

# DREAM ROAD



Danube Transnational Programme  
**DREAM ROAD**

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

An abstract, stylized landscape in shades of blue and green. The terrain consists of rolling hills and a winding path that leads towards a bright, glowing point of light in the distance. A vertical dotted line of light points down from the top of the page to this glowing point. The background is dark blue with small white specks, suggesting a night sky or a digital space.

## FINAL BROCHURE OF THE DREAM ROAD PROJECT

## DREAM ROAD introduction

Exclusionary dynamics of social inequality and poverty are mirrored in every aspect of daily life of Europe's 10–12 million Roma people. In recent years, hope of progress has been shattered by hardened political discourse with particularly harsh impact on Roma, living in overwhelmingly poor conditions on the margins of society and facing extreme levels of social exclusion. Shameful persecution at national levels, underpinned with vows to root out and expel Roma, has shifted the conversation from the need to improve a situation the minority has been condemned to, to questioning their right to inhabit areas they have made their home.

DREAM ROAD seeks to empower members of Roma communities to become agents of change. Participatory development of novel interventions to enhance digital, information and functional literacy of Roma people and establishment of broad alliances in their implementation are key results of the projects. Transferrable pilot implementations root in the development of computer-supported collaborative learning

labs as catalysts of knowledge, hands-on learning and digital access, where members of overlooked and often failed communities can obtain skills and know-how to function as informed users and equal members of society. Meaningful cooperation of Roma communities, public authorities and local communities is key in achieving success in implementation of such community ecosystems.

DREAM ROAD builds capacities of public bodies to better cope with Roma issues through innovation and dialogue, providing community representatives with the know-how to achieve lasting impact. The long-term objective is to create enduring and meaningful, transparent and interactive processes stimulating mutual responsiveness of all societal actors. Transnational framework will allow for implementation of transferrable solutions, tested in locally specific environments, which will serve as guidelines in future policymaking.

**10-12 milion**

Roma people in Europe

**Aprox. 50%**

of this population lives in Danube Region

**80% of Roma**

living in the target region suffers from social and economic exclusion

**Largest**

ethnic minority

**in the European Union**

**Empowerment**

**DEVELOPMENT**

Local Communities

**INNOVATION**

**COOPERATION**

Poverty

Prejudices

Discrimination

**LEARNING**

Social Exclusion

Marginalization

**PARTICIPATION**

Antigypsyism

**Human Rights**

Persecution

## Roma marginalization

Pro-Roma approaches are generally not popular among the majority population and prejudices/ stereotypes are actively reinforced through traditional media and new social media. Even mainstream parties are riding on the populist approaches of “iron hand” expressed in calls for penalising and disciplining the poor, and Roma in particular. It is only through examples and best practice sharing where we may anticipate a change.

According to the Roma Survey 2021 of the Fundamental Right Agency (Roma in 10 European Countries) 56% of Roma are NEET comparing with 11% the general EU population. 71% of young Roma drop out of the education system prematurely, while the dropout rate for those aged 18-24 in the EU is only 10%.

Among other things, FRA’s research showed that

- 80% of the Roma population live in poverty, while the EU average is 17%.
- The employment rate of the Roma population is 43%, which is significantly lower than the

EU average of 72%. At the same time only 28% of Roma women were employed compared to 58% of Roma men.

- The Roma life expectancy for women is 71 years, for men 67, while the EU average is 82 and 76 years for women and men.

Problem is that these positive pressures are in the same time encompassed by transition of the labour market affiliated with automatization and IT technologies, resulting in rapidly diminishing demand especially for lower skills labour. There is also very different demand for new employees among the countries and even regions of the countries. The so called “Roma problem” cannot be addressed in isolation from broader social and economic development. Globally and locally we see rapid changes that need to address by evidence-based and tested approaches and policies.

The beginning should be in addressing the prejudices/stereotypes aimed at the Roma ethnic minority. These are widespread and naturally presented in schools, labour offices, municipalities to all other related spheres. It is often in low personal skills for job interviews, missing or weak formal CV (e.g., lacking education, verified official

experience) which may prevent Roma from success in the competition with majority. Many Roma people are in reality skilled and experienced, sometimes with work experience from abroad, but need to declare this in alternative ways.

