

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's Roma Youth Action Plan

Final Report

March 2016

Prepared by

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Yael Ohana, Marija Bulat

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Executive Summary

The Roma Youth Action Plan was developed as a joint venture in Roma youth empowerment, and involves several Roma Youth Networks, partners from a variety of Council of Europe sectors and partners from the broader Roma rights sector in Europe, with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe maintaining the coordination and secretariat support.

The Roma Youth Action Plan set out to:

- Support the creation of an environment where Roma youth can grow up free from discrimination and confident about their future perspectives, while appreciating their plural cultural backgrounds and affiliations as young people, as Roma, as citizens of their countries, and as active Europeans;
- Change prejudices and stereotypical attitudes against Roma;
- Support and develop the participation and autonomy of Roma youth at European, national, and local levels;
- Defend the human rights of Roma by empowering young Roma through human rights education;
- Promote real equal opportunities for Roma young people in all aspects of life, notably education, employment, health, and housing;
- Combat the segregation of Roma schools and settlements;
- Support an integrated approach to all Roma youth-related policies;
- Value and promote Roma identity, culture, and language.

The Roma Youth Action Plan included activities of the Youth Department and of other sectors of the Council of Europe, as well as activities proposed by other partners, intergovernmental and non-governmental, interested in securing the maximum impact. The activities are complementary to other national and European initiatives, which play a fundamental role in addressing and overcoming the structural forms of discrimination and social exclusion affecting Roma across Europe.

The evaluation was commissioned by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe with several purposes in mind, as follows, and was conducted from between May and October 2015.

- To identify the main results and achievements of the RYAP, especially in relation to its objectives and double mainstreaming approach;
- To review the process of implementing the RYAP, and review its management;

- To determine the overall worth and added-value of the RYAP project within today's European context and as a response to the Roma youth needs and aspirations;
- To support the development of future programmes and policies for and with Roma youth.

The evaluation finds that RYAP had many achievements, based on concrete results and outputs, including:

- 2300 direct participants participating in 31 different activities out of which some were first of their kind for the Roma and youth fields, representing important innovations;
- Of these, 19 activities were explicitly conceptualised with educational objectives or had a strong educational dimension, and so contributed to capacity building of Roma youth and their organisations or to the capacity building of other stakeholders engaged in work with / for Roma;
- Organisation of several International and national encounters, as well as local project initiatives which aimed at valuing and promoting Roma identity, culture, language and history (e.g. Roma Genocide during WWII) and at promoting real equal opportunities for Roma young people in all aspects of social and political life. The majority of these were organised centrally by the Youth Department, in direct cooperation with the Roma Youth Networks (individually or collectively);
- Raising awareness for Roma youth issues through various structures and programs, primarily of the Council of Europe, as a support to an integrated approach to all Roma youth-related policies inside the institution (double mainstreaming) with some key results: passing of a Resolution by the CLRAE; appointment of a CAHROM special rapporteur on Youth, organisation of a CDEJ Summer University and of a CAHROM Thematic Study visit on Roma youth to Slovenia, Roma youth meeting in Ukraine, etc.;
- Learning and capacity of individuals and organisations (Roma, non-Roma, youth and youth serving, governmental and non-governmental), through knowledge pooling, exchange of perspectives and information and presentation of research to provide an evidence base for actions directed against discrimination and antigypsyism. Competence development of (hundreds) of young Roma and non-Roma on human rights, human rights education, anti-discrimination, combating antigypsyism, multiple discrimination, project management, organisational development, participation, engagement with policy, Roma youth situations across Europe and Roma rights;
- Supporting and developing the participation of Roma youth in European formal youth participation structures, with some trickle down effects to the national and local levels;

- Supporting the empowerment and development of the autonomy of Roma youth through non-formal education and multiplication of such approaches to other (potential) Roma youth leaders;
- Developing mechanisms and recommendations for combating antigypsyism and (multiple) discrimination;
- Contributing to awareness raising about the problem and challenge of stereotypical attitudes towards and prejudice against Roma through various online and face-to-face activities;
- Contributing to the struggle against school and settlement segregation by training youth workers and educational practitioners to recognise and deal with these problems.
- Double mainstreaming within the Council of Europe - Roma youth and their representative organisations gained access to participation in the statutory bodies of the Council of Europe's Youth Sector, a youth dimension to the ROMED programme is being developed, CAHROM has a youth rapporteur and activities on Roma youth have been conducted by CAHROM, the new SG action plan mentions Roma youth explicitly.
- More Roma young people are being recruited to the general youth activities (i.e. those without a Roma focus) run in the EYCs and by the Youth Department than ever before
- The European Youth Foundation has funded 34 Roma related projects with 1965 direct participants to a tune of over 400K euros
- The visibility of Roma youth issues inside the Council of Europe system has been increased.
- Production of three educational manuals including concrete, practical and educational tools on how to combat antigypsyism and multiple discrimination of Roma youth and on how to educate about the Roma Genocide in WWII, all of which are firsts of their kind for the youth and Roma sectors. These are currently being translated into different languages and tailored for different users (teachers, youth workers, youth activists, online activists). It is expected that a series of targeted activities will be launched to disseminate the manuals and train education workers to use them;
- Organisation of two large-scale commemoration events for Roma Holocaust Day (2 August), involving the active participation of over a thousand young Roma and non-Roma participants, dignitaries from different countries, and stakeholders of the European Roma rights sector. This served to raise awareness of the existence of the Roma Holocaust, often overshadowed by the Shoah, both among participants in the events, and in the wider public through media coverage. Awareness for Roma Holocaust Day (2 August) was also raised. A common sense of Roma identity is beginning to build around the Roma Holocaust, to which such activities contribute.

- Establishment of national Roma youth networks and/or fostering cooperation among Roma youth organisations on the national level (Greece, Portugal, France, Hungary);
- Facilitation of the organisation first encounters of Roma youth and Roma community leaders in certain countries on certain issues (for example, Portugal on Roma education);
- Positive experiences of intersectoral cooperation between the Youth Department and other departments and programmes of the Council of Europe concerned with Roma youth issues (SOGI, SRSO Team, ROMED/ROMACT, CLRAE);
- Trust building, networking, contact making between a variety of stakeholders, notably among the Roma Youth Networks themselves, between ‘establishment’ institutions and the Roma Youth Networks and between different institutions / organisations / donors with differing mandates for work in this area;
- Development of several long term projects and activities on topics relevant to remedying situations of discrimination and exclusion of Roma youth in Europe, such as of hate speech, antigypsyism, multiple discrimination, Roma Genocide in WWII, Roma identity and culture, etc. In some cases, these long-term projects are follow-up initiatives / projects by former participants of ‘centralised’ activities organised under RYAP by the Youth Department. In other cases, these projects are complex multi-stakeholder initiatives that aim at changing deep-rooted structural disadvantages of Roma by anchoring better educational and managerial practices in key social institutions.

RYAP also faced many challenges and shortcomings in its implementation, many of which are not specific to working on Roma youth issues, or even to the actions of the Youth Department of the Council and other institutional stakeholders, but which are rather common structural problems of the social benefit, development and NGO sectors, as follows (in no order of importance):

- Lack of human resources for managing the number and scale of activities and the programme as a whole;
- Weak organisational capacity of key partners to conduct activities;
- Recruitment of (new) participants for European and activities organised at other levels (national, local);
- Poor access of young Roma to decision making forums, and poor representation and participation;
- Lack of participation of Roma youth representatives in the development of key policy documents;

- Tracking the number of young Roma involved in RYAP activities;
- Tracking and measuring multiplication effects and changes in the situation of young Roma as a result of activities;
- Securing results, following up and ensuring sustainability;
- Lack of resources for taking successful pilot activities to scale;
- Measuring impact;
- Capacity for monitoring and evaluation.

The evaluation concludes that RYAP has made some progress in addressing its objectives, although on some objectives there has been more progress than others. Certainly, the objectives targeting systemic change in relation to Roma youth participation, discrimination of Roma, young or otherwise were probably too ambitious.

The choice of heavy investment in education, training, capacity building (not only of Roma youth, but also of other stakeholders responsible for addressing the issues of Roma youth) complemented by trying to make what exists as policy and programming more inclusive and more effective, has borne fruit. In work areas which speak to the core competences of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe (human rights education, educational approaches to combating discrimination, facilitating cooperation between different stakeholders), and to the strengths of the Roma Youth Networks (intimate knowledge of the Roma youth experience and its individual and collective challenges; Roma identity, culture, history; community sensitive ways of adapting educational approaches to their communities) the evaluation concludes that considerable progress has been made.

For the objectives which speak to political and social change, progress has been more piecemeal, something which has led to frustration and disappointment on the part of some stakeholders. However, as the following sections will hopefully show, this was to some extent inevitable, and any future iteration of RYAP should actively and explicitly consider the questions of expectations and realism in much more depth.

Furthermore, the evaluation finds that RYAP has done a lot to live up to its guiding principles (participation of young Roma, human rights based approach, encouraging synergies, mainstreaming Roma and youth perspectives, and change at local through international levels), in what can be credibly considered adverse conditions. Some progress has been made on making all of these genuine permanent features of the way the Youth Department and the Council of Europe system functions in relation to Roma youth. Less progress has been made in getting governments and other institutions to do the same, and certainly the means RYAP had at its disposal for encouraging systemic change and structural reform at the local and national levels were inadequate. However, efforts have been made to

create awareness for the importance of, and new ways of working across sectors and stakeholder groups have been experimented with.

Impact of RYAP has been evaluated on three levels: people, policies and processes. In all three areas some lasting impacts can be observed.

In relation to people, both individuals and organisations have benefitted from being involved with RYAP. RYAP activities have been an important and valuable experience for the individuals who participated, especially the individual Roma young people who had the chance to take part in training courses, seminars, conferences, political meetings, interactions of different kinds with decision-makers and other activities, in their countries or abroad. This has contributed to their personal empowerment. In terms of number of members and in terms of capacity, RYAP activities have contributed something to strengthening the Roma youth networks, by bringing them into contact with potential members/leaders and providing them with training or opportunities to learn new and useful things. Roma Youth Networks and Roma youth issues have received a lot more visibility. Contributed to the recognition of the Roma Youth Networks and to their being taken seriously as 'go to' partners for Roma youth issues. Importantly, many stakeholders believe this recognition effect is having a positive impact on the way Roma youth are perceived and engaged with by Roma community leaders in some countries and on the European level.

In terms of policies, RYAP sought to 'support an integrated approach to all Roma youth related policies'. RYAP's main impact in relation to the 'integrated approach' has been within the Council of Europe system, setting something of a precedent in that regard. Certainly, if it was not for RYAP, Roma youth would have even less visibility. Whatever its status as a 'talking shop', there now exists a recommendation of the CLRAE on inclusion of Roma youth in local and regional life, and there is awareness of the need to re-invigorate processes to get it implemented, CAHROM has created the position of youth rapporteur, even if the representativeness of the institution must be improved (i.e. the rapporteur really should be young and Roma), and there seems to be increased interest on the part of the CDEJ as a body to engage with this issue, and on the part of some individual governments to do same (in their youth sectors) as evidenced by their continued financial support through voluntary contributions to resource RYAP over several years. In the Youth Department's own agendas and policies, Roma youth issues have been mainstreamed to a large extent. At least it is acknowledged that there needs to be more attention to Roma youth when developing new policies and programmes and this is discussed in the statutory bodies. Some instruments have been adapted to make that possible. In terms of policy impact outside the Council of Europe system, accurate judgements are impossible. Stakeholders did not identify RYAP as significant in influencing or changing policies of other institutions or of governments. Yet, the same stakeholders also said that Roma youth issues are receiving more attention. RYAP is highly likely to have had some contribution, being the only multi-stakeholder initiative of its kind in Europe.

In terms of processes, it is important that RYAP did not specify which processes it wanted to impact on. If we consider processes as those already established frameworks of European cooperation, mutual exchange and organisational learning, political and social inclusion, and their national counterparts, then RYAP has had very little tangible impact, outside of the Council of Europe system. If, on the other hand, we consider processes in the broader sense of relationships, cooperation and partnership where none existed before, trust and movement building and social and cultural modernisation within the Roma community, then there is evidence to suggest that RYAP may have made some contribution to change.

As such, the evaluation finds that RYAP has done what the Youth Department of the Council of Europe has always done best: bringing people together; facilitating their learning from each other; providing opportunities to explore, debate and find new approaches to common challenges and concerns; and kicking off a dynamic of multiplication through which real people in real communities do things for themselves using the knowledge and expertise and confidence they gained by their association with the Youth Department. If the evaluation has found one thing, it is that this approach still has enormous value for incremental change, and the added value of RYAP is in its contribution to 'starting somewhere'.

The implications of the evaluation can be understood as dilemmas that need to be explored, reflected upon and addressed in any new iteration of the Roma Youth Action Plan. There are ten such dilemmas, as follows:

Participation, paternalism and empowerment: And future iteration of RYAP must consider how to ensure meaningful support and field building interventions at the same time as ensuring empowerment through the opportunity for Roma youth organisations and leaders to learn by doing, by managing their own affairs, by demonstrating their competence and by making their own mistakes. In other words, participation in activities and even consultation activities no longer really cut it when it comes to ensuring empowerment. Real empowerment requires other opportunities and forms of support, including direct engagement in meaningful decision-making, a fact well known to the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, which has produced some of the best knowledge and practice on youth participation and empowerment available.

Where does RYAP fit in? Any new iteration of RYAP will have consider in more depth, and possibly with more realism, where it best fits in the Council of Europe system and in the wider reality of promoting Roma (youth) rights at the European level and in Member States, before deciding on key objectives and the activities it should include. The nascent youth dimension of the ROMED programme is a good example of how this gap could be filled.

Long-term aims but short-term interventions: If RYAP wants to address and contribute to redressing the situation of Roma youth in Europe today and tomorrow, then it will have to be more realistic about the

scale and direction/targets of its interventions, and maybe even consider some other kinds of intervention than it has favoured until now. The idea that less might be more certainly comes to mind.

Trust vs. capacity: The evaluation revealed trust and capacity issues among Roma youth organisations and their institutional supporters. The question of what would need to be done to create the trust necessary to get beyond those issues needs to be addressed. Do Roma youth organisations need more specialised training (fundraising, financial management, NGO law, English, etc) or do donors need awareness raising and trust building measures to get over their misconceptions about Roma youth organisations? Or do both need both? Whatever the answer, this opens up new avenues and ideas for what a framework like RYAP could be used for and it brings a new perspective to the idea of 'strengthening the Roma youth movement', so central to RYAP's objectives.

Who owns the agenda? The dilemma for the next iteration of RYAP is how the initiator can create and share ownership for something it has created and initiated with other partners who do not necessarily feel they have a mandate or a responsibility to engage with it? The idea of a funding collaborative driven by a commonly defined purpose and modus operandi among key actors of the Roma rights sector with an interest in promoting Roma youth issues, advised and implemented by the Roma Youth Networks, was stillborn in this RYAP. Maybe this is an approach that can provide insights into how to deal with the question of who owns the agenda in the future.

Education for what and of whom? If systemic change is the aim (as outlined in some of the objectives), but political will is not forthcoming from key stakeholders with the power to change something (as has been observed through this RYAP experience), what kind of capacity building approaches will help RYAP and its stakeholders engage with the powers that be. The dilemma further extends to the fact that more often than not those powers that be need just as much educating as the Roma youth leaders. Put bluntly, to get human rights, hard skills for political action are required, soft skills for doing education may not be as important, and the Roma youth leaders may not be the ones who need educating the most.

Where is the movement in the Roma youth movement? It is not clear what the 'movement' in the Roma youth movement really is, for the Roma Youth Networks and for the other stakeholders. In and of itself this is not the problem - this is the case for many 'movements'. However, it does require clarification and explicit discussion. That clarification will have important consequences for the objectives and potential impact of RYAP in the future. A key question in this relation is how the focus of RYAP on Roma identity and culture can contribute to this process of clarification, and whether a more overtly political approach might be useful.

No one wants to be coordinated! RYAP must find a way to create shared leadership out of shared ownership, so that the form of cooperation represented by RYAP is not one of coordination, but of real collaboration around a common agenda and set of goals that helps each partner to meet their own objectives, at the same time as meeting those common to the collaboration.

If you want action, you need more than a plan: Having a plan is important, but as the Youth Department trains its trainees to practice, projects have a limited time frame, SMART objectives, a team with a clear division of responsibilities and activities commensurate with their resources. Too few of the things that needed to happen to make it possible for RYAP to deliver on its objectives actually happened, despite the many excellent, standard setting activities that were organised and the valuable experiences these activities proved to be for their participants. The dilemma for any new iteration of RYAP is that not delivering on expectations serves to delegitimise the action of the stakeholders, creating a cycle of disappointment and mistrust.

Walking the walk - first at home, then elsewhere: RYAP needs to think about how to get the stakeholders concerned inside the Council of Europe to reflect on their own capacity for inclusion, and to take the risks involved in being more inclusive, in a political system that is not yet open enough to giving the 'beneficiaries' of its interventions a seat at the decision making table where it really counts (in this case, NOT the statutory bodies of the Youth Department).

Participant testimony

Anette Åkerlund, Finland

I am a Roma woman from Finland. I represented Finnish Roma in the Council of Europe's Roma Youth Leader Training Course in two training course weeks: one in Budapest Youth Centre in October 2012 and another in Strasbourg Youth Centre in December 2013.

When I was participating in the training in 2012, I worked as a teacher for Roma young people in the schools in the Helsinki region. I taught them ordinary subjects but also Roma culture and music which is my main profession. I am a Roma musician.

I had just started to work as a producer for a big Roma music concert as part of the Fourth International Roma Women's Conference, which was in 2013 in Helsinki and Espoo in Finland, and I organised the concert as side event to that.

In the Budapest training course the participants started to work with their own projects, and my project was this Roma concert as part of the Roma Women's Conference in Helsinki. In the training course we were asked to take into account Human Rights as part of our work and our projects and I started to work with the idea of doing a Human Rights theatre/art workshop, from the point of view of the Roma culture and arts.

I did not do the Human Rights workshop in the Roma Women's Conference, but later I did some workshops where I have been teaching music and dance and improvisation so that all the time the human rights have been as the main subject and the arts have been an instrument in performing them and talking about them.

I have kept in touch with the approximately 30 people I got to know in the Budapest training course. We met again in 2013 in Strasbourg, but all the time, now already during a few years, we have been in contact by e-mail and on Facebook. And I even met some of those people elsewhere: one Roma girl from Lithuania, Bozena Karveliėne-Michaj, I met when I was studying folk music in Lithuania during one week in 2013 and she even invited me to the opening of a Roma photo exhibition in the City Hall of Vilnius, and I even performed there 'Gelem Gelem' with a famous Lithuanian Roma singer.

I also met many of the participants at other Roma seminars: in a training course in Murska Sobota, Slovenia, at the ERTF meeting in Strasbourg in November 2014 and in a big Roma Summit in Brussels in April, 2014, among others. And, the finest and the best thing of the Roma Youth Action Plan and Roma Youth Leaders' Training course has been that after that I have felt as if my world is many times bigger, that is from my personal point of view. And in the professional point of view, I think the space in which I can work as Roma activist, and even as a Roma artist, has been made more open and bigger.

Introduction

This is the final report of the evaluation of the Roma Youth Action Plan 2011 – 2015, conducted by [Yael Ohana](#) & [Marija Bulat](#) for the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

The purpose of the report is to present the main findings of the evaluation team about the implementation and impact of the Roma Youth Action Plan. It is intended to provide a systematic overview of achievements and shortcomings, factors supporting and hindering implementation and clues to the potential impact of actions conducted under the Roma Youth Action Plan.

