.

The need to devise pre-project procedures which value consultation, preparation and the bottom-up approach. This is strongly suggestive of a multi-stage approach and lengthy preparatory phase.

The need for funding systems to value quality control, evaluation and dissemination more and to value the currently obsessive levels of financial compliance less.

The need to design funding programmes in such a way as to provide resources on a sufficient scale and for a sufficient length of time (probably 5 to 7 years) to be impactful. EQUAL projects can appear to reach such a threshold.

The need for programme design to make *policy* demands on applicants - that projects address root causes, analyze, report and bring the outcomes into the heart of the political system, including projects that address 'harder' issues as well as softer ones.

The need for programme design to set requirements for multidimensionality, partnership, links to government and institutional frameworks.

The need for a supervisory system to ensure that project outcomes are, in practice, disseminated.

The need for the Commission to outline to the member states its expectation of their cooperation with Roma policy, Roma actors and Roma projects by putting in place the institutional

mechanisms so that the issues arising from these projects can be uploaded into the political and administrative system.

Many of the 'bad practice' problems encountered may be traced to the early phases of projects, a point made forcibly by a number of commentators. The conventional procedure has been for organizations to present 'one shot' proposals, often at short notice and certainly at such short notice as to inhibit proper consultation, the involvement of the Roma community as stakeholders, partnership building and the construction of organizational linkages.

A small but important point is that there is no formal system in place for identifying good practice, the theme of this report. Only one funding instrument encountered in this research, the Roma Education Fund, actually had such a system in place. Here the Commission could consider setting down such a standard, incentivizing projects which reached it, with some form of recognition and award.

It is ironic that EU funding instruments have long incorporated provision for technical assistance which could be used for this purpose; and that some funding programmes have followed a preparatory, followed by a main phase (this may be found in the SEP, for example). Too little use has been made of either approach. One country is known, during the 2004-6 programming period, to have developed a Project Generation Facility (Hungary) in which technical assistance was provided for organizations to develop prospective projects over time, so as to be in a good position to apply once the formal call for proposals was made. Intermediary funding bodies, operating global grants, have often followed lengthy preparatory phases with prospective applicants, but only two examples are known of the use of such a system here (Slovakia and Czech Republic). Regrettably, despite the efforts of the European Anti-Poverty Network, there are few prospects for the significant use of global grants in the new programming period.

Although the primary purpose of this research was to look at good practice in *projects*, a number of lessons have emerged in the area of *good programme design*. Just as we asked the question *What works?* in projects, we should also ask the question *What works?* in good programme design for Roma projects. Here, the lessons are summarized in this table:

*What works?* in programme design

Time for preparation, consultation, participation, bottom-up approach

Participation of those *types* of organizations most likely to deliver these features

Time for building policy dimension, institutional linkages, multidimensionality

Technical assistance during the preparatory phase

Capacity building, leadership development during the operational phase

Global grant funding systems

Project assessment criteria which value policy, rights, institutional dimensions

Quality control or supervision which emphasizes evaluation, dissemination

Systems for identifying, incentivizing, rewarding good practice

### **3.4 Concluding remarks**

The final problem remains of how these issues may best be fed into 'the programme designers' within the Commission. At present, programme design appears to be isolated, independent and uncoordinated. Although, as is evident from part I, many programmes touch on Roma issues but no system is in place for examining their collective impact and inter-relationship with Roma issues. Although no such review system exists, there is the possibility of addressing these issues through the Roma inter-service group, if reformed in composition and upgraded in role, could form the basis of one, as could the high level advisory group on ethnic minorities.

These conclusions also present some challenges for other funders (private, philanthropic, UNDP, REF etc). The size of European Union funding is on a scale much greater than that of these organizations, probably more than the others combined. At one level, there is much that other funders can do to make good the deficiencies of European Union programme design and related systems, such as assisting groups to prepare quality proposals, incentivizing dissemination, building NGO capacity, provide pre-financing, cover spending not eligible for EU funds and so on (Beblavy, 2007). Ultimately though, such measures, while welcome, would leave the European Union's programme design and operating systems unreformed and likely to produce a recurrence of the very problems already highlighted by evaluators (chapter 1). Here, independent funders may wish to consider providing funding to enable Roma organizations, both on a transnational and country-by-country basis to:

- Analyze and evaluate the operation of EU funding instruments which relate to them;

- Act as a voice of critical opinion on the effectiveness of EU funding to ensure the improvement of Roma people; and
- Develop their capacity to work with the European institutions to improve programme design and identify good practice across the broad range of funding issues that affect them.