## Rationale of the Roma support policies

Diversity is a core value of the European Union. Public authorities, companies and organisations that recognise and value diversity as a development or business strategy by putting people first, regardless of their gender, race, age, religion, sexual preferences or physical disability, have a longer-term advantage. The discrimination of the vulnerable groups and specifically Roma, contribute to the deepening inequality and marginalization and multiply the problems instead of solving them.

Undoubtedly, human rights and social rights, together with promotion of Active Labor Market Policies and Education Policies brings important framework. What is key challenge is its

implementation. Cohesion and pre-accession policy of the EU is gradually stronger and more targeted on Roma. Better aiming of the interventions from the public funds, and promotion of certain affirmative action regarding EU funds on behalf of Roma (e.g. Roma as so called horizontal priority) is a way.

Regional surveys point out to the key role of public authorities, who are at the end implementing most parts of the general framework. They need more support and incentives. If the policymakers' leadership is pro-active, we may see rather progressive approaches. Yet it applies also other way round and there are documented cases where biased and/or passive attitude to development initiatives practically blocked local initiatives and prevents progress. The state, non-state actor, media and public need to support public officers, share lessons learned and promote best practices.

## Roma participation on the community development

National and local policies should define the minimum mandatory aspects and channels of Roma people's participation in policy development, implementation, and monitoring, as well as EU funds programming, including written participation protocols defining the mandate (scope and nature of engagement), composition (principles for member selection), work methods and expected results of the bodies' consultations and participation in order to ensure effective cooperation, trust and responsibility.

Opportunities for empowering Roma communities at the local level should be created so that the community can explicitly and strategically influence social and political changes. The mobilization of the community should be viewed as a deliberate inclusive and participatory process involving Roma, local governments, and organizations.

Furthermore, in accordance with the recommendations, it should be ensured that the Roma people are represented in politics and

consultative processes in their entirety (including nationals and non-nationals, marginalized and integrated people, women, children, and young people). Naturally, initiatives for the involvement of more Roma experts, who will act as mediators and help deal with the constant lack of trust between Roma and the majority community, should be improved to ensure the Roma people's better participation in social processes - this refers to encouraging even stronger mechanisms for Roma inclusion on both national and local levels.

To ensure participation, influence should be exerted on the promotion of cooperation in the civil society sector between Roma and other organizations focusing on Roma support, particularly those focusing on the rights of children, young people, and women. In addition to domestic funds, EU and other funds that provide regular support for capacity-building should be actively used to launch various projects.

Participation of Roma in local policy development-modalities:

- Involving representatives of Roma civil society organizations or Roma individuals in local policy making bodies (councils, committees, working groups, local assemblies)
- Employment of Roma in local self government and relevant institutions
- Involving Roma in governing boards of relevant institutions (such as education, health, social protection, employment etc institutions)

## DREAM ROAD achievements:

- ✓ **Handbook** of best practices of Roma empowerment, innovative and participatory approaches developed
- ✓ **Toolbox** presenting the smart participatory methods, techniques, and tools in the context of Roma inclusion at local, regional and national levels prepared

✓ **LEARNING LABs** aimed onto advancement of digital, information and functional literacy of Roma in involved Danube Region countries established

✓ Facilitators to ensure participation of stakeholders, mentor and mobilize Roma communities trained

✓ **Virtual Know-how platform** as a collaborative space for all parties to develop solutions, exchange knowledge and accelerate learning mechanisms created

✓ Competence development trainings for public authorities, policy makers and relevant stakeholders organized

✓ **Transnational Danube cooperation strategy** targeting Roma inclusion through participatory approaches and community empowerment developed

## DREAM ROAD partners

DREAM ROAD project includes project partners from 10 participating Danube countries:



**Austria**



**Romania**



**Bulgaria**



**Serbia**



**Czech Republic**



**Slovakia**



**Hungary**



**Slovenia**



**Moldova**



**Ukraine**





■ Mapa Dunajského regionu



## Research and Educational Centre Mansion Rakičan (RIS)

Address:

Lendavska ulica, 28 Rakičan  
9000 Murska Sobota  
Slovenia

Research and Educational Centre Mansion Rakičan (RIS) is a public institute, founded by the Municipality of Murska Sobota. Firmly embedded in the local community, RIS is active in the field of culture, research, education, innovation, tourism and carries out several social programmes for different societal groups, while also cooperating with the local community, national organizations, service providers, business partners and international organizations to contribute to local development. The organisation employs experts in the field of social work and is devoted to making a difference in the lives of individuals through its numerous programmes dedicated to wider inclusion of different vulnerable groups.



