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Strasbourg, 4 May 2014

'Mirrors' training course
**Combating antigypsyism
through Roma youth
participation**

11 – 16 September 2017

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, France



**Course Presentation and
Call for Participants**

(**deadline for applying: 15 June 2017**)

The Roma Youth Action Plan

The Roma Youth Action Plan (hereafter [RYAP](#)) is a project by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe which aims to support the participation and inclusion of Roma youth across Europe. Initiated in 2011, the project is a response of the Council of Europe to the challenges faced by Roma young people in Europe, particularly in relation to empowerment, participation in policy and decision-making processes and structures, and to the multiple realities of discrimination they are confronted.

The project gives priority to human rights and intercultural dialogue as responses to discrimination and antigypsyism and relies on the principle of double-mainstreaming and youth participation to support the efforts of young Roma reach their full potential as citizens and as young people.

Capacity-building and the development of competencies of young Roma, organisations and networks have been a central part of the RYAP project and is a way of supporting the autonomy and participation of Roma youth in areas of their concern. Issues of structural discrimination and antigypsyism have been identified as main concerns of Roma youth as structural obstacles for access to their human rights. The more autonomous and competent young Roma are, the better chances are for their self-organization to counter the effects of discrimination and antigypsyism.

Antigypsyism as a specific form of racism towards Roma remains widespread in the public domain and impacts heavily on the social, economic, political and cultural disadvantage of Roma. Given that youth consist a large part of the Roma community, it is significantly important to create opportunities for learning, analysing and creating ideas for responding to antigypsyism.

In April 2015, the Council of Europe published [Mirrors](#) – *Manual on combating antigypsyism through human rights education*. This educational resource provides teachers, trainers, and facilitators of non-formal educational processes with essential information and methodological tools to address antigypsyism with young people of all ages and in any social-cultural setting. The manual is articulated from the perspective of human rights, human rights education and youth work as approaches in working with young people in raising awareness and countering antigypsyism as a human rights violation while at the same time promoting a culture of universal human rights.

Mirrors reflects the working definition of antigypsyism as “a historically constructed, persistent complex of customary racism against social groups identified under the stigma “gypsy” or other related terms and incorporates, a) a homogenising and essentialising perception and description of these groups; b) the attribution of specific characteristics of them; c) discriminating social structures and violent practices that emerge against that background, which have a degrading and ostracising effect and which reproduce structural disadvantages.”¹

Mirrors is currently available in French, English and Greek languages. Other language versions are expected during 2017, including Bulgarian and Hungarian.

Roma youth participation in all areas of society is an important aim and approach to address and overcome antigypsyism and its consequences on young people. Participation is an important process to promote inclusion and equality; it is also a way to promote autonomy and responsibility of young people. Roma youth participation includes also the development of youth-led organisations (including Roma youth organisations), but it goes beyond that and embraces nowadays many forms of individual and collective youth participation, including online participation.

Youth participation is also a concept central to the Council of Europe youth policy whose aims is to provide young people with equal opportunities and experience which enable them to develop the knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society.

The training course

The training course aims at developing the competences of 30 participants in understanding and countering antigypsyism and its impacts on Roma youth in Europe today and developing youth participation projects and initiatives for Roma young people's access to rights at all levels.

Specific objectives:

- To explore and deepen the understanding of the concept of antigypsyism, its structurality and wide range of manifestations for Roma young people
- To increase the competence of 30 youth activists, educators and leaders and implement educational and project responses for countering the effects of antigypsyism within a human rights framework
- To identify criteria and initiate specific projects for Roma youth participation at local and national level
- To support the exchange of information and networking among participants, Roma and non-Roma, and their organisations
- To strengthen the capacities of Roma youth leaders and their organisations to educate about and advocate for the recognition of antigypsyism and its consequences on Roma youth today
- To encourage participants and organisations to use and disseminate Mirrors and other educational tools available.

Expected outcomes:

- Indepth understanding of antigypsyism as a specific form of racism and the consequences for Roma youth participation
- A group of youth leaders are competent and able to act against antigypsyism and develop specific projects in this regard
- Roma youth participation is supported in Roma and youth-led projects Mirrors and other educational tools of the Council of Europe relevant to address antigypsyism are disseminated and promoted

The rational of the training seminar is based on:

- The need to understand the current policy initiatives around antigypsyism and to define the meaning and manifestations for Roma youth movements and youth organisations in general
- The need to find ways to effectively respond to such racism and to support the participation of Roma young people
- The need to support Roma youth participation in mainstream youth organisations and projects.

Methodology of the training course

The training workshop is designed to give participants the opportunity to experience and reflect upon activities and concepts central to human rights, human rights education and combating antigypsyism, based on experiential learning approaches. The seminar will make an effort to go deeper into understanding the structurality and complexity of antigypsyism. The training course shall focus also on the quality and effectiveness of Roma youth participation projects and initiatives. The programme will include theoretical and

practical approaches based on participants' experiences and, taking advantage of non-formal learning approaches, favour experiential and dialogical learning.

Profile of participants

The Mirrors training course is designed for youth activists, youth leaders and representatives of organisations working with Roma communities, particularly working with Roma youth.

All participants should:

- be actively involved in combating discrimination and antigypsyism at local, national or European level
- be active within a Roma or youth organisation
- have some experience in developing and running educational activities with young people based on non-formal education/learning
- Be motivated to develop projects and initiatives against antigypsyism and for the participation of Roma young people
- Be aged between 18 and 30 years. (exceptions are possible)
- Be able to work in English

Practical and financial conditions

The training seminar will be held during 11 September– 16 September at the European Youth Center Strasbourg. Selected participants are requested to attend and participate for the entire duration of the course. The arrivals to Strasbourg should be planned for 10 September and departure for 17 September.

The working language of the training seminar will be in English. It is expected participant to be able to express themselves in English.

Accommodation and meals for the event will be provided at the European Youth Center Strasbourg and paid for by the Council of Europe. Travel costs and visa fees for the seminar will be fully reimbursed according to Council of Europe rules.

Application process

All candidates must apply online, completing the application form through the following link:

<http://youthapplications.coe.int/Application-forms>

All candidates must apply online and send their application forms by **15 June 2017 at 14:00 CET**.

Further information and contact

For information related to the training course contact Denis Durmish, e-mail: Denis.Durmish@coe.int

ⁱ Alliance against antigypsyism – a reference paper, July 2016.