The evaluation report has six chapters, as follows:

- the present introduction to the evaluation project;
- an evaluation according to work areas and key objectives synthesising results, achievements and challenges of RYAP;
- an evaluation of RYAP's implementation including the aspects of management, intersectoral cooperation, partnerships, visibility and strategic approaches;
- an evaluation of RYAP's impact from the perspectives of the people, policies and processes it engaged with;
- an exploration of key dilemmas for any future iteration of RYAP to address key challenges and shortcomings as identified by the evaluation
- a concluding chapter
- a series of appendices
 - ❑ the Roma Youth Action Plan
 - ❑ List of interviews conducted during the evaluation
 - ❑ Key interview questions asked of interviewees
 - ❑ Blank survey targeting participants of RYAP activities
 - ❑ Charts and figures with key RYAP data
 - ❑ The evaluation plan (status May 2015)
 - ❑ Bibliography of reference material consulted during the desk review

Introduction to the Roma Youth Action Plan: A joint venture for Roma youth empowerment

The Roma Youth Action Plan is a response of the Council of Europe to the challenges faced by Roma young people in Europe, particularly their lack of participation in policy and decision-making processes and structures at European level, and the realities of discrimination, particularly antigypsyism, with which they are confronted.

The Roma Youth Action Plan was developed on the basis of the results of the Roma Youth Conference, co-organised by the team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Roma issues and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe in September 2011, and the guidelines and proposals drawn up by the participants who represented Roma young people and youth organisations. The youth sector of the Council of Europe initiated activities with Roma young people in 1995, with a training course at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg within the framework of the All Different - All Equal European youth campaign against racism, Antisemitism, xenophobia and intolerance. In the years that followed, various other activities were carried out to strengthen the capacity of Roma youth organisations and of Roma youth leaders in Europe. The Roma Youth Action plan was supposed to bring that sum of experience under one roof and create a more coherent approach, ultimately with the aim of deepening the impact of the Council of Europe's engagement with Roma youth issues.

The Roma Youth Action Plan was developed as a joint venture in Roma youth empowerment, and involves several Roma Youth Networks, partners from a variety of Council of Europe sectors and partners from the broader Roma rights sector in Europe, with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe maintaining the coordination and secretariat support. An Informal Contact Group on Roma Youth (ICG) was established following the Roma Youth Conference in September 2011 to coordinate the implementation of the RYAP among key stakeholders. The [Forum of European Roma Young People \(FERYP\)](#), the [International Roma Youth Network \(ternYpe\)](#), [Phiren Amenca](#), the [Open Society Foundations - Roma Initiatives Office \(RIO\)](#), and while it was operating, its Youth Initiative, the [European Roma Rights Centre \(EERC\)](#), the [European Youth Forum, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights \(ODIHR\) of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe \(OSCE\)](#), other sectors of the Council of Europe and other stakeholders have all participated in the ICG meetings at different moments, whose 'membership' is open and voluntary. The role of the ICG was to promote communication and coordination among the various partners and stakeholders, as well as ownership of the Action Plan by Roma young people and Roma civil society.

The Roma Youth Action Plan included activities of the Youth Department and of other sectors of the Council of Europe, as well as activities proposed by other partners, intergovernmental and non-governmental, interested in securing the maximum impact. The activities are complementary to other

national and European initiatives, which play a fundamental role in addressing and overcoming the structural forms of discrimination and social exclusion affecting Roma across Europe.

The Roma Youth Action Plan set out to:

- Support the creation of an environment where Roma youth can grow up free from discrimination and confident about their future perspectives, while appreciating their plural cultural backgrounds and affiliations as young people, as Roma, as citizens of their countries, and as active Europeans;
- Change prejudices and stereotypical attitudes against Roma;
- Support and develop the participation and autonomy of Roma youth at European, national, and local levels;
- Defend the human rights of Roma by empowering young Roma through human rights education;
- Promote real equal opportunities for Roma young people in all aspects of life, notably education, employment, health, and housing;
- Combat the segregation of Roma schools and settlements;
- Support an integrated approach to all Roma youth-related policies;
- Value and promote Roma identity, culture, and language.

The guiding principles of the Roma Youth Action plan are:

- Direct, constant and consistent involvement of Roma youth and Roma youth organisations in the implementation of the Plan with other partners;
- Creating synergies among initiatives in order to respond to the need for systemic changes in structural forms of discrimination;
- Adopting human-rights based approaches to the challenges faced by young Roma, including a concern for gender equality;
- Mainstreaming Roma issues in youth policy and mainstreaming youth issues in Roma-related policies;
- Encouraging change and action at the local and national level.

Participant testimony

Bekim Berisha, Belgium

When I heard about the Roma Youth Action Plan, I was curious.

When I read it, I was happy.

Today I cannot say that it is/was good for Roma youngsters in Flanders.

With the Roma Youth Action Plan we had and we still have a hope to a good link to Roma youngsters and a better future for them/us in Belgium.

I am not sure if something like good practices on local level exist, certainly there is nothing in Flanders.

At different international meetings I have learned how we can use the Roma Youth Action Plan. But, for beginners in an NGO it is not easy to work with.

Many local organisations do not know about it, or how to make it useful for the youngsters they work with, and how to link to it.

Sometimes the things proposed are beyond what the youngsters have the possibility to do.

We still have a chance to make it, we still can work on it, to make it better and to see what we have to change to have a better link to Roma youngsters. We need better ways to support Roma youngsters (in Flanders).

The Roma Youth Action Plan in numbers¹

Approximate calculations ('guesstimates') for several aspects of RYAP that could be presented numerically have been attempted based on information available from application databases, lists of participants, Council of Europe financial accounts, evaluation reports and other documentation that the evaluators could access. These are presented here to provide an overview and a sense of the scale of activity represented by the Roma Youth Action Plan from 2011 - 2015.

Timeframe

The Roma Youth Action Plan was initiated after the 1st Roma Youth Conference of 2011. The most intensive phase of implementation was 2013 to 2014, during which the majority of activities were organised. The evaluation covers RYAP's action from its adoption through end June 2015. The Roma Youth Action plan will continue through 2017, based on a decision of the co-managed statutory bodies of the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

Activities

Although as a framework RYAP included many centralised and decentralised activities of different kinds, and some 'independent' activities have been associated to RYAP as it developed, the evaluation focuses on those activities that were in some way or another initiated, organised, co-organised or funded (fully or in part) by the Council of Europe. This amounts to some 31 activities in total over the period from 2011 up to and including June 2015, the majority of which were organised centrally. In addition, the European Youth Foundation financed 34 projects. These are the activities for which some numerical information about money invested, numbers of participants, results, reach and impact is available. The evaluation assumes, based on a reading of the information at its disposal, however, that more activities of a decentralised or independent nature took place, especially in follow-up to the centralised educational activities such as training courses, seminars and study sessions.

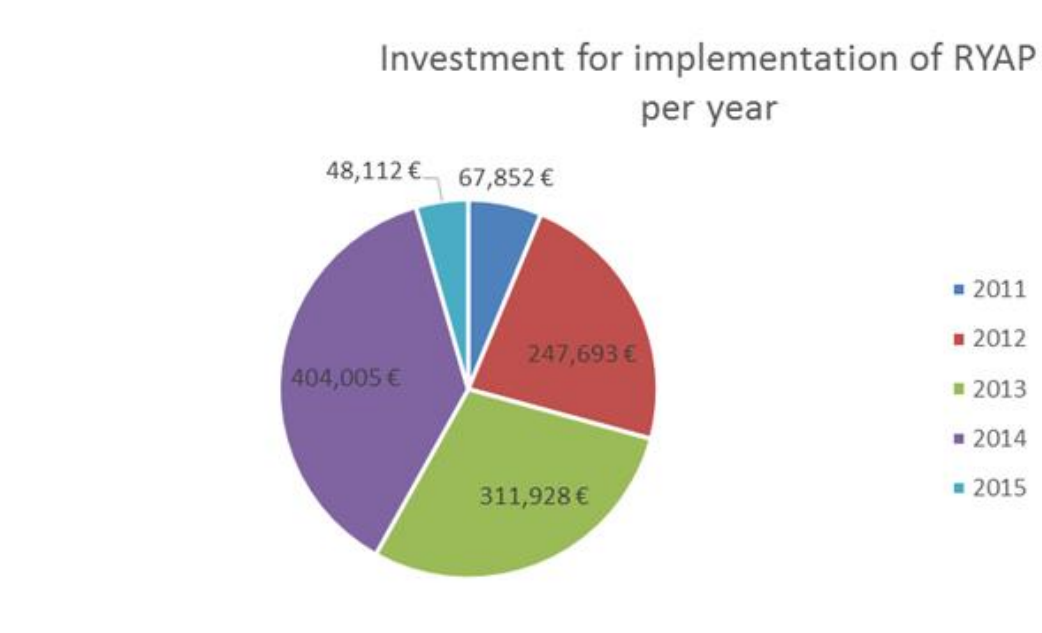
Financial resources invested in RYAP

The following table shows the financial investment of the Council of Europe in RYAP from 2011 to mid-2015. These figures refer exclusively to funds invested by the Council of Europe through its own budget or funds raised and integrated into its own budget, including Council of Europe staff time. These figures do not include investments in kind contributions of other partners.

¹ The evaluation was not able to establish figures for many aspects of the RYAP that could be presented numerically, because such data was not collected on an ongoing basis and establishing such figures post-hoc is very complicated.

2011	67.852 EUR
2012	247.693 EUR
2013	311.928 EUR
2014	404.005 EUR
2015	approx. 48,112 EUR (calculated on the basis of the activities taking place until mid-June 2015)
Total	1, 07 million EUR

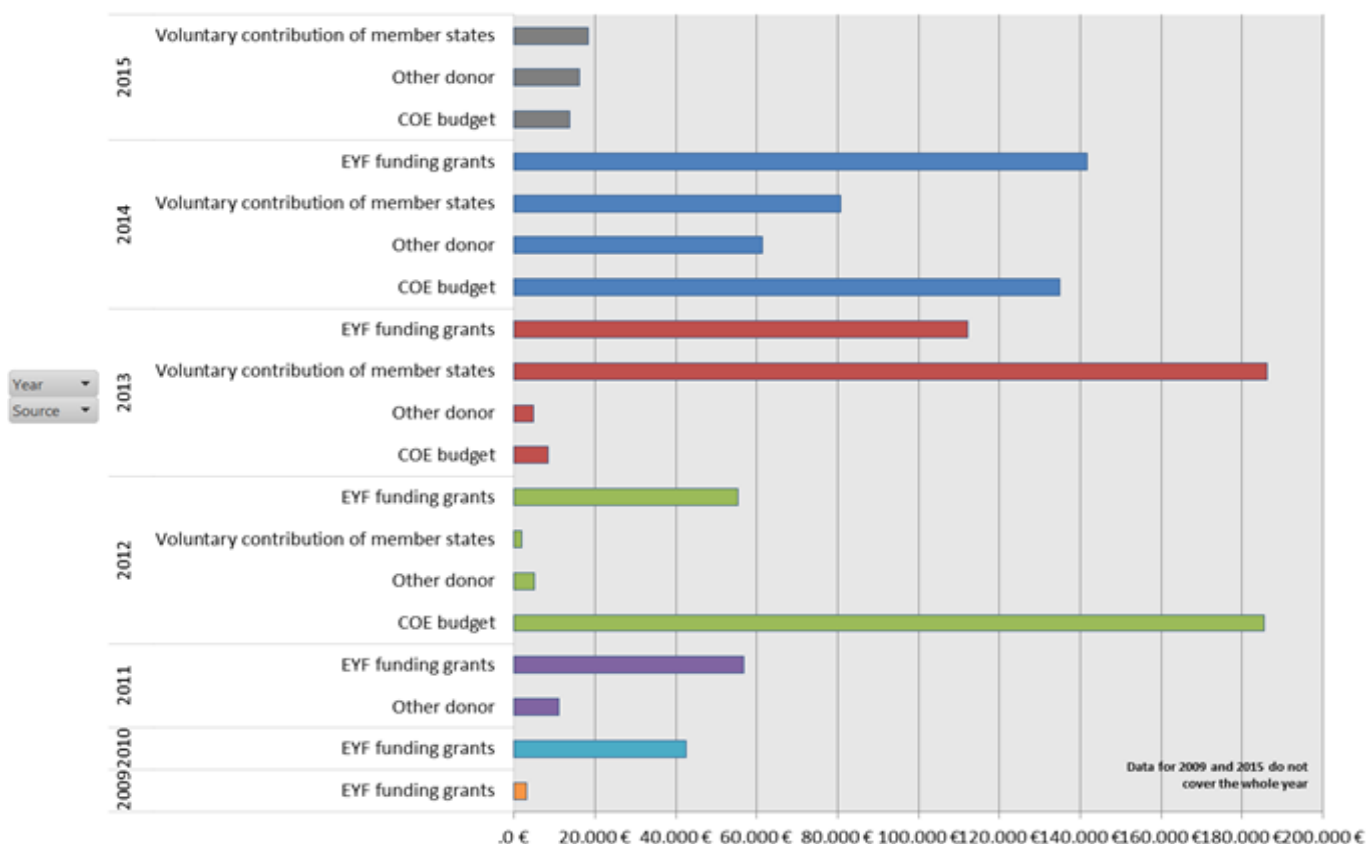
This can also be represented in visually as follows:



The following graphic representation provides more details as concerns the sources of funding received by the Council of Europe for investment in RYAP.

Sum of Amount

Investment for implementation of RYAP per year per source



Over the period 2011-2014, the European Youth Foundation supported 34 Roma youth related project, with 366,113 EUR total funding disbursed. This is a significant increase in investment by the EYF in Roma youth in comparison to the period before RYAP was adopted.

Countries

De facto, and without this having been a conscious decision on priorities, because as a strategic framework RYAP does not discriminate among Roma of 'different kinds' or among its member states, the activities of RYAP have involved more participants living in Central and Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe and possibly Southern Europe, than in Western and Northern Europe, even if there were activities in France and Portugal, and there are often participants from Belgium, for example. To some extent, this reflects the 'numerical' reality of the strength of Roma communities around Europe, but also

the embedding of the partners in the ICG and their activity in different regions of Europe. For example, the operational programmes of key institutional partners are mostly active in CEE and SEE, and the Roma Youth Networks' main membership bases are also in CEE and SEE, even if they have some members and cooperate with partners in other regions too.

Number and categories of activities organised under RYAP

RYAP included 31 activities of different kinds in the period under evaluation.

- 2 conferences
- 2 CAHROM meetings
- 3 publications
- 1 resolution adoption
- 1 public debate
- 2 seminars
- 1 summer university
- 2 commemoration events (including 20 educational workshops)
- 5 study sessions
- 3 training courses
- 6 national meetings/activities (in Portugal, Greece, Hungary, France, Ukraine, Romania)
- 1 research project
- 1 European Day of Action
- Informal Contact Group meetings (5 meetings)
- Follow-up, dissemination, other activities: series of reports, follow up-activities (number unknown)

Noteworthy here is that the total investment in activities that could be counted as educational under RYAP was 407,995 EUR, almost 50%.

Participants

Approximately 2300 direct participants took part in the 31 activity conducted under RYAP over the period covered by the evaluation (2011 to mid-2015). These participants came from the following categories of target group:

- Young people self-identifying as Roma
- non-Roma youth;
- leaders, activists, youth workers, volunteers of Roma and non-Roma youth organisations;
- Human rights activists;
- Online activists;
- Gender and LGBTQI activists;
- National and local government representatives, elected members, civil servants working in the youth policy field;
- Representatives of international partner organisations;
- Members of Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE) of the Council of Europe;
- Academics, researchers, experts (on Roma youth issues and others);
- Members of the wider community surrounding Roma youth (for example, parents/family representatives, school teachers etc.).

In addition, the 34 projects financed by the European Youth Foundation under RYAP included a total of 1965 direct participants.

The total number of participants of different kinds that took part in RYAP activities from all member states of the Council of Europe is therefore calculated at approximately 4265.

Reach

An accurate calculation of the number of people reached by RYAP is impossible based on the figures available. Nevertheless, all indications are that its reach beyond its direct participants has not been insignificant. With total estimated direct participation of 4625 participants in 31 activities and 34 EYF funded projects over four and a half years it can be assumed that a considerable proportion has used what they learned or gained during participation in some way, and there is evidence of some follow up activities / project having been organised by participants of training courses and other activities. Furthermore, the evaluation had at its disposal statistics about the online reach of at least one activity, that being the European Day of Action: Respect the Roma (2014) conducted by the No Hate Speech

Movement campaign. These figures are collected automatically by Facebook, which was the chosen social media tool for conducting the campaign and are calculated at approx. 10,000 total reaches of the posts on the Facebook page, and 1000 discrete engagements in posts. Although in comparison to previous editions of this activity online, the numbers are lower, this does indicate that an issue like respect for Roma can mobilise the social networks. Unfortunately, even accurate figures about reach do not tell us anything about the content, quality or impact of what was multiplied to the people reached, nor whether they self-identify as Roma youth. That is why such 'reach' estimates are often not all that useful for evaluation of participation or inclusion. The evaluation has, therefore, chosen to concentrate more on the quality of what was organised centrally than on trying to find out about the extent to which it was multiplied.

The RYAP evaluation project

Timeframe

The evaluation of RYAP was conducted from between May and October 2015.

Purpose of the evaluation

The evaluation was commissioned by the Youth Department with several purposes in mind, as follows

- To identify the main results and achievements of the RYAP, especially in relation to its objectives and double mainstreaming approach;
- To review the process of implementing the RYAP, and review its management;
- To determine the overall worth and added-value of the RYAP project within today's European context and as a response to the Roma youth needs and aspirations;
- To support the development of future programmes and policies for and with Roma youth.

Areas of enquiry

The evaluation sought to collect information about and reflect on the following main questions:

- To which extent have the RYAP principles and objectives been relevant to the situation of Roma young people in Europe?
- How efficiently have resources been mobilised and used?
- What has the RYAP achieved?
- To what extent does the RYAP implementation promote youth participation and double mainstreaming?

- What changes has the RYAP brought about in people, processes and policies concerned by youth and Roma issues?
- What is the specificity of the RYAP in relation to other Council of Europe interventions on Roma and how does it support them? How does it support the youth policy and programme of the Council of Europe?
- What did the participants in RYAP activities learn or change in their competences and actions?
- What are the results of the RYAP regarding the ICG partners, especially Roma youth organisations?
- What should be the future directions of action of the RYAP in order to secure and extend the results achieved and make them sustainable?

Approach and methodology

This is a post-hoc evaluation and it takes a largely qualitative approach.

Tracking and monitoring on the basis of quantitative indicators through the implementation period under study was limited. Therefore, the evaluation did not benefit from an accurate baseline from which to work in terms of numerical evaluation. For example, and on the one hand, the indicators for being 'Roma youth' were not been established and mainstreamed through the application procedures for all activities under RYAP from the outset, even if an approach to tracking Roma youth participation was developed as the plan progressed. As a result, the evaluation has only partial figures for how many young Roma participated in the activities, and these are based on self-identification as Roma.

Hence, the planning of the evaluation has had to be pragmatic and strategic. The evaluation, therefore, took the approach of reflecting and interpreting the different perceptions and perspectives of RYAP stakeholders on results, challenges and considerations for its strategic development rather than on 'hard and fast' facts.