## **Part II**

### **Guide to funding programmes and how to access them**

#### **General**

European funding programmes of benefit to Roma people may be divided into three categories: the structural funds, internal operations and external operations. Structural funds are large-scale programmes, run and co-funded by the European Commission in cooperation with national governments, using common European-level criteria but largely decided upon by national governments. Internal operations are smaller, more specific programmes run by the Commission mainly from Brussels itself and which are open to applicants from throughout the member states and in some cases beyond them. External operations are programmes also run by the Commission but designed for accession or neighbouring countries (or further afield).

Two important trends in Commission funding should be noted. First, programmes have, over the past number of years, been consolidated into common seven-year funding periods called the 'financial perspective'. The present financial perspective is 2007-2013 so the structural funds, internal operations and external operations now operate within this framework. Second, there has been a simplification and consolidation of funding programmes in the past ten years: programmes are larger in size, but more focussed in scope. Both these trends contrast with the situation in the mid-1990s, when the Commission ran a broad range of smaller funding programmes covering a wide and often richer range of activities, many with different time scales.

Each is now dealt with in turn.

## Structural funds: background

The structural funds, in their present form, were introduced in 1988 and followed five, now seven-year programming periods (1988-93, 1994-9, 2000-6, 2007-13). The structural funds have now been simplified to two funds:

- The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which attempts to redress regional disparities within Europe; and
- The European Social Fund (ESF). Despite its broad title, this was originally only a retraining fund, but now has a broader remit, but still focussed around labour market integration.

In the current programming period, the Commission outlined its priorities for the 2007-2013 in the *Third cohesion report*. Essentially, this laid down three objectives for the structural funds:

- *Convergence*: most funds should be concentrated on the poorest member states, which would eventually converge with the richer states. The poorer states are, principally, the new member states which joined the European Union in 2004 and 2006. 82% of the budget is allocated here;
- *Competition*, some modest funding to improve the competitiveness of the older member states. 16% of the budget is allocated here;
- *Cooperation*, funding to improve cooperation across the borders between the member states, totalling 3% of resources.

The budget provided was €347bn. These priorities were outlined in more detail in Community Strategic Guidelines, approved 2006, which invited each member to present (1) a National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) and (2) Operational Programmes (OPs) explaining how it would put these priorities into practice.

This is the current stage of development. Member states forwarded to the Commission, for approval, their NSRF and OPs in spring 2007. Typically, each country will have a number of OPs, the most relevant one likely to be called an operational programme for human resources development. The management of each OP is normally entrusted to a managing authority, which is generally a government ministry. Sometimes, the money from an OP is simply allocated to existing government agencies, but in some cases, there is a call for projects. The degree to which the structural funds will support Roma projects will depend on the criteria, values, objectives, methods and delivery systems set down in the NSRF and the OPs. Some are more enlightened

than others. To access the structural funds, one must identify the appropriate operational programmes, the appropriate managing authorities and apply to them.

In previous structural fund programming periods, what were called Community Initiative Programmes (CIPs) were also run, up to 13 in the course of 1994-9. These followed particular themes and, unlike the main structural funds, these were programmes with common European criteria and some were designed to be accessible to non-governmental organizations. During 2000-6, there were CIPs for urban development (URBAN), rural development (LEADER+), cross-border cooperation (INTERREG) and equality and non-discrimination (EQUAL). 3,000 EQUAL projects, or 'development partnerships' were funded over 2000-6, of which 23 can be identified as focussed on Roma people. The overall programme budget was €3,274m and the average size of project was slightly over €1m.

As part of the process of simplification, the CIPs have now been abolished. LEADER+ has been transferred to a new fund for rural development, INTERREG has become the cooperation objective and in the case of URBAN, member states have been invited to identify projects for development as part of their spending on the European Regional Development Fund. The Community Strategic Guidelines specified that the objective of EQUAL should be 'mainstreamed' into the new programming period, but did not say how. EQUAL, with its obvious applicability to the Roma community, featured in part I of this compendium and there is the very real danger that there will be no further funding of the type of projects funded in 2000-6. Access to EQUAL-type projects for 2007-2013 will be decided by the appropriate managing authority, probably the one responsible for the human resources operational programme. The URBAN-type projects have the potential to take action in the areas of community development and social inclusion for Roma people, but in practice none of the previous URBAN projects appear to have done so to a significant degree. Here, access will be decided by the managing authority for the ERDF.

