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Strasbourg, 11 September 2017

Regional training course on Roma youth participation and combating antigypsyism

6 - 9 November 2017

Vilnius, Lithuania



Call For Participants

(deadline for applying: 15 October 2017)

The Roma Youth Action Plan

The Roma Youth Action Plan (hereafter RYAP¹) is a project by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe which aims to support the participation and inclusion of Roma² 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 principles of double-mainstreaming, youth participation and capacities building to support the efforts of young Roma reach their full potential as citizens and as young people. The support to regional, national and local level processes and structures relevant to Roma youth is among the priorities of the RYAP, particularly in countries where the Roma community is less visible.

Youth participation is the active engagement of young people in their own context and includes young people being included and involved in decision making at all levels. Youth participation invites young people to take on responsibilities, face challenges and to become active in terms of realising their own aspirations and needs, to take responsibility for and deal with the consequences of their decisions and actions. There are many forms in which young people can individually and/or collectively participate in bringing decisions such as consultations, campaigning activities, membership in organisations, youth councils, etc., including through various online participation channels and opportunities. Roma youth participation in all areas of the society is an important aim and approach to address and overcome antigypsyism, discrimination and social and economic marginalisation. Participation plays an important role in promotion and securing inclusion, equality and access to rights for all.

Antigypsyism is a specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, an institutional racism, which is expressed, among others, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation and the most blatant kind of discrimination. Antigypsyism remains widely spread in the public domain and impacts heavily on the social, economic, political and cultural disadvantage of Roma, particularly Roma youth. Empowering young people and relevant stakeholders to take action against discrimination and antigypsyism and support youth participation is crucial to any action or policy that seeks to promote a long term social, political and economic change among Roma youth.

Roma communities living in the Baltic States are relatively small in size compared to the overall population; nevertheless, they still face major challenges for their social and economic integration and participation. Low rates of educational enrolment and attainment, low levels of qualifications for the labour market, poor housing conditions and spatial segregation, negative attitudes and discrimination towards Roma are among the key reasons for the current social marginalization as stipulated with the relevant national policy documents³. At the same time, the level of self-organisation and representation of Roma youth in social and political life is almost inexistent.

¹ <http://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-roma/home>

² The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "Gens du voyage", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.

³ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma-integration/index_en.htm

The training course is organised in partnership with the Department of National Minorities of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Culture of Latvia, and the Ministry of Culture of Estonia with the support of "Sare Rome" Roma youth organisation from Lithuania.

The training course

The training course will aim develop participants competences in acting against antigypsyism and in support of participation of young Roma at national and local levels and it will aspire to promote active citizenship of Roma youth in improving the social and economic conditions of Roma communities through mainstream and targeted interventions in policy and programme areas, with a particular attention to education and employment.

Specific training objectives:

- To develop social and practical skills of 25 participants from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia of organising activities and actions in support of Roma youth participation at local and national levels
- To encourage exchange of information, networking and learning among Roma and non-Roma participants and organisations
- To explore and better understand the concept of antigypsyism and to be able to develop educational and human rights based responses in addressing such racist and discriminatory practices against Roma
- To develop proposals for the inclusion of Roma youth issues into social inclusion policies and programmes at all levels
- To analyse key challenges and to develop actions that will foster social and economic development of Roma communities in the targeted countries

Profile of participants

The training course is organised for young people, activists, educators, youth leaders and others who are:

- Involved or interested to support young Roma
- Connected with the Roma communities in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia
- Committed to organise a follow-up activity or actions against antigypsyism and/or in support of Roma youth participation at national or local level
- Motivated to learn, network and share with other training participants
- Residents of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia
- Able to express themselves in Russian language

Practical and financial conditions

Working languages

The working language of the training course will be Russian. Romany or native languages of the participants may be used for working groups during the event.

Travel and accommodation

The travel expenses of participants, accommodation and meals will be covered by the organisers of the event.

Dates

Participants must arrive at the training venue on the **5th November in the afternoon and leave on 9th November in the afternoon**. The training course will be held during 6-9 November. Participants are expected to attend the full duration of the training course.

How to apply

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

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

The deadline for submission of applications is 15 October at 18:00 CET.

The Council of Europe (and partners) welcomes applications from all candidates who fulfil the above mentioned profile, irrespective of gender, disability, marital or parental status, racial, ethnic or social origin, colour, religion, belief or sexual orientation.

Further information and contact

For further information about the training course, the application procedure and financial and practical conditions please refer to: Denis Durmish (in English), denis.durmish@coe.int or to Istvan Kvik (in Russian), sarerroma@gmail.com