At the same time, the evaluation was asked to interpret possible impacts from all the information collected and to consider these as a basis for ideas about future directions and development of RYAP, as a strategic framework for action inside the Council of Europe and with external partners. This meant that the evaluation needed a basis on which to assess impact, however speculatively. We have, therefore, worked with a definition of impact that attempts to reflect how RYAP may or may not have contributed to affecting and influencing people, processes and policies relevant to Roma (youth) rights, even if the extent, depth and quality of those effects cannot be assessed with any accuracy.

Even if we have shied away from developing a theory of change for RYAP after the fact, considering that a key task for any future iteration of the plan and for the development of a credible and manageable

monitoring and evaluation system, it is important to state explicitly that some basic assumptions underlie how impact is assessed in this report. In fact, it is important to state for the record that as evaluators we also have some basic assumptions about 'success' and its closest relative, failure.

These include the assumption that multiplication of learning attained in a training situation can and will take place through organisations and trickle down to the local / grassroots level, that individual impact has a dimension of collective impact, and that educational approaches serve not only the goals of education and capacity building, but of strengthening participation and empowerment. In many respects, these are also assumptions underlying the Youth Department approach to its work with young people. Hence, and while stakeholder perspectives have guided the elaboration of the evaluation, have informed the questions asked in interviews and discussions with stakeholders on an ongoing basis, and have pushed us in certain directions in our search for additional information, they have not been the only evaluation criteria at play in the elaboration of the report and the interpretations and judgements it presents.

In terms of scope, the evaluation covers the period from 2011 through 2015 and covers international through national and local implementation and impact in the six main priority areas (objectives) of the RYAP. As mentioned above, the evaluation covers some 31 activities that were initiated, organised or funded (fully or in part) by the Council of Europe, and refers to 34 projects financed by the European Youth Foundation although these have not been evaluated in depth.

The evaluation has proceeded from a collation and analysis of all available information and documentation, to an analysis of the gaps in that information, and the collection of further information based on the priority issues for the evaluation, using stakeholder interviews and surveys. The choice of themes to be addressed in more depth and stakeholders to be addressed has also considered the fact that 2015 was something of a milestone for the Roma youth mainstreaming agenda in the Council of Europe (elaboration of the new Secretary General Roma Action Plan and the planning for the 2nd Roma Youth Conference) and in the wider European Roma rights sector (the Decade of Roma Inclusion will come to an end, and it is not clear the National Integration Strategies adopted by all EU member states will fare).

Evaluation activities

The evaluation was conducted from May to October 2015 and comprised the following activities in order of implementation:

- The preparation of an evaluation plan for discussion and acceptance by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, outlining the main lines of what the evaluation would focus on and how.
- A presentation of the evaluation plan at the June 2015 meeting of the Informal Contact Group where it was discussed in depth, followed by its finalisation based on feedback received.

- A desk review focusing on results of implementation and the impact of the RYAP from 2011 to June 2015.
- A survey of participants of RYAP activities conducted in the period from mid-May to early July, to assess their perceptions about RYAP and its impact. 350 emails were sent out to former participants and organisations engaged with RYAP, yielding 46 responses. Attempts to rustle up more input with the assistance of the Roma Youth Networks did not increase the number of responses significantly. A second survey was directed at grantees of the OSF Roma Initiatives Office to check if they knew about the RYAP, yielding 1 response.
- Stakeholder interviews (collective and individual, remote and face to face) were conducted in order to collect more insights and perceptions on RYAP. The identification of key interviewees was done in accordance with the fields of enquiry of the survey and further to the desk review and discussions with the RYAP secretariat. Interviewees included the following categories. A complete list of interviewees, names and positions, can be found in Appendix.
 - partners involved in the RYAP Informal Contact Group;
 - members of the Statutory Bodies of the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe;
 - staff, management and political representatives active in different sectors of the Council of Europe that were involved in the RYAP or that are involved in Roma (youth) related work;
 - secretariat of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe;
 - trainers, activists, experts involved in RYAP activities;
 - Roma youth leaders active in the Roma Youth Networks.
- Additional consultations and requests for information were needed to clarify open points with stakeholders who could not attend the ICG meetings or to access additional data.
- Attendance at the 2nd Roma Youth Conference in October 2015 to discuss key findings, receive some initial feedback and to conduct further interviews.
- Collection, editing and presentation of several participant testimonies that show ways in which RYAP impacted on young Roma and their communities.

The collection and analysis of documentary materials was conducted on an ongoing basis through the entire evaluation project.

Limitations of the evaluation

While the RYAP Secretariat took great care pains to collect and collate all available documentation on the RYAP activities, and with impressive results judging by the archive of documentation available to the

evaluation, it has nevertheless suffered from the absence of systematic monitoring and evaluation of its different measures over the entire period of its implementation. Comprehensive numerical data is was not collected according to pre-defined indicators through the process of implementation. Furthermore, the documentation of activities was not based on pre-defined qualitative criteria. This has limited the legitimacy of comparative assessments of impact across activities and fields of work.

The matter of assessing RYAP impact was further complicated by the fact that there was no baseline for comparing its starting point with status quo at the time of evaluation. Hence, it was difficult to establish the extent to which specific aspects of the situation of Roma youth have changed in line with its objectives and as a result of its interventions. The lack of real time monitoring meant that the evaluation had little or no access to information about changes at the grassroots or about any multiplication of results. Follow-up tracking has only been done in the case of projects resulting from some of the educational activities. This also made it hard for the evaluation to collect 'new' or up to date information on the situation of Roma youth, which was originally part of its remit.

As the evaluation progressed it also became obvious that there exist a variety of different explicit and implicit expectations about what RYAP was supposed to be, how it should be run and what it should become. For the evaluation it was complicated to establish these, and to assess the realism and accuracy of such expectations in hindsight, but an accurate presentation of the perspectives of different stakeholders required that these be teased out and taken into account. Furthermore, and at the same time as being a key challenge factor for the roll-out and impact of RYAP, such differing expectations also explain some key criticisms and disappointments outlined by stakeholders.

Participant testimony

Dragan Radosavljevic, Serbia

As a young Roma, youth activist, trainer in non-formal education and President of a Roma Youth NGO 'Minority Voice' from Serbia, I'm proud to say that being involved in the Roma Youth Action Plan made a deep impact on my personal development and the development of our organisation.

Our youth organisation aims to support young Roma through non-formal education, fighting against stereotypes, hate speech, supporting human and minority rights. For us the Roma Youth Action Plan was an opportunity to develop personal skills and raise our capacity.

My NGO and I participated in the following activities:

- Training 'Building Capacity for Roma Youth NGOs', Budapest 2013;
- Roma Youth Conference, Budapest, April 2014;
- Conference about multi-discrimination of Young Roma, Strasbourg 2014.

We used these activities to develop our organisation on the national level. We build our capacity and opened regional offices in Nis and Sombor. We involved more young people in our NGO and found new ways to raise funds.

We used the outcomes from our participation in Budapest and Strasbourg to organise a conference for Young Roma in Serbia on national level, so we can say that we have added value to the results of RYAP.

Our organisation also benefitted from funding from the European Youth Foundation. We received a grant for a youth project aiming to fight hate speech addressed to young Roma in .

In general, I can say that we used RYAP as a guideline for our NGO activities on local and national level. We benefitted from it in several ways. RYAP made a big contribution to the development of our NGO - it was an instrument of support for our NGO and my personal work.

Chapter 1: Evaluation according to work areas and key objectives

Introduction

In this Chapter we will present a synthetic overview of the main achievements, shortcomings, challenges and results in the different work areas qua objectives of RYAP. This section is based on an analysis of the documentation available about most of the 31 activities organised under the umbrella of RYAP that have been included in the evaluation. This documentation included evaluations of activities conducted with participants, final reports of activities, activity presentations, etc. However, that documentation was not complete for all activities to the same extent. Some were more comprehensively documented, evaluated and reported on than others. This exposé does take into account activities that have come about as a result of RYAP, for example, at the initiative of participants of RYAP activities. Unfortunately, the evaluation did not benefit from extensive information about those activities. Furthermore, it can only be considered partial at best, given that the evaluation did not have the same level or quality of documentation about all RYAP activities or even about all activities considered in the evaluation. The evaluation has sought to corroborate its findings through other evaluation activities, for example, interviews with key stakeholders and surveys with former participants of RYAP activities.

Evaluation by thematic area / objective of RYAP

Thematic areas and objectives	Outputs	Achievements	Challenges / Shortcomings
Strengthening Roma youth identity <i>Supporting the creation of an environment in Europe where Roma young people can grow up free of discrimination, confident about their identity and future perspectives, while appreciating their history, plural cultural backgrounds, and affiliations as young people, as Roma, as citizens of their countries and as active Europeans</i>	6 main activities in 2011 - 2014 focusing on key themes of Roma Genocide, education for remembrance, Roma identity circa. 1400 direct participants	Production of first of its kind manual on the right to remembrance through an inclusive consultative process First of its kind large scale event involving Roma youth in remembrance of Roma Genocide (1000 young people from all over Europe, 25 organisations, 30 countries, 70 experts), repeated in for a second year Introduction of Holocaust education and education on the Roma Genocide and	Limited capacity of Roma organisations to deal with typical challenges involved in large scale events Tracking Roma youth participation in each of the activities to achieve a sense of reach and impact Implementation was not always Roma youth led to the extent desired by key stakeholders Lack of specific and targeted follow-up to the specific activities to consolidate results Language barriers among participants of events and a lack of resources to

		antigypsyism to youth organisations	provide translation
<p>Addressing multiple discrimination and recognising plural identities</p> <p><i>Empowering groups that experience multiple discrimination, including from Roma communities, such as young women, Gay and Lesbian Roma, migrants and religious or linguistic groups.</i></p>	<p>4 main activities, all in 2014, aiming to raise awareness about multiple discrimination affecting young people from the perspective of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, etc., and providing educational tools for combating these.</p> <p>circa. 170 direct participants</p>	<p>Production of “Barbaripen”, a study of the life stories of young Roma experiencing multiple discrimination.</p> <p>Study session organised by Roma youth network, including development of an online resource point on multiple discrimination for volunteers and partners.</p> <p>Joint conference on multiple discrimination by YD, SOGI, SRSG) including 60 Roma activists, LGBT, migrant and women’s organisations on multiple discrimination addressing the issue using an inter-sectional approach (first of its kind in the CoE at least)</p> <p>Study session organised by Roma youth network on multiple discrimination in Roma communities.</p>	<p>Tracking Roma youth participation in each of the activities to achieve a sense of reach and impact</p> <p>Tracking influence on policy making and/or approach in the work of organisations/institutions that took part in the activities</p> <p>Dissemination of the publication and its implementation in the work of Roma/non-Roma youth organizations, educational institutions, communities, etc.</p> <p>Securing the results and follow-up from the conference on multiple discrimination inside and outside the CoE.</p>
<p>Building a stronger Roma youth movement</p> <p><i>Facilitating and enabling Roma youth alliances within and outside Roma communities, mobilizing Roma youth and staking their position in their communities and in European society at large.</i></p>	<p>6 main activities in 2013 - 2014 focusing on capacity building for Roma youth activists and organisation representatives through training activities, campaigns and community organising meetings of Roma (youth).</p>	<p>First of their kind activities implemented on local-national level in accordance with the local needs (France, Portugal, Ukraine) for Roma civil society development and community organising led by Roma youth.</p> <p>28 Roma youth organizations from 16 countries were trained in management and organizational development. Approx.. half of the</p>	<p>Tracking of the impact and multiplication in case of national meetings and study sessions.</p> <p>Perceived lack of resources for organisational development based on acquired competence during capacity building activities</p> <p>Perceived Lack of resources for running campaigns on local level.</p>

	<p>circa. 240 direct participants</p> <p>Strategies for combating antigypsyism and discrimination through campaigning developed.</p>	<p>organisational development plans planned have been reported to have been implemented.</p> <p>Contact making and networking between different Roma youth organisations.</p>	<p>Lack of recognition of competence and capacity of Roma youth leaders by older generations of Roma leaders in communities.</p> <p>Few Roma related applications to the European Youth Foundation</p>
<p>Increasing the capacity of Roma youth organizations to participate in policy making.</p> <p><i>Supporting active Roma youth participation in decision making processes in order to mainstream Roma issues in youth policies and youth issues in Roma policies and programmes.</i></p>	<p>7 main activities in 2012-2015. including one research project, two seminars, activities to introduce/mainstream Roma youth agenda in CAHROM, CDEJ, AC and CLRAE.</p> <p>Set of recommendations towards Ukrainian authorities for integration and mainstreaming of Roma youth issues in Roma and minority related policy frameworks.</p> <p>circa. 250 direct participants.</p>	<p>Congress of Local and Regional Authorities resolution and recommendation on empowering Roma youth through participation.</p> <p>CAHROM decided to mainstream youth as a transversal issue in their deliberations and work programme and appointed a Rapporteur for Roma youth issues.</p>	<p>CAHROM Roma youth rapporteur is neither young nor Roma which for some puts into question his expertise and experience, as well as authenticity a rapporteur and advocate for Roma youth within the CoE system.</p> <p>Tracking how much activities have influenced policy making and other activities in the work of organisations/institutions that took part in the activities.</p> <p>Measuring participants' capacity for engaging with policy actors and in decision-making. Lack of data for making any assessment.</p>
<p>Human rights and human rights education</p> <p><i>Raising awareness of the human rights situation of young Roma and promoting a culture of human rights.</i></p>	<p>3 main activities held in 2012-2014 focusing on human rights education:</p> <p>2 national training courses (Greece, Hungary) and one Long Term Training Course (L TTC) on fighting against discrimination.</p> <p>circa. 90 direct</p>	<p>Establishment of national networks of Roma youth trainers and multipliers in Greece and Hungary.</p> <p>Significant competence development in anti-discrimination and Human Rights (Education) among participants.</p> <p>After the national training</p>	<p>Tracking projects developed within LTTC type trainings, and the multiplication effect and impact of training conducted.</p> <p>Profile of participants - some of them were beginners and some experienced leaders.</p> <p>Number of participants that could receive training was limited.</p> <p>Recruitment of participants - young</p>

	participants.	<p>course in Greece, follow-up initiatives have taken place: creation of a youth centre in Roma settlement, workshops on Roma Genocide, seminars on family planning and reproductive health, awareness raising activities on anti-discrimination.</p> <p>Participants of LTTC implemented projects in their communities focusing on tackling discrimination, hate speech and antigypsyism.</p>	<p>Roma often do not speak foreign languages and have difficulty in applying for international events.</p> <p>Selection of participants - many young Roma do not feel confident and empowered enough to take part in international training activities, and selection often results in the “usual suspects” being invited to the activities.</p>
<p>Combating antigypsyism</p> <p><i>Promoting systemic changes to structural forms of discrimination and combating antigypsyism through enforcing existing anti-discrimination norms and promoting human rights education.</i></p>	<p>5 main activities were held in 2014-2015 aiming to raise awareness but also develop strategies and mechanisms for combating antigypsyism.</p> <p>circa. 150 direct participants (+ approx. 2000 online engagements during European Action Day: Respect Roma, 2014)</p>	<p>Production of manual “Mirrors” on combating antigypsyism through human rights education.</p> <p>Training workshop for combating antigypsyism as a dissemination effect as its program activities were based on manual Mirrors</p> <p>Online campaign for European Action Day was held on the occasion of the 8 April 2014, International Roma Day and mobilised a large number of activities, activists and organisations.</p> <p>Introducing/mainstreaming antigypsyism through No hate speech campaign - leveraging of the resources.</p>	<p>Tracking the dissemination of the publication and its implementation in the work of Roma/non-Roma youth organizations.</p> <p>Tracking multiplication effect and impact of strategies developed for combating anti-gypsyism.</p> <p>Number of participants that could receive training was limited.</p> <p>As above for recruitment and selection of participants in international training activities.</p> <p>Online mobilisation on European Action Day on 8 April 2014 less successful than in previous years.</p> <p>Participation and representation of Roma expertise and feedback in drafting of Mirrors manual.</p>

One project taking place in the RYAP framework occupies something of a special position, as it straddles several if not all of RYAP’s work areas. [The "Children and Youth at risk" Programme in Bulgaria](#), which is

funded by EEA Grants and the Norway Grants, and is managed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science of Bulgaria, aims to addressing vulnerable and at risk groups of children and young people, particularly those identifying as Roma, by helping underprivileged children and youth to participate in educational and social activities in kindergartens and youth centres. The Programme supports the integration of Roma and other minority young people, helps them to improve their school results, and to develop their personalities. The Youth Department of the Council of Europe supports the development of four local youth centres in accordance with the quality standards of the two European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest and has developed training for youth workers and Roma mediators working in these youth centres. The four youth centres in Stara Zagora, Dobrich, Vratsa and Plovdiv promote the priorities of the Council of Europe's youth sector, namely human rights' education, intercultural learning, youth participation, active democratic citizenship and social inclusion of young people. Furthermore, the programme includes training for educational specialists and managerial staff in kindergartens to provide early multicultural education to children from 3 to 6 years old from underprivileged and Roma families. Finally, the programme includes training courses for Roma mediators, youth workers and kindergarten teachers in order for them to be able to respond to situations of risk affecting young people and children. The programme started in 2013 and continues until 2016.