## **Structural funds in eastern and central Europe**

European Union funding for the countries of eastern and central Europe began in the early 1990s with the PHARE programme,<sup>2</sup> which was, in effect, a lengthy pre-accession pre-structural

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<sup>2</sup> PHARE has two lexical origins. The original title PHARE stood in English for Poland Hungary Aid for the Restructuring of the Economy and in French, 'phare' is the word for a 'lighthouse'.

funds programme which lasted until 2004, with some spending not concluding until end 2006 (in the case of Bulgaria and Romania, 2006 and 2008 respectively). As with the structural funds, the details of PHARE funding were agreed in cooperation with national governments. Initially, the amount of PHARE funding allocated to Roma project was small - indeed, Guy (2006) described the funding level as insignificant to the point of invisibility. Because entry to the European Union required an improved observance of human rights standards and progress against discrimination, larger amounts of PHARE money came to be allocated to measures to improve the situation of Roma people, such measures becoming more prominent as pre-accession arrangements progressed. For example, the government of Slovakia adopted in 1999 a minority tolerance programme, as well as measures to improve the situation of Roma people in education, local government, self-organization and the legal system. The European Union also ran a number of programmes within PHARE designed to be more accessible by the non-governmental sector, especially around human rights and social inclusion (LIEN, democracy, civil society programmes). These have now concluded.

### **Structural funds and Roma people**

During the 2000-6 programming period, a number of structural fund measures were of benefit to Roma people. Such measures were found mainly in the European Social Fund in general and within the operational programmes for human resources development in particular. For example, in the course of 2004-6, the Polish government developed a measure *Initiative for the development of Roma entrepreneurship*. In Finland, Roma people were a targeted group in objective 3, measure 3.2.3 *Integration of people in a weak position in the labour market*, while measure 3.1.1 *Activation of unemployed people on the open labour market* provided funds for the retraining of unemployed Roma people in the adult training centre in Jyvaskyla. In the Czech Republic, a different approach was taken. Although no measures were specifically allocated to Roma communities within either the human resources operational programme, or the Prague objective 3 region Single Programming Document (SPD), the programme promoters specifically invited Roma organizations to apply and ask regional and labour offices to promote the programme with them. It is anticipated that Roma people will comprise 30% of participants in the SPD measure for active employment policy and 40% of the measure for the integration of specific groups at risk, with a significant take-up of the measure to enhance the quality of education in schools.

The 2007-2013 structural fund operational programmes are currently in the process of approval within the Commission, so the information available on how likely they are to benefit

Roma people is limited. In Slovakia, for example, National Strategic Reference Framework made specific reference to 'the marginalized Roma communities', suggesting a significant expansion of the work of both the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund to assist Roma people (Government of Slovakia, 2006). In Spain, for 2007-2013 there is an operational programme against discrimination, funded through a global grant and run by the Luis Vives Foundation, which is the designated intermediary funding body.

Access to structural funds: apply to ministry responsible in each member state

### **Internal operations**

The European Union runs a number of programmes directly as part of what are called 'internal operations'. Several are relevant to the Roma community. It is stressed that because the new programming period of 2007-2013 has only just commenced, many are still in the process of preparation and some information is not yet detailed.

### **PROGRESS**

The first is the PROGRESS programme, which is a simplification of a number of earlier programmes, principally the Social Exclusion Programme (SEP) and the Community Programme against Discrimination, which featured in part I. SEP was the descendant of the three programmes against poverty developed by the original European Communities (1975-80, 1984-9, 1989-94). The Social Exclusion Programme ran from 2000-6 and had a number of elements, the most relevant of which were 55 transnational exchange projects concerned with different aspects of poverty. The Community Programme against Discrimination, 2000-6, funded 52 transnational projects (2003-6), this time focussing on different aspects of discrimination, such as racial discrimination, gender and age: of these six addressed Roma issues. It is worth noting an important evolution in the Community programmes. Whereas in the 1970s, the Commission funded small, on-the-ground NGO action-research projects, it now preferred much larger, transnational partnerships of NGOs with governments, social partners and research bodies, with a strong policy focus, to see how experience could be learned and transferred from one member state to another.