## Institute of Social Innovations (USI)

Address:

Na Návsí 218, 664 51 Kobylnice  
Office: Divadelní 4, 621 00 Brno  
Czech Republic

Institute of Social Innovations provides education and training for preparation of local social economic development projects with respect of sustainability principles, employment, human potential development and environment.

USI cooperates with labour offices and operates in adult education field ensuring training programs for unemployed persons and vulnerable socially excluded groups (youth, elderly, disabled people, women on maternity leave, etc.) with the aim at making them successful on labour market and find employment, focusing mainly on new labour market opportunities. The organization has experience in working with social innovation aspects including involvement of local, regional and other different stakeholders into the project implementation (e.g. local and regional public authorities, SMEs, NGOs and other stakeholders). The objective of this approach is to involve all

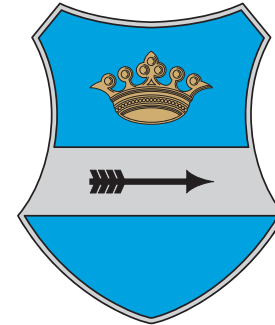
relevant bodies in the development of the area in the long term and to positively influence further development in the regional and national context, taking into account economic, social and environmental benefits for the society.



## Zala County Regional Development Agency Nonprofit Ltd. (ZMTÜ)

Address:  
Kosztolányi u. 10.  
8900 Zalaegerszeg  
Hungary

Zala County Regional Development Agency Nonprofit Ltd. carries out regional and rural development tasks in Zala County and assists the work of Zala County Government in defining the long-term development directions and objectives for the county, and it helps planning and implementing national and international projects. The agency also promotes the employment and qualification of disadvantaged people in the labour market, facilitates equal opportunities, and provides activities related to the national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary.



## Nevo Parudimos Association (NEVO)

Address:

P-ța Traian Vuia, nr.1-4, building E, ground floor  
320085 Resita, Caras-Severin  
Romania

Nevo Parudimos Association it's a nonprofit apolitical organization which was founded by a group of teachers, Roma activists and Roma students from Caras-Severin County, in the south-west of Romania in 2008. The aim of the Nevo Parudimos association is to decrease the economic, social, educational and cultural differences in the society.

NEVO activities are split in more fields like: education, culture, social work, community development, human rights, youth work and volunteering, as well as specialized internships for students of Social Work department in Eftimie Murgu University.



## Amalipe Center for Interethnic Dialogue and Tolerance (AMALIPE)

Address:

23 Marno Pole Str., Floor 4, Office 5  
5000 Veliko Tarnovo  
Bulgaria

AMALIPE is the largest Roma organization working for better education, community development and equal integration of Roma in Bulgarian society. The name itself indicates the goals and the way of work of the organization - "Amalipe" is a Roma word that means "friendship": working for Roma integration, we include people of all ethnicities. There is a huge potential in the Roma community that can help Bulgaria become a more developed and economically stronger country. This will help to make life better for all ethnic groups, and active people from all ethnic groups must be involved in this process. That is why Amalipe Centre unites the efforts of Roma, Bulgarians, Turks and others, guided by the values of interethnic dialogue and tolerance. And this path passes through the EDUCATION we try to give to the children, parents and the community we work with, together with

nearly 300 schools from all over the country, united in the Network "Every student will be a winner" and over 400 educational mediators.

**We believe that every child can succeed and achieve their dreams, as long as they have someone to believe in them and encourage them to believe in themselves!**



**АМАЛИПЕ**  
Център за междуетнически  
диалог и толерантност



## Roma Adult Education Organization Burgenland (VHS Roma)

Address:  
Raingasse 9b  
7400 Oberwart  
Austria

### About us

The aim of the Burgenland Roma Adult Education Center, founded in 1999 as a sub-organization of the Burgenland Adult Education Centre, is to create educational opportunities for Romnija/Roma and non-Roma who are interested in the language and culture of the Roma, and to promote encounters and exchange between Romnija/Roma and non-Roma .

One of the offers of the VHS of the Burgenland Roma are Romani language courses, which are offered at different levels. The target group of the language courses are, for example, social workers or project managers who work with Roma, but also Romnija and Roma who want to learn the minority language.