Achievements and challenges of RYAP activities

We can summarise RYAP's outputs, results, achievements and its attendant challenges based on the information we have about the activities, as follows:

- 2300 direct participants participating in 31 different activities out of which some were first of their kind for the Roma and youth fields, representing important innovations;
- Of these, 19 activities were explicitly conceptualised with educational objectives or had a strong educational dimension, and so contributed to capacity building of Roma youth and their organisations or to the capacity building of other stakeholders engaged in work with / for Roma;
- Organisation of several International and national encounters, as well as local project initiatives which aimed at valuing and promoting Roma identity, culture, language and history (e.g. Roma Genocide during WWII) and at promoting real equal opportunities for Roma young people in all aspects of social and political life. The majority of these were organised centrally by the Youth Department, in direct cooperation with the Roma Youth Networks (individually or collectively);
- Raising awareness for Roma youth issues through various structures and programs, primarily of the Council of Europe, as a support to an integrated approach to all Roma youth-related policies inside the institution (double mainstreaming) with some key results: passing of a Resolution by the CLRAE; appointment of a CAHROM special rapporteur on Youth, organisation of a CDEJ Summer University and of a CAHROM Thematic Study visit on Roma youth to Slovenia, Roma youth meeting in Ukraine, etc.;

- Learning and capacity of individuals and organisations (Roma, non-Roma, youth and youth serving, governmental and non-governmental), through knowledge pooling, exchange of perspectives and information and presentation of research to provide an evidence base for actions directed against discrimination and antigypsyism. Competence development of (hundreds) of young Roma and non-Roma on human rights, human rights education, anti-discrimination, combating antigypsyism, multiple discrimination, project management, organisational development, participation, engagement with policy, Roma youth situations across Europe and Roma rights;
- Supporting and developing the participation of Roma youth in European formal youth participation structures, with some trickle down effects to the national and local levels;
- Supporting the empowerment and development of the autonomy of Roma youth through non-formal education and multiplication of such approaches to other (potential) Roma youth leaders;
- Developing mechanisms and recommendations for combating antigypsyism and (multiple) discrimination;
- Contributing to awareness raising about the problem and challenge of stereotypical attitudes towards and prejudice against Roma through various online and face-to-face activities;
- Contributing to the struggle against school and settlement segregation by training youth workers and educational practitioners to recognise and deal with these problems.
- Double mainstreaming within the Council of Europe - Roma youth and their representative organisations gained access to participation in the statutory bodies of the Council of Europe's Youth Sector, a youth dimension to the ROMED programme is being developed, CAHROM has a youth rapporteur and activities on Roma youth have been conducted by CAHROM, the new SG action plan mentions Roma youth explicitly.
- More Roma young people are being recruited to the general youth activities (i.e. those without a Roma focus) run in the EYCs and by the Youth Department than ever before
- The European Youth Foundation has funded 34 Roma related projects with 1965 direct participants to a tune of over 400K euros
- The visibility of Roma youth issues inside the Council of Europe system has been increased.
- Production of three educational manuals including concrete, practical and educational tools on how to combat antigypsyism and multiple discrimination of Roma youth and on how to educate about the Roma Genocide in WWII, all of which are firsts of their kind for the youth and Roma

sectors. These are currently being translated into different languages and tailored for different users (teachers, youth workers, youth activists, online activists). It is expected that a series of targeted activities will be launched to disseminate the manuals and train education workers to use them;

- Organisation of two large-scale commemoration events for Roma Holocaust Day (2 August), involving the active participation of over a thousand young Roma and non-Roma participants, dignitaries from different countries, and stakeholders of the European Roma rights sector. This served to raise awareness of the existence of the Roma Holocaust, often overshadowed by the Shoah, both among participants in the events, and in the wider public through media coverage. Awareness for Roma Holocaust Day (2 August) was also raised. A common sense of Roma identity is beginning to build around the Roma Holocaust, to which such activities contribute.
- Establishment of national Roma youth networks and/or fostering cooperation among Roma youth organisations on the national level (Greece, Portugal, France, Hungary);
- Facilitation of the organisation first encounters of Roma youth and Roma community leaders in certain countries on certain issues (for example, Portugal on Roma education);
- Positive experiences of intersectoral cooperation between the Youth Department and other departments and programmes of the Council of Europe concerned with Roma youth issues (SOGI, SRSR Team, ROMED/ROMACT, CLRAE);
- Trust building, networking, contact making between a variety of stakeholders, notably among the Roma Youth Networks themselves, between ‘establishment’ institutions and the Roma Youth Networks and between different institutions / organisations / donors with differing mandates for work in this area;
- Development of several long term projects and activities on topics relevant to remedying situations of discrimination and exclusion of Roma youth in Europe, such as of hate speech, antigypsyism, multiple discrimination, Roma Genocide in WWII, Roma identity and culture, etc. In some cases, these long-term projects are follow-up initiatives / projects by former participants of ‘centralised’ activities organised under RYAP by the Youth Department. In other cases, these projects are complex multi-stakeholder initiatives that aim at changing deep-rooted structural disadvantages of Roma by anchoring better educational and managerial practices in key social institutions.

Challenges, shortcomings, room for improvement

From the comprehensive review of evaluation activities in regard of the question of the challenges RYAP faced, we can see that there were several transversal challenges, many of which are not specific to working on Roma youth issues, or even to the actions of the Youth Department of the Council and other

institutional stakeholders, but which are rather common structural problems of the social benefit, development and NGO sectors, as follows (in no order of importance):

- Lack of human resources for managing the number and scale of activities and the programme as a whole;
- Weak organisational capacity of key partners to conduct activities;
- Recruitment of (new) participants for European and activities organised at other levels (national, local);
- Poor access of young Roma to decision making forums, and poor representation and participation;
- Lack of participation of Roma youth representatives in the development of key policy documents;
- Tracking the number of young Roma involved in RYAP activities;
- Tracking and measuring multiplication effects and changes in the situation of young Roma as a result of activities;
- Securing results, following up and ensuring sustainability;
- Lack of resources for taking successful pilot activities to scale;
- Measuring impact;
- Capacity for monitoring and evaluation.

Evaluation activities pertaining to the work areas/objectives of RYAP and the various discussions held with stakeholders confirm that the work areas and the objectives have been and continue to be highly relevant to the challenges faced by and the concerns of Roma young people in Europe from a thematic point of view. These were elaborated in consultation with representatives of young Roma and key experts in the field of Roma rights, for the majority themselves identifying as Roma, and RYAP activities included Roma young people and their organisations as primary stakeholders and beneficiaries, and they are considered to reflect on the ground situations quite accurately. So, as one stakeholder candidly pointed out, the situations of discrimination and exclusion experienced by a large number of Roma youth around Europe have not been improved significantly since 2011.

Furthermore, there was no work area / objective that participants of the evaluation considered to be 'irrelevant' or not worthy of continued attention, and no single type of activity or intervention was evaluated as not appropriate to its purposes or the purposes of RYAP more generally. In addition, when asked if any issues were missing, most stakeholders were of the opinion that RYAP was comprehensive

in its understanding of the issues, needs and concerns of young people with two exceptions: Gender and Roma young people in North- and Southwest Europe. While Gender was addressed through activities on multiple discrimination, in the work on the Barabaripe publication and at least 2 study sessions, some stakeholders felt that the situation and opportunities of young Roma girls and taboos around early marriage and childbearing did not receive enough attention, and should be treated in their own right in the future. Regarding its geographical focus, it is acknowledged that RYAP's stakeholders and partners are most active in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, and the majority of activities focused on issues of concern to Roma youth communities in those regions. Some stakeholders pointed out that Roma in Western, Northern and Southern Europe are also actively involved in the Roma youth movement, have many similar concerns and needs, and could receive more attention in the future.

Further, through the interviews stakeholders shared critical, although sometimes not entirely accurate, assessments about the relevance of the level at which activities were organised (European vs. national or local; inside the European Youth Centres vs. in member states, cities or communities), about the stakeholders involved in planning and implementation and about the target groups or beneficiaries, about the lack of resources for conducting grassroots activities and about the proliferation of certain kinds of activity. For some stakeholders the level at which the activity took place was more important than the relevance of the topic of the activity, because they felt it is more effective to work as close as possible to the reality of the beneficiaries. It was noted in this relation, that many Roma working hard at the grassroots simply do not have the language skills to even apply to European level activities and there were fewer opportunities under RYAP to access 'real' perspectives on the situation of Roma youth in Europe as well as on their expertise in addressing it than was hoped for. In regard of the availability of resources for conducting grassroots activities, many stakeholders were critical that more resources were not available. At the same time, the evaluation found that those resources that are available were not used as actively as might have been expected. Concretely, the European Youth Foundation received comparatively few applications for Roma youth related projects during the period under evaluation and the majority of those received grants. Finally, some stakeholders were critical of the kinds of events that were supported. Notably conferences and meetings were not considered an effective use of resources in comparison to grassroots projects in communities. At the same time, in the four and a half years under evaluation RYAP included only one Roma youth conference, and one Conference on addressing multiple discrimination; most of the activities were small-scale seminars, study sessions and training courses. None of these perspectives is incorrect. All of them have merit and are borne out of a concern for improving the delivery of RYAP. At the same time, none can be considered objective truth.

Specifically, regarding relevance, the evaluation finds that although the political context of Roma rights related work in the majority of Council of Europe member states has changed since RYAP was launched (for example, with the introduction of the National Integration Strategies Framework of the European Union), activities under RYAP's six work areas have been meaningful. In fact, the information and perspectives gathered by the evaluation show the extent to which a youth specific dimension to Roma rights and empowerment tends to have been neglected, is missing, yet is important for the overall Roma

rights and empowerment agenda. RYAP's approach placed strong emphasis on Roma young people having a key role to play in empowering their communities, and on the fact that they require attention as rights bearers in their own right, even if RYAP stakeholders are not all entirely satisfied with how activities under RYAP fared in that regard. And, yet, it is becoming increasingly likely that the new political context of Roma rights that is represented by such national Roma integration agendas will be crucial for the future of RYAP as a relevant intervention (all EU member states are also Council of Europe member states, after all).

Conclusion

The results and achievements outlined above demonstrate that RYAP has made some progress in addressing its objectives, although on some objectives there has been more progress than others. It might be worth considering whether the objectives of RYAP were SMART enough, for significant progress towards them to be made. Certainly, the objectives targeting systemic change in relation to Roma youth participation, discrimination of Roma, young or otherwise were probably too ambitious. However, RYAP's activities are making a contribution, and the choice of heavy investment in education, training, capacity building (not only of Roma youth, but also of other stakeholders responsible for addressing the issues of Roma youth) complemented by trying to make what exists as policy and programming more inclusive and more effective, has borne fruit. In work areas which speak to the core competences of the Youth Department (human rights education, educational approaches to combating discrimination, facilitating cooperation between different stakeholders), and to the strengths of the Roma Youth Networks (intimate knowledge of the Roma youth experience and its individual and collective challenges; Roma identity, culture, history; community sensitive ways of adapting educational approaches to their communities) the evaluation concludes that considerable progress has been made. For the objectives which speak to political and social change, progress has been more piecemeal, something which has led to frustration and disappointment on the part of some stakeholders. However, as the following sections will hopefully show, this was to some extent inevitable, and any future iteration of RYAP should actively and explicitly consider the questions of expectations and realism in much more depth.

Participant testimony

Fenia Papakonstantinou, Greece

The Roma Population in Greece lives in conditions of exclusion and discrimination. The majority of the population (mainly older people) has reduced access to and use of social and health services, and demonstrates a lack of hygiene. They experience shorter life expectancy and higher rates of child mortality than the rest of the population. They further demonstrate higher rates of functional illiteracy, which is both a cause and effect of social exclusion, and which is a barrier to accessing administrative services and their rights.

The wider society has strong prejudices about Roma, which believes they do not want to improve their living conditions and that it is the Roma's own choice that they live in those conditions. Even civil society organisations hesitate to implement projects about Roma and when they do, they often do not involve staff which is familiar with Roma culture. This prevents them from succeeding because Roma require time to get to know the people they work with.

As for Roma Youth, they lack opportunities to improve their skills, upgrade their knowledge and standard of living. There are few organisations dealing with Roma, but even fewer dealing with Roma Youth empowerment.

The Roma Youth Action Plan is the right strategy to combat discrimination of Roma Youth and empower them as also is a right way to create a network of activists for Roma Youth. The Roma Youth Action Plan committed me to the cause of Roma Youth and Women, and I would like to share how that came about.

I had the chance to take part in the Long Term Training Course "Roma Youth Leaders and Activists to promote human rights and non-discrimination" (2013-2014). The two seminars (Budapest & Strasbourg) that I participated in gave me strong knowledge on Roma Culture, and the same time, I had the chance to network with other Roma Youth and Activists around Europe. We have built our own community there and this was very important for my actions in Greece because I was feeling that I had people to support me and with which to exchange experiences.

As an impulse, this seminar gave me the idea to create a project called "X-Roma", in the region of Larisa. This project aimed to motivate and educate women regarding primary health issues. This initiative and my strong will to succeed led me to ask for support which I found from Angelopoulos Foundation that sponsored the implementation of the project. X-Roma also had the chance to be honoured and attend to Clinton Global Initiative University Annual Meeting in Saint Louis in the United States, in which 1000 young people from all over the world participate with their innovative ideas. Ours was the only project concerning Roma at the event. 400 people benefited from medical examinations free of charge as a result of our project. The Mayor of Larisa has recognised it as a good practice and is emulating it.

At the same time as I was implementing X-Roma I tried to contribute and highlight the 'No Hate Speech Campaign' (NHSC) in Greece. I attended a meeting on the inclusion of Roma Youth in the NHSC in

Budapest and when I came back I tried to put what I learned there into action.

I am passionate in promoting equal opportunities and try to contribute to facing the challenges experienced by organisations Roma activists. For this reason, I cooperated with other Greek activists that took part in the seminar for “Roma Youth Leaders”. Together, we developed a National Programme on Human Rights, which was supported by the Council of Europe. We concentrated on the long term aim of creating a network of Roma Youth Activists in Greece and we submitted proposals to several funders to support our work. Until now we did not receive funding, but I am very optimistic that we will.

Another outcome of my participation in RYAP activities was the idea of creating an organisation addressing Roma Youth. When I was implementing X-Roma, I recruited a team of volunteers. Based on the situation of Roma Youth, I had a vision for a youth organisation focused on Roma youth issues so I founded one in Thessaly with the name “Alternative Innovative Development”.

When I moved to Thessaloniki though, other activists in the field of Human Rights, approached me and asked me to contribute with my knowledge on Roma to the work of their organisation (Institute of Social Innovation and Cohesion). So I took the decision to participate as an educational advisor.

Recently, I participated in the FERYP seminar “Roma Youth Building Bridges” and I found it very constructive because as an outcome the Roma Youth Women Empowerment project was founded. Women that attended also the seminar and are interested on the topic will participate.

The Roma Youth Action Plan was a very constructive way for me to not only expand my knowledge of Roma Culture and to become an advocate for Roma Rights but also to transfer my knowledge to my society and create a network of people working with Roma Youth. This was a multiplier outcome and very important since in Greece the most important thing is to create a network of activists (Roma and non-Roma) that care about Roma.

Chapter 2: Evaluation of implementation

Introduction

A fair and accurate evaluation of the implementation of RYAP first requires a discussion of its nature as an 'action plan' with all the expectations that using such a term to describe a framework brings with it. The evaluation has revealed that ideas and perceptions of what an action plan is and should be differ considerably among the stakeholders involved in the ICG, which includes Roma youth networks, other sectors of the Council of Europe and other institutions concerned with Roma (youth) empowerment. The evaluation has also revealed that despite its role as a platform for coordination and cooperation, the ICG was not the space where such issues were explicitly clarified, or at least, not to a satisfactory extent. What has become clear is that for Council of Europe/Youth Department insiders, establishing RYAP as an action plan had currency, but that outside the Council of Europe doing so created expectations that could not necessarily be fulfilled.

If inside the Council of Europe it was possible to attract attention, visibility and even support for the double mainstreaming agenda, youth participation and Roma youth concerns by using the term, RYAP lacked some key features typically associated with action plans that on the one hand frustrated implementation efforts, and on the other hand frustrated stakeholders. Specifically, we are referring to features such as: SMART objectives, key targets, indicators for monitoring and evaluation, a limited time frame, a dedicated budget for implementation and management that goes beyond that reserved for activities, dedicated visibility and communications, and human resources with a mandate to act and clear responsibilities.

If anything, the RYAP under evaluation could be better understood as a policy document, which sets out the key commitments of the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe towards which a certain number of its activities are expected to contribute progress in a long term perspective, and to which partners (whatever their status, including youth organisations not engaged in its Statutory Bodies, other institutions and foundations) are invited to associate and provide support.

These reflections are offered as a context within which to consider the perspectives provided by participants of the evaluation regarding implementation of the RYAP, many of which have been critical, and have focused more on challenges and shortcomings than on achievements. As evaluators we are bound on the one hand to call a spade a spade, i.e. to be honest about the perspectives shared with us, and at the same time to be fair, i.e. to consider all factors that might be at play in any situation.

This chapter addresses key aspects of implementation in more detail, as follows:

- management of the RYAP and its implementation;
- intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe;

- partnerships with other institutions and actors of the Roma rights sector
- visibility of RYAP in different contexts;
- and RYAP's key strategic approaches (double mainstreaming, engagement with policy, participation of Roma youth).

These groups of issues regarding implementation emerged from the evaluation activities, although aspects were already delineated in the terms of reference for the evaluation. Suffice it to say that there was quite some consensus among stakeholders involved in the evaluation about what aspects of implementation could be improved, and therefore, that they should be evaluated. Hence, we can say with some certainty that these issues should be considered in any further iteration of RYAP and efforts to improve its effectiveness, alongside its many achievements and positive results.

Management

Evaluation of the management of RYAP focused on several issues, most important among which were financial aspects, human resources and capacity and communication. In general, this area was found to be fraught with challenges, shortcomings and frustrations by participants of the evaluation who could observe how RYAP was managed.

Financial aspects

If considering the question of financing, it is apparent from the various evaluation activities that stakeholders in the RYAP see this question very differently. On the one hand, discussions with key stakeholders like the Roma Youth Networks lead give the overwhelming sense of RYAP having been under-financed. On the other hand, when one looks at the absolute figures involved this is not borne out. The actual figures are discussed below in more detail, but approx. 1.07 million euros were invested in through Council of Europe resource mobilisation alone over four and a half years. The evaluation revealed a critical tension in perceptions around the issue of financial resources. On the one hand, some stakeholders, notably the Roma Youth Networks hoped RYAP would provide them with dedicated resources over which they would have decision making power. On the other hand, Council of Europe-insiders point to the fact that only co-managed statutory bodies have that decision making power.

If considering the question of **resource mobilisation**, the figures the evaluation have at its disposal show that external funding was mobilised in the form of voluntary contributions from four member states of the Council of Europe (Belgium - Flanders, Finland, Germany and Hungary) and small scale in-kind contributions by select participating institutions / foundations (e.g. self-financing of travel costs for meetings and activities, joint or self-financed activities in the EYCs). A closer look at sources of funding by year, shows that the scale of financing for RYAP grew every year from 2011 through 2014 (approx. 418,5000 euros), which indicates that RYAP gained some political traction in decision-making on the

priorities of the Youth Sector of the Council of Europe (i.e. in the co-managed statutory bodies) 4 years running. Furthermore, the sums were not negligible by Youth Department standards. Total investment in programme from 2011 to mid-2015 when the evaluation was begun reached 1.07 million euros. Furthermore, from 2011 to 2012 the majority of funds for RYAP came from the ordinary budget of the Council of Europe (Youth Department, other CoE sectors) and the European Youth Foundation. From 2013 onwards, the proportion covered by voluntary contributions and other sectors of the Council of Europe with youth related activities was more extensive. It can, therefore, be concluded that within the Council of Europe system some form of resource mobilisation was achieved and to the extent it secured 1.14 million euros over 5 years it was successful. At the same time, it is apparent that joining the ICG did not come with any obligation to contribute with financial resources, in kind or otherwise, and nascent ideas about coordination of funding efforts in the form of a funding collaborative among ICG partners to leverage potential did not get off the ground. Furthermore, some 'promises' of financial support (for staff and activities) were not kept by participating institutions, although it seems the reasons for this were internal institutional politics rather than anything to do with RYAP, as such.

Nevertheless, the stakeholders that participated in the evaluation were vociferous in pointing out that RYAP did not have sufficient **financial means** to ensure adequate coverage of its ambitious objectives in each work area, and over its whole period of operation (the majority of activities being Youth Department programme activities and took place in 2013 and 2014). Furthermore, some stakeholders expressed disappointment and frustration over what they felt to be the lack of financial support for the institutionalisation and organisational development of the Roma Youth Networks, and that few grants were available for their activities and projects. At the same time, and as has been mentioned above, the evaluation also revealed that the Roma Youth Networks have not used the opportunities provided by the European Youth Foundation under its operational grant scheme for youth organisations, nor did they apply for project funding to the extent expected. This raises questions about the capacity of the Roma Youth Networks and Roma youth initiatives broadly to absorb the funding that is available. This also raises questions about the kind of capacity building that the Roma Youth Movement might need now and in the future.