The SEP and the programme against discrimination are now merged as the PROGRESS programme, with five themes:

Social protection and social inclusion	30%
Employment	23%
Discrimination and diversity	23%
Equality between men and women	12%
Working conditions	10%
Administration	2%

The budget for PROGRESS is €743.25m over 2007-2013. The annual amount rises from €82.9m this year, 2007, to a peak of €120.41m in the final year, 2013. Funding will be in two phases: 2007-2010 and 2011-13. The main activities to be funded will be:

- Analytical - data, statistics, indicators, studies, impact assessments;
- Mutual learning, awareness, dissemination, best practice, peer review, media campaigns and events;
- Support to main actors, networks, working groups, training seminars, expert networks, observatories, personnel exchanges, cooperation with international institutions.

Access to PROGRESS: European Commission, Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs.

### **Justice, Freedom and Security**

A number of funding programmes run by the Directorate General for Freedom, Security and Justice are relevant. This is a growing area of funding within the European Union's overall budget, with an allocation of €542m over 2007-2013, which is in the order of €80m a year. The directorate general has three following relevant funding heads:

- Prevention and combatting of violence against children, young people, and women and to protect groups at risk, the *Daphne III* programme, €114.4m;

- *Fundamental rights and citizenship*, €93.8m; and

- *Civil justice*, €100m.

*Daphne III* is a long-standing programme going back to the 1990s, it is normally heavily over-subscribed and has been intensively by NGOs. It is still awaiting final legislative approval. *Daphne III* will cover not only member states, but candidate countries. *Fundamental rights and citizenship* will fund actions calculated to promote respect for fundamental rights, the strengthening of civil society, the fight against racism and improving cooperation between organizations in the field of the law through support for NGOs, transnational projects and specific actions. *Civil justice* will fund improved judicial cooperation in the civil field, including access to justice. Details are awaited.

Access: European Commission, Directorate General for Freedom, Security and Justice

### **Education & culture**

The Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) runs a number of programmes of relevance. For 2007-2013, these have been grouped together under the €6.97bn lifelong learning programme. *Leonardo da Vinci* is the European Union's flagship programme for vocational training. The objectives are to improve the skills of young people in vocational training, to improve the quality of vocational training; and to reinforce the role of vocational training in business innovation. This is done through pilot projects, transnational networks, joint actions and the production of appropriate tools. The budget for 2000-6 was €1.15bn and the programme was open to projects in the accession countries including Turkey. A small number of Roma projects were funded (see part I). Some educational opportunities may also be open in the areas of school education (the *Comenius* programme) and adult education (*Grundtvig*) and a number of Roma-related projects and networks were funded here over 2000-6. It should be stressed that although budgets are at first sight large, significant amounts are committed to mobility, exchanges between educational groups and multinational learning networks, rather than on-the-ground projects.

*Youth* is a €885m programme for 2007-2013 to encourage contact between young people and youth organizations across Europe, with an emphasis on promoting participation in democratic life, networking, exchange across borders and policy cooperation. The new €400m *Culture* programme, 2007-2013 has three strands: multinational cultural action (61%), support for European cultural bodies (10%) and support for analysis and dissemination (5%). In addition to DG EAC, there are national contact points for this programme.

Finally, DG EAC runs a citizenship programme, with a number of relevant strands: citizens participation project (a new one, from 2008); *Active civil society for Europe*; European remembrance (victims of genocide, e.g. the holocaust), pilot actions and best practice in citizenship. *Active civil society for Europe* has a sub-strand *Support to projects initiated by civil society organizations* which will support transnational European networks contributing to citizenship and European integration.

Access: European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture

### **Health**

The public health programme is a large-scale programme directed toward the prevention of communicable diseases and health threats, improved know-how and research. Although a well-funded programme (€365m), it has quite limited scope for activities by health-related NGOs working in the area of community health. The programme includes candidate countries and Turkey, with a 2007 first call for proposals of €33m. Priorities for 2007 are health information systems, the improving of reporting systems, strategies for addressing health threats, e-health, environmental health, good practice, pandemics, health security, health determinants, addictions (e.g. drugs), lifestyle improvements and capacity-building.