In addition, there are a number of events on Roma culture, such as talks with Holocaust survivors, readings from books by and about Roma, commemorative events, film screenings, etc. New concepts of communication between Romnija/Roma and non-Roma are being tested. For example, a moderated regulars' table is offered or coffee groups on specific topics.



## Institute for Cultural Relations Policy (ICRP)

Address:

Gyöngyösi u. 45. 8 lh. fszt. 3  
1131 Budapest  
Hungary

Founded in 2012, the Institute for Cultural Relations Policy (ICRP) is a non-governmental and non-profit organisation fostering scientific education and public discourse regarding cultural relations policy. The institution is officially run by Kulturalis Kapcsolatokert Alapitvány, based in Budapest, Hungary. The ICRP focuses on global intercultural dialogue, the promotion and protection of International Human Rights, the recognition of cultural diversity and religious and minority issues. Moreover, the ICRP puts a great emphasis on the professional development of young generations by conducting an internationally known and popular Internship Programme and regularly organising different trainings and workshops. The foundation has offices in Finland, Georgia, Armenia, Turkey, Ukraine and Mali with similar structure, aims and objectives as the ICRP Budapest has.





## Roma Inclusion Office (RIO)

Address:  
Bulevar Mihajla Pupina 25  
21000 Novi Sad  
Serbia

The Roma Inclusion Office was founded in order to improve the position of Roma in the field of education, employment, health, housing, human and other rights, as well as to create conditions for Roma inclusion in all spheres of social, public and political life.

Main activities of the organisation include: Implementation and of the Roma Integration Strategy and implementation of action plans on the territory of the Province; Coordination of various Roma integration projects involving individual line Provincial Secretariats; Coordination with the National Council of the Roma National Minority, the Roma Integration Council in the Province and with relevant organizations and bodies at the international level; Promotion of women's and human rights of Roma; Monitoring the implementation of the Roma integration process; Preparation of analytical documentation

for planning and programming of activities related to Roma integration in the Province; Cooperation and consultation with governmental and non-governmental organizations and bodies in the field of Roma integration and improvement of their position, etc.



**Kancelarija za inkluziju Roma  
Novi Sad**



## Know How Centre (KHC)

Address:

Boulevard Jovana Ducica 25

21000 Novi Sad

Serbia

The Know How Centre was established on February 14th 2012. Our Mission is to develop communities towards inclusion of vulnerable groups through establishing and developing innovative services. We strive to increase visibility and participation of marginalized groups in the field of social and economic policy, through empowerment of local community actors-civil society organizations, authorities and institutions. Also, we want to increase sensibility and accountability of the government towards vulnerable groups, through direct communication of our policy analysis findings, as well as through raising these issues on the public agenda.

Our work is organized in 3 pillars/programs:

1. Program for Children and Family with goal to innovate existing and initiate new systems of support to children and families on a local and national level.

2. Roma Program with goal to contribute to protection and improvement of Roma position.
3. Youth Program with goal to contribute to better position of youth.



## Representation in the Republic of Moldova of the Foundation Terre des hommes Lausanne - Switzerland (TDH Moldova)

Address:

Nicolae Iorga street 6, Apod. 3  
2009 Chisinau  
Moldova

Terre des hommes is the leading Swiss child relief agency. Founded in 1960, the organization is committed to improving the lives of millions of the world's most vulnerable children. Through our innovative protection, migration, access to justice and health projects, we support more than 5 million children and their families in 30 countries.

Working in Moldova since 2004, Terre des hommes is dedicated to ensuring the fulfilment of Children's fundamental rights and the proper protection of all children in Moldova. TDH Moldova works to reduce the vulnerability of children affected by migration and improve their protection; to improve children's access to their rights in the juvenile justice system, promoting a restorative

approach; to strengthen the capacity of child protection institutions and professionals, as well as children, families and communities in general. More recently, the organization carries out youth empowerment projects.



## NGO Youth Space (NYS)

Address:  
Shvabska street 12B  
88000 Uzhhorod  
Ukraine

**YOUTH  
SPACE**

Non-governmental organization "Youth Space" is an association of active youth that aims to promote the development of civil society; activation of youth at the regional, state and international levels; creation of new opportunities for personal, social, economic, creative, cultural and other development, youth self-realization and manifestation their abilities in all possible directions and fields; propaganda and dissemination of progressive ideas and worldview among the youth; protection of the rights and interests of the youth; satisfaction and protection of the interests of its members; conducting forums, meetings, round tables aimed at the development of society and the environment.