If looking at the question of **resource efficiency**, however, a more differentiated picture emerges. While the Council of Europe system has relatively high staff and administration costs, its operational spending is far from negligible, and the Youth Department is well known for making a little go a long way. RYAP's resources certainly did not meet its ambitions, but it can nevertheless be concluded with confidence that the use of the limited resources there were for RYAP was relatively efficient. Hard and fast, accurate data on participation, the real cost of activities, the real overheads associated with running RYAP, and other variables such as the value of non-tangibles such as volunteers and the multiplication effect, were not available to the evaluation. However, the evaluation was able to reconstruct some basic key data about RYAP after the fact.

RYAP has reached quite a substantial number relevant stakeholders active in the promotion of Roma youth empowerment, certainly including a relatively high proportion of Roma youth (although we cannot say how many or even what proportion) with relatively few resources. If we only count the cost of direct participation in the 31 centrally organised activities at 1.07 million euros, we come out with a simple cost benefit calculation of 465 euros per participant. If we add the 34 granted EYF projects and their participants into the equation brings us to a net investment of approx. 1,5 million euros and approx. 4300 participants. This brings us down to a cost of 348 euros per participant. We can on this basis conclude safely that if the efficient use of funds is evaluated based on cost per participant, then RYAP was anything but expensive. Furthermore, this calculation does not consider the multiplier effect. Although we cannot establish the extent and depth of multiplication through RYAP participants, if they even multiplied their knowledge to 2 further persons, the cost per participant would be reduced even more significantly.

While cost per participant may be a relevant measure of resource efficiency, it is however not a very useful measure of **effectiveness**. Given its objectives, RYAP's effectiveness should be better measured by learning and capacity building achievements, added value for stakeholders and beneficiaries, changes in attitudes of mainstream society towards Roma youth, inclusion of Roma in participation structures, and other less tangible indicators which are highly context dependent. The evaluation will explore those in detail in Chapter 3, which deals with its issues of strategic importance and priorities. Furthermore, resource effectiveness was constrained by structural factors not necessarily within the control of the ICG or RYAP staff. As a programme coordinated by the Youth Department, RYAP was subject to its administrative and financial regulations, as well as its bureaucracy. As a 'joint venture', RYAP suffered from prescribed modes of 'cooperation' and 'partnership' between institutions and different organisations with different statuses (intergovernmental organisations, foundations, non-governmental organisations), and it suffered from inherited mistrust between stakeholders, born out of stereotypical misconceptions about each other and each other's ideological positions on Roma rights.

Human resources and capacity

As alluded to, RYAP had some serious challenges with **human resources and management capacity**. RYAP benefitted from the part time workforce of one educational advisor (approx. 30%) and of the Head of the Education and Training Programme of the Youth Department (approx. 15%). Nevertheless, and to put it bluntly, this staffing level was simply not adequate to cover all the typical transversal tasks involved in implementing a project of this scale, let alone for running that many activities, however dedicated and committed the staff concerned were. And, this considering that several activities implemented under RYAP were the responsibility of stakeholders such as the Roma Youth Networks and other sectors within the Council of Europe. Significant disappointment was expressed by stakeholders participating in the evaluation in regard of the human resource situation. On the one hand, there were hopes that one specific external donor would co-finance a staff person to act as RYAP secretariat and project manager. These hopes were dashed when that partner exited the international youth sector and decided not to participate financially. However those hopes may have been misplaced, given the policy

of that donor has consistently been not to finance staff working at other institutions, especially those in the intergovernmental sector. The appointment of the part-time project assistant in 2013, based in Budapest, was a major boost to RYAP, and improved the level of secretariat support and contributed to ensuring better coverage of some key tasks important for managerial coherence (notably those not covered through the implementation of activities). However, it proved impossible to sustain the financing of that position.

Another important reflection as concerns management in this area relates to the division of responsibilities for implementation among partners, which is also to an extent a reflection of concerns about ownership and leadership of RYAP among ICG members and other partners. The evaluation heard many critical perspectives on the way in which responsibilities for RYAP implementation were or were not adequately divided. On the one hand, there is a clear sense of what should have been done by the Council of Europe. For example, several stakeholders evaluated the lack of engagement of the RYAP secretariat in visibility efforts critically, although such efforts were potentially important for its political impact. Another example is facilitation of cooperation and coordination among partners in the ICG, for which there was clearly an expectation that more would be done, this being a 'Council of Europe initiative'. As mentioned above, this was certainly a problem of inadequate human resource capacity and time, but it was also discussed in terms of a lack of clearly divided responsibilities. On the other hand, the evaluation found that stakeholders in the ICG did not necessarily consider such tasks and functions to be their responsibility, although the idea of shared responsibility for RYAP as a set of objectives was very present in ICG deliberations. Thirdly, there was disappointment across the board that institutions engaged in the ICG, other than the Council of Europe, did not contribute with more resources and especially human resource capacity.

Finally, on this dimension of management, there were some voices in the evaluation that were critical of the human resources practices that were employed in the implementation of RYAP, specifically the hiring of non-Roma consultants to work on different projects. This is a highly sensitive and controversial point on which there was no consensus among stakeholders, and it must reiterated that this was not a widespread criticism. Nevertheless, it was raised and vociferously by those for whom it represents an issue and concern. They felt that recruiting non-Roma for certain consultancies, notably the elaboration manuals and publications, contradicts RYAP's aim of empowering and strengthening the capacity of Roma youth to conduct their own affairs, that it perpetuates paternalism, and that such practices are counterproductive for the reproduction of leadership and knowledge retention/transfer within the Roma youth movement, as qualified young Roma professionals are quickly recruited out of the sector unless there are opportunities for career development open to them within it. Yet the evaluation also found another side to this story - one of remaining skills gaps in the Roma youth movement and community of practice associated with RYAP, especially as concerns the conceptualisation and development of educational materials. And other perspectives were offered on this issue by Council of Europe insiders involved directly in the management of such recruitment processes. These other perspectives pointed out that the different consultancy positions that needed to be filled were

advertised widely through the Roma youth networks, precisely in the hope of accessing young Roma professionals with the right skills sets, that all teams for all RYAP projects included one or more young Roma experts, scholars or educationalists, that where Roma youth input was felt be not present enough, consultative meetings were organised to gather in relevant input, and that the needs of representation cannot always meet the requirements of qualification and competence required for specific educational tasks. Once again, the evaluation finds that neither of these perspectives can be considered incorrect, but at the same neither can be considered 'the truth'. It is not the role of the evaluation to establish the truth, but rather to reflect on the implications of such differing perspectives for how RYAP functioned. What this delicate matter raises, then, are questions about how such issues are dealt with, transparency in communication between partners and matters of honesty as regards the necessity of representation, as well as competence, in fulfilling certain roles. And as we will see from the next section, there were major challenges with communication in RYAP.

Communication

Insufficient or late communication was a recurrent theme during the evaluation. The ICG was welcomed as a platform for communication, exchange of information, as having potential for improving coordination, and as creating conditions for mutual trust building. However, meetings took place rarely (approx. once per year) and it was felt that some more or better communication between meetings would have been helpful, especially for the purposes of coordination and visibility.

There was acknowledgement that communication requires facilitation, and that the human resources available to RYAP were insufficient to cover the needs in this and other important areas of implementation. Yet, there was also a sense that communication should have been given more attention and priority, and that this could have been done without needing extensive resources using technology and social networks. For example, it was questioned why RYAP stakeholders (ICG and the broader community of implementing partners) did not have a dedicated and facilitated platform for communication and exchange (a kind of 'intranet'), as exists for the statutory bodies of the Youth Department. It was further questioned why some technology tools already in place (for example, e-learning platforms, Facebook, etc.) were not be used to better effect of communication, internal and external.

It will come as no surprise from the above discussion that both internal (i.e. among ICG partners and even within the Council of Europe) and external communication about the RYAP suffered because of a lack of human resources to ensure it was conducted systematically, with clear objectives and communication channels, and on a regular basis. This has had clear knock on effects for the level of information and sense of engagement of the ICG stakeholders, and even for their mutual trust, for the visibility of the RYAP externally, and maybe even for political will for deeper engagement with it on the part of potential stakeholders and donors. Yet, and at the same time, the evaluation finds that the RYAP website is a. informative, b. was kept quite up to date, and c. a lot of information and documentation was made available for internal and external use in a manner transparent enough for anyone looking for

both general and specific information about RYAP and its activities to be able to find it without extensive need to search. This is yet another example of how perspectives on a specific dimension of RYAP diverge depending on whom one speaks to, without there being the possibility of establishing who is more right or who is more wrong.

On the plus side, the cordial working relationships that exist between many of the actors involved, especially within the Council of system (civil servants and representatives of NGOs and even governments) have been identified as having been key in the implementation of RYAP. The question of communication between the partners themselves, without the medium of the RYAP was also raised during the evaluation. It was noted, that it is not always as regular as it should be, for example, among the youth networks, and certainly the same can be observed for inter-institutional communication. From this perspective, the role of the ICG itself as a platform for communication and exchange of information has been positively evaluated.

This discussion of communication would not be complete if we remained on the level of the quantity of communication. The quality of communication among partners, and notably its level of openness, appears to have been something of a challenge. The question of the openness of communication among partners was raised again and again during the evaluation, by the widest variety of stakeholders.

Intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe

Stakeholders participating in the evaluation qualified to comment on the question of intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe were generally satisfied with the way it worked in the development and implementation of RYAP. The operational staff working within all Council of Europe programmes directly concerned with RYAP are on cordial terms with one another and stay in regular contact, consulting each other on key areas of common interest. There is both a strong interest and perception of necessity in their cooperation. Furthermore, they all testify to its utility for the effectiveness of their specific work areas and their common objectives.

Concrete examples of positive experiences of intersectoral cooperation under RYAP are many. In the political sphere, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities has been actively engaged in the ICG through one representative of a local authority. There appears to be growing awareness on the part of the CLRAE that Roma youth are a relevant cohort for local and regional authorities, many of which are receiving young Roma migrants from other EU member states for the first time and simply do not know how to deal with their needs. Some local authorities, therefore, demonstrate increased interest in active cooperation. Even if the follow-up to the adoption of the Congress' flagship political framework on Roma youth, the Resolution 366 (2014) Empowering Roma youth through participation: effective policy design at local and regional levels, has been slow, there is a clear understanding of the necessity to reinvigorate it, and the relevant staff are on board. In the CDEJ, the European Steering Committee on Youth, which is the governmental strand of the co-managed statutory bodies of the Youth Department, there has been some interest in Roma youth, as demonstrated by the hosting of an annual Summer

University of the CDEJ in Slovakia in 2013 on the situation of Roma youth. The European Youth Foundation provided seed-funding for RYAP in 2009 and has consistently funded Roma projects over the years, amounting to some 40 projects funded to the tune of more than 400,000 euros up to June 2015). Nevertheless, and as alluded to above some voices, especially the Roma Youth Networks, were critical of the level of funding made available.

In the wider Council of Europe system, the appointment by CAHROM of a Youth Rapporteur is also considered a step in the right direction towards creating visibility and mainstreaming potential for youth issues in the Roma agenda of the Council of Europe and its member states. The concentration of CAHROM on Roma youth issues (notably through the Slovenia Thematic Visit) has been welcomed and was felt to be constructive, even if it is rightly considered to be problematic by several stakeholders in the ICG that the appointed Rapporteur is neither Roma nor young.

The joint activities of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit (SOGI) with the Youth Department on multiple discrimination have also been hailed as a model of good practice for intersectoral cooperation in the Council of Europe. Nevertheless, there is also recognition that even with these good relations and this level of cooperation there is sometimes duplication, something which internal stakeholders feel needs to be given more attention.

Furthermore, close cooperation with both the ROMED and ROMACT programmes has led to the active conceptualisation and implementation of a youth dimension in especially the ROMED programme. With a strong overlap between the actual participants of that programme and RYAP, with ROMEDs access grassroots communities, and its more significant financial capacity, RYAP stands to multiply its investments training, competence development and capacity development of Roma youth leaders and to extend its value added to the local level, which it is not in a position to reach and impact upon directly.

There are two notable exceptions to this largely positive evaluation of intersectoral cooperation within the Council of under RYAP. The first is the most recent policy development effort of the Secretary General in relation to Roma programmes in the Council of Europe. In the first place, The Strasbourg Declaration on Roma (adopted by the Committee of Ministers at the end of 2010) does not mention Roma youth at all. Although its adoption precedes RYAP, it kicked off a process of internal Council of Europe strategy development around Roma issues. It is widely acknowledged that the absence of youth in this document and, therefore, political agenda, is highly problematic. Yet, the process to develop the Secretary General's Action Plan on Roma in response to the Strasbourg Declaration is not widely considered to have been sufficiently inclusive of a youth dimension either, despite what several RYAP stakeholders, staff of the Youth Department and the CAHROM Youth Rapporteur consider to have been their best efforts. So, while and finally youth is in the Action Plan, the way in which it has come to be included has been evaluated as disappointing by many stakeholders in the ICG. Taking into account the high level of activity of the Roma Youth Networks in the Council of Europe system, their recognised

positive role in efforts to promote Roma rights Europe-wide, and the generally high level of cooperation between the Networks and the SRSG team, these stakeholders feel the process sent the wrong signal to external partners and governments, i.e. Roma youth are not important enough to be active participants and decision makers in the work to develop the Secretary General's new action plan.

The second exception as concerns intersectoral cooperation within the Council of Europe is the lack of involvement of the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission in RYAP. To the outside observer, it would appear logical that the Partnership might have acted as a bridge to engaging the European Commission, an increasingly important actor in relation to Roma rights in Europe (see more on this below under Partnerships with other institutions and actors of the Roma rights sector). Yet, according to key staff, it was never considered a priority to engage the Partnership actively in RYAP and its only active contribution on the theme of Roma youth was to commission a paper on Roma youth entitled 'Framework paper on marginalised youth groups within the Roma communities'. It is possible we overestimate the potential role of the Partnership, given its limited mandate, but considering the future importance of developments in the European Union for inclusion of Roma young people, the very real context of intra-EU migration of Roma, along with Roma young people's position among the most vulnerable in Europe, we find it surprising that the possible opportunities offered by cooperation between the Partnership and RYAP have not received more attention.

Partnerships with other institutions and actors of the Roma rights sector

External partnerships were an important dimension of the RYAP and something of a 'make or break' factor for its implementation. Overall, the opportunity to partner on RYAP, through participation in the ICG, has been welcomed by all concerned, internal and external to the Council of Europe system. The initiative to create and maintain the ICG, and its flexible format of participation, has been evaluated positively for the fact that it provided a dedicated space and time for consultation, exchange of information and mutual trust-building among stakeholders engaged with Roma rights and Roma youth that did not exist until RYAP was adopted. It was also welcomed because it was expected to foster coordination of activities and joint project development, something that was basically missing around Roma youth issues until its creation.

Nevertheless, many frustrations were expressed about how partnerships around RYAP were or were not developed and maintained, including in relation to the functioning of the ICG, likely because of the diverse and unclear expectations that existed towards RYAP as an 'action plan' and open questions of ownership and division of responsibilities for its implementation (see above). Critical perspectives were raised on a number of dimensions. First is that the ICG met too rarely, and not often enough to ensure deep partnership. Second is that it did not manage to foster the level or effectiveness of coordination many stakeholders had hoped for. For example, it was pointed out that Roma sector (youth) activists and experts are expected to participate in a proliferation of events, which continue to be organised in parallel or very close together, such that there are often important clashes of dates. Third, some

stakeholders were disappointed that there was no strategic ‘preparation’ of their participation, which they felt would have ensured a better leveraging of resources, political momentum and impact. Fourth, a number of stakeholders hoped that the ICG would develop RYAP into a common agenda among partners on equal terms, but were disappointed about how this turned out in reality. These stakeholders, and especially the Roma youth networks, felt that the process of implementation was not sufficiently Roma youth led, something they believe would only have been made possible by investing more financial and human resources into their organisational development and programmes of activities. Fifth, and finally, some stakeholders hoped that external partners would contribute with more tangible inputs, especially resources for implementation, especially staff capacity and financial resources, and were disappointed when these were not forthcoming.

Considering the way national level Roma rights promotion has changed in Europe since RYAP was tabled (with the introduction of National Roma Integration Strategies by all EU member states, EU funding streams for Roma and youth, interest of candidate states to follow EU developments), it is important that the European Commission did not participate in RYAP. Neither the Partnership on Youth between the Council of Europe and the European Commission nor the relevant department/s of the European Commission were represented in the ICG, and European Commission funds were not available to RYAP. The reasons for this are certainly complex and not all of them were within the power of the RYAP secretariat or even the management of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, which was de facto leading the process. Formal Council of Europe procedures and mandates around negotiating funding collaborations with the European Commission were certainly significant, as was the lack of human resources for partnership building suffered by RYAP. However, there is a sense among stakeholders that this was a missed opportunity for putting RYAP on a more constructive and operational footing and that it would have warranted more persistence and attention from all ICG members and especially the RYAP secretariat.

Finally, in relation to partnerships, RYAP was vulnerable to the vagaries of the internal politics of participating institutions, including the the Council of Europe. The situation around the financing of RYAP secretariat described above is a case in point. The fact that the funding for the RYAP project assistant fell through was outside the control of the Youth Department, but it shows the extent to which ‘putting your eggs in one basket’, even when a partnership is cordial, is risky. It also shows the extent to which certain issues (financing responsibilities, ownership, mutual expectations) were treated implicitly in the ICG.

Visibility

The question of visibility has been discussed at length in the evaluation of RYAP implementation, and perspectives differ considerably depending on where RYAP was supposed to have been visible. Participants of the evaluation in a position to judge deem Roma youth, if not RYAP itself, to have become far more visible inside the Council of Europe, which speaks to progress having been made on the double mainstreaming agenda over RYAP’s years of operation. Council of Europe internal

stakeholders are of the opinion that this would not have been possible without the platform created by RYAP.

It is not possible for the evaluation to judge the extent to which Roma young people, and the wider youth sector, were aware of RYAP. Several stakeholders were of the opinion that RYAP was not well-known and for that to have been possible, more targeted dissemination and visibility activities would have been necessary. While the RYAP website was found to be generally up to date, informative and transparent, a number of stakeholders questioned why RYAP did not have a dedicated Facebook page, a Twitter account and other social media presences that could bring it closer to Roma youth. These stakeholders rightly point out that none of these cost a lot of money and nor have to be very time consuming for staff. At the same time, there was disagreement among stakeholders about who should have been responsible for conducting such visibility activities. There was an expectation on the part of the Youth Department that ICG members, and especially the Roma Youth Networks and other youth organisations, would take a more active role in promoting RYAP to the grassroots and to their members, whereas some ICG members consider this expectation to have been misplaced.

Strategic approaches

The evaluation found that RYAP operated according to four main strategic approaches - double mainstreaming; training, competence development and capacity building; participation of Roma youth; and engagement with policy. To some extent these were 'deliberate' (RYAP states its guiding principles explicitly, see introduction to RYAP above). To some extent these emerged as a matter of course, and by virtue of the number of activities of particular kinds conducted. These reflect the opportunities commonly available to the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, on the one hand, and on the other, its constraints of mandate and operational reach. We will consider each of these in more detail here, as they are important for considering questions of impact in Chapter 3.

Double mainstreaming

Double mainstreaming simultaneously emphasises the importance and centrality of the needs and concerns of Roma youth in Roma agendas and the needs and concerns of Roma youth in youth policy agendas. The rationale behind double mainstreaming is that Roma youth are underrepresented in both Roma and youth policy agendas, despite often being at the forefront of efforts to secure Roma rights, and despite bearing the brunt of discrimination, disadvantage and marginalisation. Furthermore, it speaks to the idea that there is value in working to improve long standing initiatives and systems, rather than proliferating initiatives.