Access: European Commission, Directorate General for Health

### **Economy**

There are no specific funds available to assist the Roma economy. During the 1990s, the Commission ran programmes for the development of the social economy, since disappeared and much larger programmes for Small and Medium size Enterprises (SMEs). For the 2007-2013 period, the Directorate General for Enterprise has revised its grant programmes and SMEs ap-

pear to be mainstreamed within broader programmes and policies. The main funding programme is the €320m *Services in support of business and innovation*. Although SMEs continue to be a focus of interest, the emphasis is on business cooperation networks, information sharing and technology transfer.

Access: European Commission, Directorate General for Enterprise

It is worth emphasizing that these programmes are not designed for nor geared to Roma social service providers, nor even to Roma activist NGOs. But larger Roma NGOs with a reasonable level of capacity might find possibilities therein for developing thematic transnational projects in particular fields of interest with comparable like-minded NGOs.

### **External operations**

The European Union has a set of programmes which are relevant for neighbouring, accession, candidate or prospective member states and which, in budget terms, fit into the global programme of assistance of countries outside the Union. These programmes are led by the Commission's Directorate General for Enlargement and the EuropeAid office (in effect a directorate general, though not so formally called), as well as an independent Community agency operating in a number of neighbouring countries, the European Agency for Reconstruction.

Historically, the most relevant was the CARDS programme (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization), which formally concluded in 2006, although spending may run to end 2008. CARDS had a broad brief, which included economic reform, energy, infrastructure, good governance, institution-building, social integration, civil society and the improvement of the situation of refugees. CARDS was operated by the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR), which was established in 2000 in Thessaloniki, Greece as an independent Community agency to manage European aid programmes (Europeaid) in Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It has operational offices in Skopje, Pristina, Podgorica and Belgrade. The annual budget is €282m (2005). While some CARDS allocations went to the more immediate problems of Roma people still displaced by the Balkan wars and living in camps in poor conditions (e.g. Kosovo), CARDS also provided more medium to long term assistance. In 2005, for example, this included targeted assistance to Roma people in Serbia (€1m), the placing of Roma people in municipal authorities (Serbia, €0.6m), *Durable solutions for the Roma through empowerment* (Montenegro, €0.3m) and assistance to the Roma

community in Bitola (Macedonia, see case study). CARDS in Croatia, for example, provided €500,000 for the building of civil society, which went into an NGO house intended for organizations concerned with peace-building, social inclusion and the integration of refugees.

Turkey falls outside CARDS and the west Balkan programmes. Instead, relationships with Turkey were governed under a series of accession partnership agreements. A number of specific grant programmes for NGOs operated in Turkey. Funding under the 2005 programme was available in for 45 projects to the value of almost €3m, with calls in 2006 and funding running into 2007. None was available specifically for minorities or Roma people, but it listed headings of women's rights, social inclusion of people with disabilities, consumer rights, children's rights and environmental protection, human rights and democracy, violence against women, culture and NGO support.

#### **External operations: Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA)**

From 2007 and in order to fit into the financial perspective of 2007-2013, CARDS, PHARE and the Turkey programme were replaced by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), which covers both applicant members and potential applicant members and is a consolidation of earlier programmes. Essentially, it covers all the western Balkans countries and Turkey (but not Ukraine). The budget for 2007-2010 is €1,255m with five strands: transition assistance/institution building; cross border cooperation; regional development; human resources; and rural development. This will include the strengthening of democratic institutions, respect for human and minority rights, support for civil society and the reduction of poverty. IPA is still in an early stage of development, but it is reasonable to presume that there will be significant opportunities for Roma organizations.

Access: European Commission, Directorate General for Enlargement and, in appropriate countries, the European Agency for Reconstruction, Thessaloniki, Greece.

#### **External operations: human rights**

The European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) is operated by EuropeAid. This operates not just in the candidate countries and potential candidate countries but throughout the world. The initiative is interested in both generalist and specific human rights and de-

mocracy projects, specialized ones focussing on such issues as the death penalty, torture and also racism and xenophobia. About €100m is available annually. Some of the projects funded by EIDHR in the western Balkans appear to have at least some similarity with projects funded through CARDS. A new EIDHR is currently being set in place for 2007-2013. In the course of 2000-6, EIDHR funded a mixture of (1) own initiative projects (2) large scale projects of over €150,000 and (3) micro- projects, this being defined as up to €100,000, mainly used by NGOs for activities in the areas of human rights and democratization activities managed by grass-roots NGOs. In Turkey, for example, the 2000-6 programme funded eight macro-projects and 28 micro-projects for €1.8m, which included disadvantaged groups, anti-discrimination and the promotion of diversity.