## Centre of Social and Psychological Sciences Slovak Academy of Sciences (CSPS SAS)

Address:

Šancová 56, 811 05 Bratislava

Office: Karpatská 5, 040 01 Košice

Slovakia

The CSPS SAS was established on 1.10.2015 by a merger of three research facilities: Institute of Social Sciences, Institute for Forecasting and Institute of Experimental Psychology. The main mission of the CSPS SAS is to perform research activities, and to collect, process and disseminate scientific information.

Currently the CSPS SAS represents a unique community of researchers in Psychology, Economics and History with interdisciplinary overlaps with Sociology, Environmental and Political Sciences. The multi- and interdisciplinarity of the Centre makes it a strong research institution and flexible partner for scientific projects at both national and international levels.

The Institute of Social Sciences of the CSPS SAS in Košice, which is involved in the project DREAM ROAD, is an interdisciplinary workplace of social sciences and humanities with a primary research focus on the area of Central Europe in the field of social psychology, sociology and history.



## Harghita County Council (HCC)

Address:

P-ța Libertății no 5  
530140 Miercurea Ciuc  
Romania



Harghita County Council is the local public administration body of Harghita County with one President - elected directly by the citizens for a mandate of 4 years - and 30 County Councillors, including the two Vice-Presidents of the county council.

In brief, the following activities and responsibilities belong to the action sphere of the county council and of its subordinated institutions:

- Responsibilities related to the county level infrastructure and public acquisitions, preservation of cultural patrimony and historical monuments, assistance in urbanism and construction certification;

- Investments and economic development, international, EU funded and structural projects' management;
- Development and implementation of county-level programmes on several fields of interest: culture, youth, religion, schools, civil society, social assistance, health, agriculture, rural development, tourism, mountain rescue and mountain area development, library, arts and registrar;
- County level events organization and protocol, relation with mass-media, human resources, international relations and coordination of the local public authorities of the county.



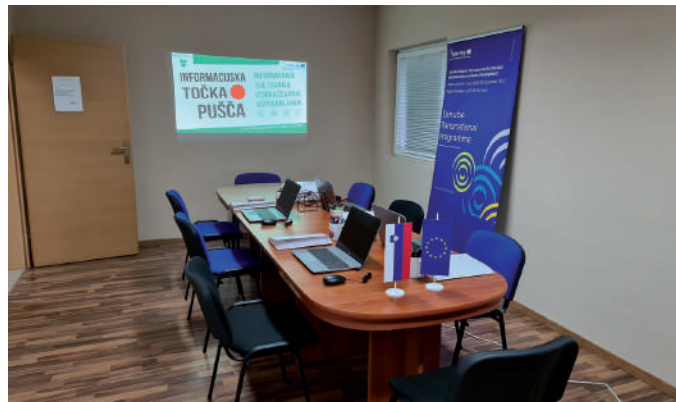
## Municipality of Murska Sobota

Kardoševa ulica 2  
9000 Murska Sobota  
Slovenia

Mestna občina  
MURSKA SOBOTA



Murska Sobota is located in the southeastern part of Slovenia and is the only municipality in this part of Slovenia. Approximately 19,000 inhabitants live in the town itself and in the 11 suburban settlements that make up the municipality of Murska Sobota. As the largest and most developed town in the region, it is the administrative, economic, cultural, educational and health center of the Pomur region. There are also many other cultural, sports and other attractions in the municipality, such as the town park, which together with the castle represents an exceptional potential for development, the Fazanerija recreation center, the gallery, the provincial and study library, the Novak architecture in the town center with the town market, which is the center of sociability, and last but not least, the Expano regional advertising center, which represents the gateway to Pomurje. All these features and sights enrich Murska Sobota.



### Project „DREAM ROAD“

Danube REgion for improved Access and eMpowerment of ROmA Development  
Project Duration: 30 months  
(01 July 2020 – 31 December 2022)  
Project Budget: 2,072,267,40 EURO  
Project co-funded by European Union funds  
(ERDF, IPA, ENI)

Project web site:  
[www.interreg-danube.eu/dream-road](http://www.interreg-danube.eu/dream-road)

# DREAM ROAD

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**Danube REgion for improved Access  
and eMpowerment of ROmA Development**



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