As an initiative located in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, RYAP was potentially well positioned to change something tangible in the way the Council of Europe system addresses Roma youth. Due to its post-hoc nature, it is not possible for the evaluation to judge the extent to which RYAP has actually been responsible for such changes that can be observed. Nevertheless, there have been changes in the way this issue is considered in three main respects, and many stakeholders consider

RYAP to have been an important contributing factor. First, the political institutions and mechanisms of European cooperation developed by the Council of Europe have taken note of Roma youth as a group of concern and interest in their own right. Whether in the European Steering Committee on Youth, CAHROM or the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (CLRAE), Roma youth is increasingly on the agenda, not only as the object of measures to improve their situation, but also as actors of their own destiny. Second, some stakeholders in a position to judge consider the very existence of RYAP to have been important for such developments. On the one hand, it gave Roma young people and youth organisations a platform for positive visibility towards institutions they rarely have the chance to address. On the other hand, it gave the Youth Department and its key partners with experience of working with youth added legitimacy as hubs of good practice in relation to Roma youth inclusion and empowerment. And third, one of the Roma youth networks gained membership of the Advisory Council on Youth, one of the statutory bodies deciding on the priorities, agenda and programme of the Council of Europe Youth Sector.

Yet RYAP's double mainstreaming agenda inside the Council of Europe cannot be considered an unqualified success. There continue to be significant challenges and work to be done in order to ensure effective double mainstreaming. Stakeholders of the evaluation active in the Council of Europe's political institutions, and senior management, readily admit that getting beyond tokenistic approaches (references to Roma youth concerns and needs in conventions and recommendations, public hearings facing young people off with parliamentarians, national experts speaking for Roma youth, consultations on working documents, etc.) to Roma youth inclusion is really difficult, even since RYAP. Contrary to what one would expect, efforts to ensure meaningful participation in decision making of Roma youth under RYAP have not managed to ensure their extensive and deep participation in the development of the Secretary General's Action Plan on Roma.

In the Youth Department's co-managed statutory bodies, where relationships between Roma and non-Roma youth organisations have been established to varying degrees since the mid 1990s, the risk of 'Roma youth fatigue' is a constant challenge, notably because mainstream youth organisations do not take kindly to being browbeaten into more inclusivity. Efforts on the part of the European Youth Forum to encourage their members (National Youth Councils and International Non-governmental Youth Organisations) to engage more actively with and become more inclusive of Roma youth have not borne as much fruit as was hoped, despite inclusion of Roma and other minority youth organisations being an explicit criterion for the assessment of prospective members.

At the operational level, mainstreaming Roma youth in the relevant programmes of units with common interests to those of the Youth Department has not been so much a question of political will, as of available resources financial, human and temporal. If anything, these have been missing for the development of youth specific dimensions to other programmes and for joint activities and programmes. Where mainstreaming a youth dimension with adaptations to existing approaches was possible, this has largely been achieved. Notable in this relation are the ROMED / ROMACT programmes,

which will enter a new phase of operation including many young Roma activists engaged and trained through RYAP activities. The point here has been to make the best of the resources invested by one programme of the Council of Europe for the development of another. Furthermore, ROMED / ROMACT, having the strong local dimension they do, provide RYAP with a transmission belt from which to draw on new activists, mobilise wider Roma youth communities and to develop its multiplier effect. It should, however, also be mentioned that ROMED / ROMACT benefit from large scale funding from the European Union. They have more operational capacity than RYAP, but RYAP has and can continue to leverage its added value through such programmes.

Outside the Council of Europe, there are signs that Roma youth issues are receiving more attention, but again, it is impossible to evaluate the extent to which this has been the direct result RYAP. Certainly, for the other institutions involved in RYAP, the Roma youth agenda was already of interest, hence their motivation for participation in the ICG and eventual coordination of activities under RYAP.

In national level policy arenas, some good practices elaborated at the European level within the RYAP context have been adopted, and RYAP activities with a policy dimension (notably the CDEJ Summer University in Slovakia in 2013, the CAHROM Thematic Study Visit in Slovenia in 2015 and the work of certain representatives of the CLRAE) have served to raise awareness among national and local policy actors about the importance of mainstreaming Roma youth issues. However, as noted by stakeholders in a position to judge, the make or break factor in this respect is the openness of key 'gate-keepers' to allowing Roma youth and their representatives a seat at policy and decision-making tables. Once they are actually at the table, they are often welcomed, take a leading role and bringing new perspectives to policy deliberations, which are appreciated. However, getting to that point takes changes in attitudes, and that takes a lot of time and concerted effort. It is readily admitted that there continues to exist a lot of ignorance, mistrust, prejudice, and a lack of expertise on the part of policy makers when it comes to Roma and especially Roma youth. It is also readily admitted that the interest of key stakeholders is often limited, and the mechanisms for engaging them more actively inadequate. Some stakeholders participating in the evaluation believe that expecting a framework like RYAP to deliver in this area is going too far and unrealistic. Others think that with more resources and a more strategic approach, this is the level at which a framework like RYAP could have most impact for the meaningful inclusion and empowerment of young Roma. Again, both perspectives have merit, and this discrepancy in perspective is certainly an issue that requires consideration in the development of any new iteration on RYAP.

While it could be expected that organisations representing Roma would embrace the idea of youth mainstreaming, stakeholders report that efforts in this relation have been fraught with challenges and that notably there is something of an 'inter-generational divide' within the Roma community and in the Roma rights sector. Roma youth leaders report that they experience difficulties to get what they want to do and their status as youth leaders taken seriously by the leaders of their own communities and by the leaders of European Roma representation platforms (including those supported by the Council of Europe), who often see them as competition. Understandably, this is extremely frustrating for Roma

youth leaders and their constituencies, and complicates their claims for participation in mainstream political arenas at the national and local levels. Certain stakeholders believe that RYAP has contributed positively to changing attitudes within the Roma community to its own youth, in that it has invested a lot in supporting the competence development of Roma youth leaders for advocating on their own behalf, by implication contributing to growing acceptance of Roma youth in leadership positions.

Training, competence development and capacity building

Altogether RYAP's programme of activities from 2011 to 2015 included a total of 19 activities conceptualised explicitly as 'educational' or as having a strong educational dimension, and a further 20 educational workshops were organised in the context of the two large-scale events organised to commemorate the Roma Genocide in WWII in 2013 and 2014. These represented a total financial investment of 407.995 euros out the 1.07 million euros spent on RYAP in total by the Council of Europe. Further, the European Youth Foundation provided funds for some 34 national and local projects dealing with Roma youth issues or organised by Roma youth (organisations / initiatives) from 2011 to 2014 inclusive to the tune of some 366,000 euros, a significant proportion of which had educational aims.

These educational activities had a variety of target groups, but for the majority were directed at Roma youth in general and Roma youth leaders / community activists specifically. A proportion of the activities included policy actors, experts, researchers or key education workers engaging with Roma, from the local through European levels, and brought youth leaders into contact with such, aiming to foster cooperation. Furthermore, many activities took an intercultural approach, including Roma and non-Roma youth, in order to foster mutual understanding, knowledge and cooperation.

It is no secret that the core competence of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe lies in training and competence development through non-formal education, and that it has a strong track record in the development of intercultural learning, anti-Racist education and Human Rights Education. These educational approaches continue to be at the centre of the Youth Department's educational approach, and are understood as vehicles for emancipation and empowerment of discriminated and marginalised communities, on the one hand, and as contributions to changing the global culture around the rights of such communities, on the other.

Human Rights Education has been promoted as the primary educational approach underpinning the educational dimension of RYAP. Within this, the practice of anti-discrimination, combating hate speech, educating for remembrance and countering antigypsyism have featured most prominently. It is, therefore, in these areas that the majority of learning and competence development identified (for example, by participants of educational activities) as resulting from RYAP can be observed. Furthermore, survey activities, testimony from participants and interviews with stakeholders all point to personal and organisational gains in competence, capacity and confidence for educating Roma and non-Roma youth, for engaging with policy and decision-makers, for working against discrimination, for developing

projects, for managing organisations, for fundraising, for working with non-Roma and creating alliances / partnerships and for advocating on behalf of Roma youth.

It is also clear that the training and capacity building activities conducted under RYAP, including and maybe even notably the study sessions conducted by the Roma Youth Networks, have had effects beyond individual capacity building, which contribute to emancipation and empowerment. The possibility to meet other young Roma, to exchange experiences, good and bad, to discuss best practices, to network and the opportunities that were provided by the educational activities under RYAP to simply be together have all been evaluated as invaluable and especially important for the sense among Roma youth that they are not alone in struggling for their rights - that there are other Roma youth to whom they can turn for support, that there are people from their own communities with more experience who can guide and mentor them and that there are non-Roma allies that can help them get their message heard in forums to which they do not usually have access.

Nevertheless, there was a minority of voices that questioned aspects of the training and capacity building approach practiced by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. While training is invariably valuable for the individual concerned, there are legitimate questions to be asked about the extent to which 'educating' (however well intentioned) can fall into the dual traps of paternalism towards marginalised young people, and their objectification as incompetent. Those stakeholders referred to the fact that not all Roma youth leaders need the same kind or level of training (i.e. basic), but might need more advanced and specialised educational offers, especially in the area of political leadership, advocacy, lobbying and civic sector management. Although there was no suggestion that the training programme of the Youth Department could / should be replaced, it was implied that after some 20 years of training in the Council of Europe, Roma trainers could also be running the training courses by themselves, and the Roma youth networks should be trusted and financially supported to develop and run training activities of their own with grassroots target groups under the umbrella of its quality standards. At the same time, stakeholders internal to the Youth Department pointed out that such funding has been available through the European Youth Foundation and the programme of study sessions, which the Roma Youth Networks might use more extensively. Again, this discrepancy in perspective could do with explicit airing in the development of any new iteration of RYAP. The question to address is not who is right, but rather what is hindering Roma Youth Networks from using the available resources and support to its maximum potential and what support would be needed to ensure this is possible.

No less important remains the fact that another important point raised in the evaluation is that many active Roma youth leaders working at the grassroots do not to speak English and other foreign languages to the same degree as other youth leaders from more privileged backgrounds. As such their access to the training programme of the Youth Department and any other international activities in the Roma youth sector tends to be limited if they cannot also speak Romanes, and even then Romanes is not always one of the working languages of international activities pertaining to Roma (youth). RYAP

placed emphasis on the organisation of national level activities to counteract this barrier to participation. As RYAP progressed, more emphasis was placed on securing the participation of Roma youth leaders in the 'mainstream', i.e. non-Roma specific, activities of the European Youth Centres, through targeted recruitment and identification of key channels for accessing new activists. Nevertheless, and concretely, the question was put as to why no specific initiative had been taken to offer a specialised English language course for international youth work to Roma youth leaders, such as those organised in previous years.

Finally, and while key stakeholders considered the production of the three educational manuals to have been educational experiences for those involved, and some Roma youth leaders were involved in their development, there was a small minority of stakeholders that felt that these processes were not sufficiently inclusive of Roma, especially in the role of authors. This point has been discussed in a previous section dealing with participation of Roma youth. Suffice it to say that having the opportunity to develop a key resource combining knowledge and approaches on sensitive themes such as those addressed is an invaluable vehicle not only for individual learning, but also for consensus building and the strengthening of a common identity. The more Roma youth leaders that have the opportunity to grow and gain autonomy and recognition through such processes, the more effective a platform like RYAP can be for Roma youth empowerment. At the same time it is naive to imagine that representation and qualification can always be reconciled. The evaluation finds that this is a further sensitive issue that would benefit from explicit discussion in the ICG to ensure that expectations are realistic.

Participation of Roma youth

Roma youth participation was a key objective of RYAP. It offered young Roma, especially the cadre of well-educated activists with experience of the European Roma rights sector speaking foreign languages, many opportunities to participate, to get involved and do something constructive and worthwhile for themselves and their communities. During the period under evaluation, Roma youth organisations gained formal representation in Youth Sector statutory bodies, and received funding for projects from the EYF or conducted study sessions with their own members in the European Youth Centres. As outlined in the achievements, participation in RYAP activities accrued manifold benefits for the individuals concerned. Furthermore, the three Roma Youth Networks had leading positions in the ICG and were consulted on a regular basis for input and expertise. Roma youth leaders and trainers were involved in the planning and delivery of the key training and capacity building activities conducted at the European Youth Centres. Furthermore, a research project presenting stories of Roma youth participation was initiated, but at the time of writing had not yet been completed.

Yet the question of the participation of the Roma Youth Networks and representatives of Roma youth was problematised by several stakeholders during the evaluation. While acknowledging the Council of Europe's positive history of engagement with Roma youth and its work to secure Roma youth rights and empowerment, and while acknowledging that RYAP emerged from a process of consultation and common agenda setting in which Roma youth representatives played key leadership roles, there was the

sense among several stakeholders that in the end RYAP did not sufficiently address the needs of Roma youth organisations to get on with empowering themselves through ‘learning by doing’ RYAP implementation.

A number of ‘facts’ were cited as evidence of this, including the above mentioned issues with hiring practices and with financing for organisational development, although the evaluation has found that these are rather a matter of perspective than fact. Maybe most significant in this relation is that these stakeholders, prominently the Roma Youth Networks themselves, but not only, felt that the Roma Youth Networks were not sufficiently involved in key leadership tasks and decision-making. For example, fundraising, advocacy and lobbying for RYAP was the sole responsibility of the Youth Department, and Roma youth representatives were not involved in most of the key negotiations, although there was the expectation that this should be done with them, not for them. One stakeholder reflected that RYAP might have been more credible to funders had Roma youth representatives had the opportunity to meet donors themselves and show them the extent to which they are competent and can be trusted. This said, there was also acknowledgement that this situation was not only the responsibility of the Youth Department. Some institutional stakeholders acknowledged that they could have been more proactive in demanding a more participatory approach, and some acknowledged that these operational and political functions are often not open to stakeholders outside the official secretariat.

These critical and contradictory perspectives reveal a tension common to activities promoting the rights of the discriminated and the marginalised. It is a tension between the necessity of a participatory Roma/youth led approach for empowerment objectives to be met, and the necessity of actually getting programmes and activities done and done to a level of quality that warrants trust and ongoing support on the part of donors, partners and decision makers with power over budgets and resources. A number of stakeholders hoped RYAP would be an opportunity to do things around participation differently, and were disappointed when this turned out not to be the case to their satisfaction. At the same time, other stakeholders raised the legitimate question of whose responsibility participation is - the Council of Europe’s alone? The question of the role of the Roma Youth Networks in relation to Roma youth participation was also raised and to an extent critically evaluated. The fact that the Roma Youth Networks also experience challenges with mobilising young Roma at the grassroots level was raised, as were legitimate questions around turnover in leadership and representation in those organisations. As in the case of other sensitive issues, the evaluation finds that the added value of RYAP could have been to ensure such were openly discussed, analysed and approaches found to addressing them. This was possibly something of a missed opportunity.

Engagement with policy

As a political organisation engaging governmental representatives, parliamentarians, local and regional authorities and non-governmental organisations from its member states across the geographical Europe, the Council of Europe context within which RYAP operated offered the Roma Youth Networks and the Roma youth leaders participating a platform from which to advocate for change in policies that

have an impact on the lives of Roma youth and on the situation of their communities. RYAP acknowledged the importance of engagement with policy, and was explicit in promoting the idea that not all answers to the empowerment of Roma youth and not all solutions to the challenges faced by Roma youth around Europe are in the hands of Roma youth themselves, but that many are in fact structural in nature and require long term multi-stakeholder initiatives at various levels of governance. This approach acknowledges the intersectional nature of Roma discrimination and marginalisation, an awareness which is only slowly being developed among key stakeholders in government and public administration with responsibility for policies and programmes that are important for the daily lives of Roma youth and their communities.

While changing policies was not explicitly mentioned in the objectives of RYAP, many activities sought to bring Roma youth and political actors and stakeholders together, with the aims of facilitating mutual trust, exchange of best practice and even standard setting. As such, RYAP sought to facilitate interactions and relationships that could foster the necessary awareness and skills for building consensus around key issues, with the ultimate aim of policy change and improvement by multiplication. RYAP also sought to develop the capacity of different stakeholders, not only Roma youth, to engage in such efforts. The evaluation heard many examples of initiatives emanating from the training and capacity building activities or from encounters between policy and decision-makers and Roma youth representatives which have made some contribution to policy development or have sought to influence policies, at a variety of levels from local governance to national policy to the policies of organisations in fields as diverse as education and health, housing and participation.

However, as has been mentioned several times already, RYAP did not have the resources nor the mandate to go further than taking note that these are underway. It could neither monitor their progress nor evaluate their success nor fund their follow-up, which is perceived as an important shortcoming by many of the stakeholders engaged in the ICG. Furthermore, and although there was one specific activity on the role of youth policy in supporting the social inclusion of young Roma, some stakeholders pointed out that the training programme rolled out under RYAP did not include extensive input on policy, advocacy, lobbying or fundraising, such that one could expect it to result in extensive organisational capacity for influencing key policies relevant to Roma youth.

Finally, it was pointed out by several stakeholders that influencing policy requires a seat at the decision-making table, and getting one in most member states of the Council of Europe is no mean feat for Roma, let alone Roma youth. This challenge was not addressed in substantive terms with 'the powers that be' during RYAP (representatives of governments involved in the work of the Youth Department, Committee of Ministers, etc.). For example, it remains problematic that members of the CDEJ are not very engaged with efforts to secure better Roma youth participation in relevant political processes in their countries, despite one or two good experiences from which much learning could be gleaned (Slovenia CAHROM Thematic Visit 2015, Slovakia CDEJ Summer University 2013), that little or nothing is happening with the recommendation on Roma youth adopted by the CLRAE and that the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma

did not include explicit mention of Youth, even if the current Secretary General Action Plan on Roma attempts to make up for that with the inclusion of explicit mention of RYAP). Further problematic is that little progress has been made in influencing the National Integration Strategies in Member States which have them, to consider Roma youth issues and concerns explicitly and to involve Roma youth representatives in decision-making.

Conclusion

The guiding principles of the Roma Youth Action plan were:

- Direct, constant and consistent involvement of Roma youth and Roma youth organisations in the implementation of the Plan with other partners;
- Creating synergies among initiatives in order to respond to the need for systemic changes in structural forms of discrimination;
- Adopting human-rights based approaches to the challenges faced by young Roma, including a concern for gender equality;
- Mainstreaming Roma issues in youth policy and mainstreaming youth issues in Roma-related policies;
- Encouraging change and action at the local and national level.

The evaluation finds that RYAP has done a lot to live up to these guiding principles, in what can be credibly considered adverse conditions. Some progress has been made on making all of the above genuine permanent features of the way the Youth Department and the Council of Europe system functions in relation to Roma youth. Less progress has been made in getting governments and other institutions to do the same, and certainly the means RYAP had at its disposal for encouraging systemic change and structural reform at the local and national levels were inadequate. However, efforts have been made to create awareness for the importance of, and new ways of working across sectors and stakeholder groups have been experimented with.

As such, the evaluation finds that RYAP has done what the Youth Department of the Council of Europe has always done best: bringing people together; facilitating their learning from each other; providing opportunities to explore, debate and find new approaches to common challenges and concerns; and kicking off a dynamic of multiplication through which real people in real communities do things for themselves using the knowledge and expertise and confidence they gained by their association with the Youth Department. If the evaluation has found one thing, it is that this approach still has enormous value for incremental change, and the added value of RYAP is in its contribution to 'starting somewhere'.