In its most recent call for proposals, under the racism heading, EIDHR allocated €4.1m to 12 projects, six of which are in the area which concerns us. These included:

- Stichtung CARE Netherlands, €262,000 for the Bosnia Roma human rights projects;
- €389,000 for Kindershilfswerk, Germany, for the integration and empowerment of minority children in Albania, Serbia and Montenegro;
- €226,000 for the Humanitarian Law Fund to protect minority rights, in Serbia and Montenegro;
- €300,000 for CARE Deutschland youth activists involved in work against racism in Serbia and Montenegro;
- €471,000 for the Minority Rights Group to combat discrimination and promote minority rights in Turkey; and
- €360,000 for the European Roma Rights Centre to protect Roma rights in Turkey.

Access: EuropeAid, European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights; and, for micro-projects, the Commission delegations in each member state.

## **Methodological note, including definition of ‘good practice’**

The dissemination of good practice has been an enduring feature of European-level programmes for over thirty years. Many have indeed worked on the assumption that the standard of social policy and practice can be driven up by the cataloguing, exchange and dissemination of ‘good practice’. An enduring problem, though, is that ‘good practice’ has rarely been defined. Here, in defining good practice, this report was informed by the policy tools developed in Britain by the Government Centre for Management and Policy Studies in *Beyond the horizon toolkit* and the Cabinet office’s *Identifying good practice in the use of programme and project management*.

This project works on a model developed by EuroHealthNet within the Social Exclusion Programme (Stegeman & Costongs, 2004). This model has the advantages of being up to date, based on the project’s *a priori* examination of what constitutes ‘good practice’ and is relevant to and transferable to our field of work. Adapting their model gives us a definition of ‘good practice’ as follows - projects which:

- Had reached a level of learning;
- Can indicate the effectiveness of their intervention in some way;
- Address policy issues, have a policy focus and address policy-makers;
- Are understandable by and are useful and relevant to policy-makers.

Such projects *may*:

- Have a broad or narrow target group;
- Be large or small in scale, or work in a variety of settings (urban/rural);
- Derive funding from a number of different sources;
- Have different actors (government, NGOs etc).

*Desiderata*: it is *desirable* that examples:

- Take an empowering, bottom-up approach;
- Face the root causes and situations of social exclusion;

- Address issues of discrimination;
- Are gender sensitive;
- Collaborate, network or share with other organizations;
- Attempt to achieve sustainability;
- Demonstrate innovation;
- Stimulate ideas;
- Can be transferred to other countries, programmes and situations.

In the search for good practice, European, intergovernmental and NGO organizations were invited to take these points into consideration. As 'sources' show, good practice examples were nominated from a number of sources, such as the European Commission (e.g. ESF *Leonardo*, CARDS and PHARE). Outside the European institutions, good practices were nominated by Impreuna Community Development Agency (Romania) and Amalipe (Bulgaria). On the governmental side, recommendations were given by the Ministry of Construction and Regional Development, Bratislava.

In practice, obtaining good practice examples up to these demanding standards proved to be quite difficult, for the following reasons:

- Few funding bodies appeared to have an operational definition of 'good practice', any kind of rigorous system for rating a project accordingly, or some form of standard
- Some organizations cited 'good practice' without ever making clear the criteria adopted.
- The information provided on the projects concerned was so minimal as to make a decision to include them as 'good practice' quite marginal'.
- Documentation on project progress was very limited.

The material available for the compendium presented a number of challenges. Not all the projects included had either concluded at the time of writing, nor were end-of-project reports available. The EQUAL programme provided a series of helpful summaries of projects, many of which appear to have been compiled at some stage into the projects concerned, but generally before their conclusion. Some end-of-project reports were more useful than others. Here we

note the comprehensive nature of the report on the TRAILER project (European Dialogue, 2006) and insightful nature of the report on the Hungarian SEP project (Tanaka, 2007).

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