Participant testimony

Ionut Stan, France / Romania

The Roma Youth action Plan made us stronger. I am a regional trainer on Roma issues for Secours Catholique in the South of France. At the same time I am President of an active, small, local NGO called 'Gipsy Eye' in the North-East Romania.

In my daily work I support Roma families to find their way into French society: work, housing and fighting for their rights. I also support groups of youngsters to go beyond prejudice and to speak up.

One of my big responsibilities is building trust - confidence between the Roma and the "gadje". Before the Roma Youth Action Plan, I thought that we were facing mission impossible, but now I can give you examples of ways in which that is possible.

I was one of the first youngsters to be involved in the drafting of Council of Europe's Roma Youth Action Plan. In 2011 we gathered together and we start "arguing", but in a good way. Together, we managed to find the path to a better image of and to better empowerment actions for Roma youngsters.

Myself I managed to grow up, to learn techniques for how to address people, how to write projects, how to be patient and to understand that results come in time, and we must not give up. I also understood how important it is to take what I learned in the big training rooms from Strasbourg and Budapest to the smaller houses in Cozmesti or in the streets of Toulon, Marseille and Arles.

The Council of Europe supports me to find new partners and stand up for me in order to work with them. It put me in contact with other young Roma and non-Roma like me, having the same values and the same mission: fighting antigypsyism. For me the work I did on Mirrors, the antigypsyism manual and my participation in the Holocaust Remembrance activities in Cracow as a facilitator were among the strongest life experiences I have had, that I will always remember and that will give me the inner strength to continue the fight.

I really think that programmes and plans made by the Council of Europe to support the Roma youth movement gives us bigger wings to fly further and to resist storms. It helps us to send this message: "Don't worry, be Roma!".

Chapter 3: Impact

What do we mean when we talk about evaluating the impact of RYAP? This evaluation was conducted post-hoc, and as mentioned in the introduction, there is no baseline from which to assess change from the onset of RYAP through the period under evaluation to the time of writing this report. Yet, change is what impact is all about, or at least, this is often how it is perceived. One simple definition of impact understands it as a ‘marked effect or influence’ on something.²

For the purposes of this evaluation, we have decided to work with a slightly more specific definition, but which takes the idea of influence rather than change into account. We, therefore, understand impact as

‘... Effects brought about by the existence of RYAP and the implementation of its activities in people, processes and policies concerned by Roma youth issues’.

To discuss RYAP’s impact in an accurate and fair manner, we must take into account its specificity. As discussed above in relation to RYAPs objectives, and despite not meeting some criteria for being an action plan in the classical sense, it was operational, i.e. it included a series of activities especially developed for its implementation. And, the ICG was actively involved in developing the rationale and purpose for including those activities (evidence for this can be found in the transcripts of the ICG meetings) as well as in planning them, which accounted for the fact that some ICG stakeholders found its role confused and the meetings frustrating. Yet, these stakeholders expected to be involved in decision making as we as to discuss principles of cooperation, approaches to coordination and the leveraging of efforts around the objectives of RYAP, and to agree to shared responsibility for implementation. As one stakeholder explained, they wanted ‘more columns’ in the plan – not just what, why and how, but who, with which resources and until when. This reveals a tension around expectations towards RYAP and the role of the ICG, however, as activities and actions of the Youth Department are subject to decision making in its statutory bodies, and RYAP was no exception.

In this relation, it appears RYAP was never really able to get beyond its positioning as an initiative with its administrative home inside the Council of Europe bureaucracy, deeply constrained by that institution’s limited mandate, scope of action, human resources and decision making approach, and even though it is co-managed (unlike that of any other institution dealing with Roma or youth in Europe). This fact must be taken into account when discussing the impact of RYAP. Whatever the expectations of the stakeholders involved, this positioning has had a significant and marked effect on the extent to which RYAP has been able to engage with its objectives and on the extent and reach of its impact, especially outside the Council of Europe system. Taking this into account allows us to see

² <https://www.google.de/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=definition+of+impact>

beyond what might seem to be insufficient impact, and identify valuable aspects that might get overshadowed by overly ambitious expectations.

And assessment of impact would be incomplete without discussion of the multiplier effect. Many institutions invest in individual competence and capacity building, thereby contributing to the personal development of the individual, and potentially to the development of society. The Council of Europe's Youth Sector has always taken a slightly different approach, relying heavily on the implication of young people in civil society organisations of different kinds to ensure that the investment in individuals does not only stay with the individual but can be multiplied through the organisational structures associated to a larger number of young people and communities than can be reached with its limited resources and number of activities. As has been mentioned a couple of times previously, it was not possible for the evaluation to calculate and quantify the multiplier effect of RYAP activities, notably because different kinds of activity have very different qualities of multiplication. A training course which engages an individual activist and their organisation in a project over 12 months or longer will necessarily engage the communities around its participants more and deeper than an awareness raising event with a large public of bystanders who just happen to be there when it is taking place. The activities of RYAP, however, were immensely diverse, and of a significant number over several years, engaging thousands of participants directly and indirectly in learning, awareness raising, campaigning, policy and social benefit work, and included centralised activities, and projects funded by the European Youth Foundation. In addition, the nature of the Roma community is to be close knit, and which favours the multiplier effect. Hence, the evaluation can conclude with some certainty that the investment through RYAP has had impacts on a wider range and larger number of people, policies and processes than those explicitly included in the framework.

This chapter will consider each of the three areas for which effects can be observed – people, policies and processes – identifying effects that have been found during the evaluation, and discussing the possible extent to which RYAP is responsible for those. It is, however, impossible for this evaluation to say with any confidence whether there are causal relationships between RYAP and the effects identified.

People

Individual Roma young people

All stakeholders involved in the evaluation have confirmed that RYAP activities have been an important and valuable experience for the individuals who participated, especially the individual Roma young people who had the chance to take part in training courses, seminars, conferences, political meetings, interactions of different kinds with decision-makers and other activities, in their countries or abroad.

In the first place, for young Roma, RYAP activities were an opportunity for learning and gaining experience in issues and approaches relevant to their own empowerment and that of their peers and communities, through Human Rights Education and non-formal educational approaches to anti-

discrimination, anti-Racism, combating antigypsyism and prejudice against Roma. Participation in such activities is reported by participants themselves to have contributed in many tangible ways to their confidence, sense of common identity as Roma and of being part of a movement, self-respect and emancipation. They have further contributed to improving collaboration among Roma youth across Europe and within individual member states of the Council of Europe. Not unimportantly, such activities most often took place outside of the usual environments in which Roma young people live, work and advocate for their rights – i.e. abroad. This has not only offered participating Roma young people real mobility opportunities, but also opportunities for extending their horizons and experiencing something else, somewhere else. Likely most important of all to empowerment, the young people who participated in RYAP activities report that they no longer feel so alone with their challenges and problems. They have learned, through the meeting of like-minded others (Roma and non-Roma) facing similar challenges that there is added value in collaboration across realities and across communities, between majorities and minorities. If thinking about impact on individuals, the evaluation finds that RYAP contributed to the empowerment of individual young Roma activists, even if the extent of empowerment achieved by RYAP activities may differ, and how much empowerment a given young person achieved through participation in RYAP over that which they achieved through participation in other initiatives or their studies or their grassroots work is impossible for the evaluation to even guesstimate.

Even so, among stakeholders, and even participants of RYAP activities that took part in the evaluation, there exists some frustration. Although not a widespread opinion, some participants went as far as to say that the training activities they were involved in raised their expectations towards themselves and the youth sector to such an extent that their hopes for change were bound to be dashed once back in their own realities doing battle with the usual resource penury and discrimination they face daily in trying to do their work with and on behalf of Roma youth. Particularly, the Roma Youth Networks expressed frustration at the fact that the Council of Europe and the other institutional partners involved the ICG mobilised only very limited resources and support for follow-up activities on the part of individual activists wishing to put what they learned to good use at the grassroots, and made clear they believe this fact has significantly limited RYAPs structural impact, if it has had any at all. At the same time, and as outlined above, the evaluation found that the resources available to grassroots activists in the member states through the European Youth Foundation appear not to have been used to the extent expected by the Roma Youth Networks and their members.

Roma Youth Organisations

Another dimension of impact on people relates to their ‘collectives efforts’, in other words, their organisations. As alluded to previously, many stakeholders, including and especially the Roma Youth Networks, were disappointed about RYAP’s impact in this relation, largely because the support available for the sustainability and operational capacity of the Roma Youth Networks did not match their expectations. Furthermore, their ability to mobilise young Roma at the grassroots continues to be questioned does not seem to have been improved significantly, which was an expectation of the institutional partners towards RYAP. Reasons for these ‘shortcomings’ have been explored elsewhere,

and the fact that there is disagreement over whether such expectations were realistic has also been pointed out, and so will not be explored further here.

Benefitting from the broader perspective provided by the results of all evaluation activities, the evaluation finds that there have positive effects on Roma youth organisations, and while the above mentioned disappointment is perfectly legitimate, it does not reflect the complete picture. In the first place, the majority of the participants of RYAP activities came to those activities with some kind of organisational background – and these were not always large, experienced and formalised structures. Some were already members of the Roma Youth Networks or engaging with them, others got into touch with them as a result of participation. So, both in numerical terms and in terms of capacity, RYAP activities have contributed something to strengthening the networks, by bringing them into contact with potential members/leaders and providing them with training or opportunities to learn new and useful things.

Secondly, participants of the activities, especially the training courses, gained in competence and confidence for a variety of functions, including those related to organisational management and development, among other things (as outlined above). It is impossible to assess the extent to which this has improved the functioning of Roma youth organisations, but in the words of former participants of key training activities, they have contributed significantly to incremental professionalisation, which promotes their social and political recognition in the long run. Furthermore, the Roma Youth Networks and Roma youth issues have received a lot more visibility than could be expected to have been the case without RYAP, especially in the Council of Europe context. Intangible as it may seem, this has also contributed to the recognition of the Roma Youth Networks and to their being taken seriously as ‘go to’ partners for Roma youth issues. Importantly, many stakeholders believe this recognition effect is having a positive impact on the way Roma youth are perceived and engaged with by Roma community leaders in some countries and on the European level.

At the same time, almost all stakeholders find it problematic that RYAP failed to secure what they call ‘grassroots’ impact. Although many factors are at play in this dynamic, it must be considered in relation to the capacity of organisations to engage new activists, to recruit and renew leadership, to handle the turnover of membership and leadership necessary for sustainability, to marshal volunteers and to embody a movement. These continue to pose a significant challenge for Roma youth organisations, and RYAP is not seen as having been effective enough in supporting Roma youth organisations to address them. In part, this relates to resources, with stakeholders, especially the Roma Youth Networks, pointing out that it is not possible to engage with the grassroots when you have no resources for projects of your own. However, and probably more importantly, the Roma Youth Networks appear not to be sufficiently embedded in the communities where new Roma youth activists are located.

Furthermore, the evaluation finds that RYAP was the victim of its initiation at the European level, by an institution whose mandate of action does not extend to the local and national levels. The centralised activities organised in the European Youth Centres can only reach a certain number of Roma youth activists - the ones with more education and training are also the ones that have the language skills to participate in international activities - and RYAP did not benefit from local focal points that could conduct outreach activities to new local activists and organisations.

The dynamics of upward social mobility that are at play among the community of those who could be considered to be Roma youth leaders are also having their impact on grassroots impact. Those young Roma leaders that have gained training and competence through their activities in Roma youth organisations often leave their communities for further education and training, and employment, with obvious consequences for the reproduction of leadership, because they do not always return. This might be seen as the down side of the 'education and training' approach, so favoured by the institutions supporting and promoting Roma rights.

Non-Roma young people and target groups

While Roma young people were the primary target groups of most of the activities taking place under RYAP, it nevertheless included non-Roma participants, notably young people working in solidarity with young Roma peers in 'mainstream' youth organisations or civil servants and policy makers working in authorities with responsibility for programmes that are supposed to benefit young Roma. Again, all the evidence the evaluation has been able to gather points to important individual learning effects, especially as regards knowledge of Roma (youth) issues and concerns, overcoming inherited stereotypes and even prejudices, developing an understanding of how to work on such issues in a non-paternalistic manner, and the human rights dimension of working with or for Roma youth.

Non-Roma organisations from local to international level

Without wishing to repeat issues which have been explored elsewhere, it should be pointed out that RYAP and its activities have had similar effects on some non-Roma (youth) organisations operating at local, national, regional and international levels as it had for Roma youth organisations. By bringing diverse people together, people who would otherwise never meet, non-Roma (youth) organisations active in fields related to that of Roma rights have gained experience and perspective on how to develop their inclusivity when it comes to Roma youth. Although it remains a fact that not enough mainstream youth organisations (NYCs, international youth NGOs) are actively trying to redress their challenges of Roma representation, this question is firmly on the agenda in the Statutory Bodies of the Council of Europe Youth Department and of the European Youth Forum. RYAP has contributed to getting it there and keeping it there. Not least important in this regard is the fact that Roma Youth Networks are now represented in the Advisory Council of the Council of the Council of Europe Youth Sector. Nevertheless, and as explored above, there can be less certainty about the extent to which non-Roma organisations at the local and national level have become more inclusive of young Roma and, crucially, which part was

played by RYAP in making that happen. This is also a perennial challenge and one that requires constant monitoring and advocacy.

Participant testimony

Marko Tomashevich, Serbia

I got introduced to the opportunities offered by the Roma Youth Action Plan by applying to a call for participants for a training course: "Training Roma youth leaders and activists for promoting human rights and taking action against discrimination". This training course benefited me in a several ways: I have learned a lot about human rights, and about Roma history and the denial of Roma human rights, and about opportunities for youth leaders and for writing project proposals.

Based on the things I have learned I started developing a project proposal. The goal of the project was to evaluate and change non-formal education curricula for Roma youth together with young Roma. The biggest change to the way I previously planned projects was that I involved beneficiaries as participants in the projects and that the outcome that was delivered was the product of joint work of young Roma and the project team.

Personally, getting involved with the training and opportunities of RYAP changed me a lot. I decided that I want to work with and for people coming from marginalised groups and continue educating in this direction. During the last two years, I developed professionally more than ever before, and had access to resources to support my professional growth.

The local Red Cross branch at which I worked during the training course gathered young people that wanted to volunteer and work with Roma youth from the slums. Those young people were educated in human rights education and intercultural dialogue. We worked together with young Roma on the project for young Roma that was planned at the training course. The final outcome was a handbook for non-formal education for Roma youth living in slums.

In September 2014, I stopped working for the Red Cross and decided to start my own NGO. The main goal of this NGO is to work with homeless people and especially young people. Most of the homeless youth are Roma, and they experience multiple discrimination. From among the young people that started working together a year and a half ago in the Red Cross, three are now active in this new NGO that I started.

Basically, the most important thing I got from the Roma Youth Action Plan is the opportunity to learn about human rights, discrimination, Roma history, project planning and writing. This enabled me to continue working in this field and to develop even more professionally.

Policies

Evaluating the impact of RYAP in relation to policies has to be conducted in view of the kind and level of policies that were targeted in RYAPs objectives and work areas, and any auxiliary effects RYAP may have had on other areas of policy. RYAP had one objective, which addressed policy directly, although several of its work areas addressed the capacity and competence of Roma youth to engage with policy actors and to engage in activities aimed at changing policy. This section will attempt to assess RYAPs impact in both of these respects.

RYAP sought to ‘support an integrated approach to all Roma youth related policies’. This objective did not specify the level of governance such support should be directed to, however. This made it somewhat vague. However, it also made it more encompassing of activities and results that might not immediately be considered relevant to policy.

RYAP’s main impact in relation to the ‘integrated approach’ has, of course, been within the Council of Europe system, where Roma youth has gained more visibility through the double mainstreaming agenda. However, this positive result was also evaluated with scepticism by several stakeholders, who were of the opinion that the Council of Europe has little or no direct influence on the policies and programmes of member states and local authorities in relation to Roma rights, and that national and local level policies are simply more relevant to the life situations of Roma youth than those of any European institution.

This criticism is valid. Nevertheless, there are also achievements around the mainstreaming of Roma youth issues in the Council of Europe to be acknowledged. RYAP has set something of a precedent in that regard, and even if its impact has been strongest in the youth and Roma programmes of the Council of Europe all indications are that Roma would have even less visibility and priority in the agendas of Council of Europe institutions and programmes if it was not for RYAP. While this might not be an entirely satisfactory result it should be considered negligible. After all, and whatever its status as a ‘talking shop’, there now exists a recommendation of the CLRAE on inclusion of Roma youth in local and regional life, and there is awareness of the need to re-invigorate processes to get it implemented, CAHROM has created the position of youth rapporteur, even if the representativeness of the institution must be improved (i.e. the rapporteur really should be young and Roma), and there seems to be increased interest on the part of the CDEJ as a body to engage with this issue, and on the part of some individual governments to do same (in their youth sectors) as evidenced by their continued financial support through voluntary contributions to resource RYAP over several years.

On the flip side, local and national level policy impact has not been extensive. This is hardly surprising given the lack of resources and capacity of RYAP to engage in more depth with policy making and change at the local and national levels, and given that the policies which really matter for Roma youth inclusion at those levels are made by other stakeholders than the ones actively involved in RYAP. Nevertheless, there have been some interesting experiments with how influencing the national and local agendas

could be done, notably the CAHROM thematic visit on Roma youth to Slovenia in 2015, and one follow-up project to the LTTTC Training Course for Roma Youth Leaders in 2015 in Ukraine self-evaluated as policy relevant (recommendations developed in the context of the project are reported to have been taken on board by the relevant government committees concerned with Roma integration).

Certainly, more attention would have to be paid to bringing stakeholders with real decision-making power over Roma rights and integration together, facilitating interactions between them and Roma youth leaders from their country or municipalities for which they are responsible, and providing them with support to include the good practice that RYAP has brought to the fore and that are known to work for Roma youth inclusion and participation. For example, there is still a long way to go to convince the youth sector's own intergovernmental committee members (the CDEJ) to bring those practices home and to mainstream them in relevant decision-making bodies nationally (here we are thinking of Roma youth representation in the development and implementation processes for the National Roma Integration Strategies in member states of the Council of Europe that have them, for example). The implementation of the CLRAE recommendation needs to be re-invigorated, and more work needs to be done to make the mainstreaming agenda and the advantages of mainstreaming known to local authorities with Roma youth concerns. Here, the role RYAP as a facilitator of connections and relationships, and as a provider of technical assistance and expertise, has to be brought to scale. Until now RYAP has only offered us a glimpse of what can be achieved, which is more than nothing but does not go far enough, especially for the Roma Youth Networks.

In terms of RYAP's added value for policy in the Council of Europe, we can refer back to the section in the evaluation on intersectoral cooperation, and its achievements and disappointments. Again, RYAP has offered us a glimpse of what is possible when there is cooperation, how it can have mutual benefits for different sectors, and make better use of the limited resources. However, it is very problematic that the main Council of Europe political agenda on Roma for the coming years was not developed with extensive Roma youth participation, even if it now does include a youth chapter. This is something that has been evaluated by the youth stakeholders in the ICG as a missed opportunity for and on the part of RYAP and the SRSG. This lends weight to the perspective that RYAP did not sufficiently act as a platform for advocacy on behalf of Roma youth concerns, even within the Council of Europe system. Furthermore, classical skills for lobbying and political advocacy, and for the development of partnership and cooperation with policy makers, did not have as strong a place in the training and educational activities as was hoped for by some of the stakeholders, especially the Roma Youth Networks, the strategic astuteness of which can also be questioned.

In relation to the Youth Department's own agendas and policies, Roma youth issues have been mainstreamed to a large extent. At least it is acknowledged that there needs to be more attention to Roma youth when developing new policies and programmes and this is discussed in the statutory bodies. Some instruments have been adapted to make that possible. For example, it is acknowledged that while there are more and more Roma participants in the non-Roma specific educational and other

activities of the Youth Sector, this apparent increase in participation cannot yet be effectively tracked, and the application procedures and information collection practices for activities are beginning to be adapted. Nevertheless, to be internally coherent with the double mainstreaming agenda proposed by RYAP, all instruments of the Youth Department would need to consider the inclusion of Roma youth more explicitly, and transversally, all programmes and statutory bodies would have to be actively engaged in implementing it, and in the managerial functions of the ICG. The absence of the Partnership from RYAP is a case in point in this regard. There would also need to be more attention paid to making the members of the Advisory Council more active on substantive Roma inclusion in their structures.

In terms of policy impact outside the Council of Europe system, the evaluation has great difficulty to make accurate judgements. Previous sections have referred to the fact that RYAP was not well known or very visible outside the Council of Europe system, that its reach to the grassroots was rather tenuous and that it has not received as much financial support from member states and other institutions (even those participating in the ICG) as was hoped for. These could all be considered indicators for RYAPs recognition and influence outside the Council of Europe. Certainly, many stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation did not identify RYAP as significant in influencing or changing policies of other institutions or of governments. Yet, as the section on visibility also explores, the same stakeholders believe that Roma youth issues are receiving more attention. Unfortunately, it is beyond the capacity of the evaluation to even guesstimate how much of this was the result of RYAP, even if it is highly likely to have had some contribution, being the only multi-stakeholder initiative of its kind in Europe.

Participant testimony

Mustafa Jakupov, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”

Nowadays, I am a participant of the TRAYCE training course organised by the Council of Europe and I lead a Regional Roma Educational Youth Association, working on Roma youth empowerment and mobilisation, side by side with Roma and non-Roma youngsters from “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. We believe that Roma youth represent a great opportunity for our country, knowing their rights and responsibilities as citizens they can equally contribute to the development of our country.

Roma youth face many challenges on a daily basis, and we are glad that the response of the Council of Europe to the challenges faced by Roma young people in Europe, particularly in relation to their empowerment, participation in policy and decision-making processes and structures at European level, and the realities of discrimination, particularly antigypsyism, with which they are confronted, comes in the shape of the Roma Youth Action Plan.

Being part of the ternYpe team that ran the study session under RYAP, made me realise the potential this plan has for young Roma people, but also the dangers, if it is not used or implemented properly. The plan tries to develop synergies and to avoid duplication. The activities are complementary to other national and European initiatives which play a fundamental role in addressing and overcoming the structural forms of discrimination and social exclusion affecting Roma across Europe. However, as a young Roma, I believe that the plan also needs to be revised and adapted to recent trends in youth issues, to try to mainstream Roma youth issues into the larger European programmes and avoid to segregate and keep Roma youth as a special group.

For example, Europe promotes entrepreneurship as a main component in the EU 2020 strategy, which should have a strong impact on the economy and reduce youth unemployment. Entrepreneurship and start-ups should show a way out of unemployment and economically empower young people and their national economies, and at the same time it should bring people closer and work on fostering the greater good. Besides all this, there one important part, namely the social part, that needs to create a positive climate among young people, because one main important part for economic growth and empowerment is employment and being part of the labour market. I assume that youth employment influences the social dynamics and inclusion in one society, as well as active citizenship.

This is why I think that Roma youth entrepreneurship should be a new priority in European policies and programmes. The time comes when we must start to consider this as a valid option to empower Roma youth economically, because the majority of the Roma population is young. In my opinion, economic empowerment will reinforce the process of inclusion and contribute to active citizenship. All in one society, means also all to have the same opportunities!

Processes

Evaluating this dimension of RYAP impact is not as straight-forward as it might initially seem. The crux of the matter is how we define 'process'. RYAP did not specify which processes it wanted to impact on although it also refers to several in its rationale and in its objectives. If we consider processes as those already established frameworks of European cooperation, mutual exchange and organisational learning, political and social inclusion, and their national counterparts, then RYAP has had very little tangible impact, outside of the Council of Europe system. These have already been evaluated in other sections. If, on the other hand, we consider processes in the broader sense of relationships, cooperation and partnership where none existed before, trust and movement building and social and cultural modernisation within the Roma community, then there is evidence to suggest that RYAP may have made some contribution to change.

In relation to relationships and collaboration, and in relation to movement building, RYAP initiated a number of firsts - a first multi-stakeholder platform for promoting the double mainstreaming agenda, inside and outside the Council of Europe (and nominally led by Roma youth), a first attempt at coordination of institutional efforts to support Roma youth empowerment, a first collaborative attempt at putting Roma youth issues on equal footing with other groups within the Roma community needing targeted and specific attention. Secondly, new working relationships were established between actors of the Roma rights sector that until RYAP were not much in contact with each other, and were used to doing their own thing on Roma youth, without too much consideration for what the others were doing. Thirdly, the Roma Youth Networks had opportunities to work together on something of common interest, and to consider their common goals as Roma Youth Networks (with different missions and target groups), rather than always being condemned to compete over the same funding streams. And fourthly, RYAP was an opportunity for trust building, between Roma and non-Roma youth organisations, between Roma youth organisations and the 'establishment' and between the Roma Youth Networks themselves.

In relation to social and cultural modernisation of Roma communities and established governance structures, it is important to mention that although we cannot evaluate the extent to which this effect is due to RYAP's interventions, there has been a change since 2009 in the way that Roma youth leaders are perceived inside their communities by 'adult' leaders and by established governance structures related to Roma (such as the Councils representing Roma to government that exists in some member states, etc). If before they were hardly trusted to run a project with donor money, today Roma youth leaders are more and more perceived as key to the process of Roma empowerment and inclusion. Once they get onto those committees, once they have found a way into the intra-community discourse as having something useful to say, it is usually the youth leaders who take the initiative and they are changing the way business is being done, making useful contributions, gaining respect and paving the way for a more dynamic and better educated generation of young leaders to follow them. Some stakeholders went as

far as to say that once given the chance, they hold the reigns of the agenda, with their many inputs and creative suggestions. It stands to reason that RYAP has made some contribution to this dynamic.

Furthermore, by its focus on some very important but nevertheless quite taboo issues (for example, the status of LGBTQI young people in the Roma community and the multiple discrimination they face), RYAP has contributed to challenging the discourse around the Roma community's own internal issues of discrimination, traditionalism and conservatism and to creating more inclusion for young Roma who are not only marginalised by virtue of being Roma but are marginalised by virtue of discrimination for being something else as well. At the very least it is possible to conclude that Roma youth leaders have gained awareness for these new ways of thinking about Roma identity, with intersectionality becoming a more accepted principle. They are bringing these new ways of thinking to their communities.

Participant testimony

Sofia Aurora, Portugal

I have had a personal interest in Roma human rights issues for many years. The fact of having taken part in the training course for Roma youth leaders for promoting human rights and non-discrimination in October 2012 in Budapest, motivated me to find out more and take greater responsibility in the fight for human rights. The course also helped complemented my academic studies, helping me to discover and learn new working tools, such as methodologies and approaches for promoting human rights. The development of critical reflection on Roma issues at the micro and macro level, as well as improving my ability to apply my knowledge, motivated me to publish scientific articles and to participate in the national study on Roma communities as part of the national strategy (Portugal). The course was an opportunity for me to get updated on international developments related to the situation of the Roma in Europe, to develop more awareness about the fight for human rights with specific groups, to share experiences with other young Roma and non-Roma from other countries and meet many European organisations working with Roma. In addition to the training course, I was edited a brochure for the 1st meeting of young Roma students and families of Portugal, from 29 and 30 April 2014, organised by Letras Nómadas Association in cooperation with Council of Europe. Being involved in these activities, made me believe in my work more, and to believe that it is possible to change the current situation of many Roma families and communities.

The cooperative Mandacaru develops outreach work with people and groups, enabling personal and social development of individuals and groups, through the presentation, discovery and practice of the arts. The establishment of strategic local partnerships for the development of education and community intervention, promotes an open, useful and rich work in the integration of most vulnerable groups. With a vast knowledge and experiences in grassroots community work, Mandacaru has developed a small but solid international network of partners for the creation and development of various social and cultural projects. I learnt more methods and tools to work for and with Roma young people. I gained knowledge about Roma and youth policies at the European level. I learned about several European organisations that work on and study Roma issues. I've also become more aware of the importance of involving Roma young people in the defence of their rights, supporting them to participate more in the decisions that concern themselves. I now feel more confident about Roma issues in general.

The impact on my personal development and the organisation was positive and helped me in organising various activities and events at local, regional and international levels, such as the organisation of the 1st cultural Week Roma in the Algarve in May 2014; the youth exchange 'Play', between Roma young people from Portugal, France and Hungary in March 2014, supporting and coaching a young Roma man from the Czech Republic in the framework of European Voluntary Service and cooperation in various lobby events and work for the inclusion and non-discrimination of Roma communities in Portugal.

Chapter 4: Consequences and implications of the evaluation

This section focuses on interpreting and assessing the different findings of the evaluation for RYAP's future development in a synthetic future oriented manner. The evaluation was based on a confrontation of many different perspectives, and as such no single perspective can be considered accurate. Hence, this chapter will present the consequences and implications of the evaluation in the form of dilemmas that we believe must be reflected upon and addressed in any new iteration of the Roma Youth Action Plan.

Dilemma 1: Participation, paternalism and empowerment

The evaluation found that there have been differing expectations towards RYAP as a mechanism for participation. Increasing the participation of young Roma in all kinds of activities, especially those with a political or policy decision-making dimension, irrespective of who organised them and at which level, was a specific objective RYAP. And RYAP itself, the ICG and the platform it provided for the visibility of Roma youth issues inside and outside the Council of Europe, was seen as a vehicle upon which young Roma could gain access to relevant European level decision-making processes relevant to both Roma and youth. However, the upshot of stakeholders' concerns in relation to participation and empowerment of Roma youth through RYAP is that while it was Roma youth serving it was not sufficiently Roma youth led. For example, a good part of the programme offered under RYAP took place inside the European Youth Centres or was organised centrally by the Youth Department, even if where possible local and national partnership activities were prioritised too. While efforts were made to ensure maximum Roma youth participation in teams and groups preparing projects, not all demands for representation could be reconciled with qualification requirements for all projects. So, despite extensive consultation with Roma youth representatives on the form and content of RYAP, the approach taken to implementation had the hallmarks of paternalism for some stakeholders. Some stakeholders reflected on this 'dissatisfaction' and contextualised in what they identify as a growing 'backlash' among young Roma community leaders against 'establishment interference' in their affairs, emanating from the fact that although there are so many frameworks and strategies for Roma rights, few of them seem to be hitting the mark, if they get implemented at all. One way or another, the evaluation finds, based on these perspectives, that any future iteration of the Roma Youth Action Plan must consider how to ensure meaningful support and field building interventions at the same time as ensuring empowerment through the opportunity for Roma youth organisations and leaders to learn by doing, by managing their own affairs, by demonstrating their competence and by making their own mistakes. In other words, participation in activities and even consultation activities no longer really cut it when it comes to ensuring empowerment. That requires other opportunities and forms of support, including direct engagement in meaningful decision-making, a fact well known to the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, which has produced some of the best knowledge and practice on youth participation and empowerment available.

Dilemma 2: Where does RYAP fit in?

The evaluation found that while RYAP had its heart in the right place, a solid analysis of the needs of Roma youth, brought to the table by authentic experiences from the grassroots, and a relevant interpretation of this into operational objectives, the scale of intervention RYAP could muster was not adequate to the challenges it sought to address. Reasons for this were identified in the different levels of governance it sought to address, on the one hand, and in its lack of resources on the other. RYAP was a European level intervention, which sought to have local impact and to change something in the lives of young Roma people. This ambition is explicitly mentioned in its objectives. Yet, it has its home in a European institution with no mandate and no resources to engage directly with the national and local levels, and its member states can choose to engage with its standards or not without being held to account for that choice. In the case of Roma youth, the national and local levels seem to be most essential, but policy and programming stakeholders from those levels and with power and mandates to change something meaningful in the lives of young Roma were largely missing from the development and implementation of the RYAP. A case in point is the implementation of the CLRAE recommendation on the inclusion of Roma youth in local and regional life, which RYAP has not managed to re-invigorate, despite there being acknowledgement of it being both relevant and necessary. Another is the absence of the European Commission from the ICG, considering it is the one European institution that can bring to bear both conditionality on governments and resources in this field. Therefore, any new iteration of RYAP will have to consider in more depth, and possibly with more realism, where it best fits in the Council of Europe system and in the wider reality of promoting Roma (youth) rights at the European level and in Member States, before deciding on key objectives and the activities it should include. The nascent youth dimension of the ROMED programme is a good example of how this gap could be filled.

Dilemma 3: Long-term aims but short-term interventions

RYAP is characterised by long term aims and objectives. As stakeholders participating in the evaluation pointed out, much of the work being done today under RYAP and other strategy frameworks for Roma rights will not change the situation of even a minority of Roma currently experiencing discrimination and disadvantage, but are laying the ground for 'a better future'. Others pointed out that getting RYAP, whatever its content, focus, resources or approach, was a long term goal and is an achievement in and of itself. These are valid and pragmatic perspectives - something is always better than nothing, and the work done today will not go to waste, as it is contributing to the development of a new generation of Roma with different expectations and perspectives and competences. Yet, this was not good enough for a number of stakeholders, who pointed out that the majority of the actions under RYAP were short term in nature. With the exception of the Long Term Training Courses, most of the educational interventions were once-offs. Grants and funding to youth organisations from the European Youth Foundation tend to be for projects, are limited to small scale funding, do not commit the EYF to any follow-up funding and all the Roma youth organisations are competing for funding from the same pots of money. Institutional support and grants for the operational costs involved in developing and running a youth organisation are available from the European Youth Foundation, but not from any other donor involved in the ICG

(the few that there were), and for some unexplained reason have not been used by the Roma Youth Networks until now. The dilemma for RYAP is that if it wants to address and contribute to redressing the situation of Roma youth in Europe today and tomorrow, then it will have to be more realistic about the scale and direction/targets of its interventions, and maybe even consider some other kinds of intervention than it has favoured until now. The idea that less might be more certainly comes to mind.

Dilemma 4: Trust vs. capacity

Stakeholders in the evaluation pointed to an interesting phenomenon that we believe should be addressed in thinking about RYAP's future. On the one hand, the Roma youth organisations feel that the donor community does not 'trust' them sufficiently to make good on any funding they might grant (as evidenced by the fact that they do have difficulties accessing funding for projects and organisational development) and on the other hand, the donor community feels that the Roma youth organisations continue to lack capacity to absorb funding on a larger scale (as evidenced by the evaluations of large scale Roma youth events and other projects consulted). The dilemma that arises here is what would need to be done to create the trust necessary to get beyond the current impasse. Do Roma youth organisations need more specialised training (fundraising, financial management, NGO law, English, etc) or do donors need awareness raising and trust building measures to get over their misconceptions about Roma youth? Or do both need both? Whatever the answer, this opens up new avenues and ideas for what a framework like RYAP could be used for and it brings a new perspective to the idea of 'strengthening the Roma youth movement', so central to RYAP's objectives.

Dilemma 5: Who owns the agenda?

A key challenge raised in the evaluation is the question of who owns the RYAP agenda. Some stakeholders just do not see it as theirs, whatever the overlaps between RYAP's objectives and those of their own organisations, because it was initiated by and is located in a different institution, i.e. the Council of Europe. This is not so much a criticism of the way the Youth Department has conceptualised the ICG or its openness to partnership, or even its efforts to secure the engagement of other partners. Rather, this points to the extent to which the idea of a Roma Youth Action Plan is weighed down by the baggage of inter- and intra-institutional and organisational competition, or even just insularity and inaction on cooperation, in the Roma rights sector. It further points to the extent to which creating cooperation across institutional agendas is not only a matter of having meetings. Rather, stakeholders in the evaluation alluded to the need for more commitment, more investment, more trust, more coordination, more added value both as needed and wanted. The question that has to be asked is if everyone wants more of those things then why was it not possible for the ICG to function in the desired way? The idea that RYAP is a 'joint venture' for Roma youth empowerment cannot be borne out by this evaluation, with the exception maybe of it being a joint venture between the Youth Department, the Roma Youth Networks and a couple of other willing sectors inside the Council of Europe. The idea of a funding collaborative driven by a commonly defined purpose and modus operandi among key actors of the Roma rights sector with an interest in promoting Roma youth issues, advised and implemented by

the Roma Youth Networks, was stillborn in this RYAP. Maybe this is an approach than can provide insights into how to deal with the question of who owns the agenda in the future. The dilemma for the next iteration of RYAP is how the initiator can create and share ownership for something it has created and initiated with other partners who do not necessarily feel they have a mandate or a responsibility to engage with it?

Dilemma 6: Education for what and of whom?

In terms of approach to strengthening the Roma youth movement, RYAP has focused quite strongly on training and capacity building, and understandably. Human Rights Education is the flagship educational approach of the Youth Department, useful to Roma youth leaders and well-adapted to their needs on the ground when working with peers and non-Roma allies. However, the evaluation raised the question of the kind of capacity building that would be most appropriate for addressing the key issues of RYAP, from discrimination to antigypsyism, and from participation to empowerment. It also raised the question of who needs the training and what training needs they specifically have. At least in respect of issues which have an important political dimension, the evaluation finds that some more emphasis on skills for political action would have been warranted within the educational dimension. In particular, some participating stakeholders were disappointed that the political advocacy and lobbying capacity of the Roma Youth Networks was not strengthened sufficiently to be effective in influencing the various levels of governance at play in concrete ways. The question this raises for RYAP is if systemic change is the aim (as outlined in some of the objectives), but political will is not forthcoming from key stakeholders with the power to change something (as has been observed through this RYAP experience), what kind of capacity building approaches will help RYAP and its stakeholders engage with the powers that be. The dilemma further extends to the fact that more often than not those powers that be need just as much educating as the Roma youth leaders. Put bluntly, to get human rights, hard skills for political action are required, soft skills for doing education may not be as important, and the Roma youth leaders may not be the ones who need educating the most.

Dilemma 7: Where is the movement in the Roma youth movement?

Encyclopaedia Britannica offers this definition of a social movement: ‘... (a) loosely organised but sustained campaign in support of a social goal, typically either the implementation or the prevention of a change in society’s structure or values. Although social movements differ in size, they are all essentially collective. That is, they result from the more or less spontaneous coming together of people whose relationships are not defined by rules and procedures but who merely share a common outlook on society.’³ The Roma Youth Networks would like to see themselves as members of a movement, and some way has been travelled to creating a sense of common identity and goals among Roma youth organisations, by associating them to agendas like RYAP and the Roma youth work initiatives of the

³ <http://www.britannica.com/topic/social-movement>

Council of Europe and other institutions and donors. The activists meet regularly, are involved in many common projects and initiatives at both national and international levels, are highly committed, and are doing great work of relevance to the real lives of Roma, with a whole range of their peers, on key issues for Roma youth. However, it is questionable whether they really share the same outlook, and whether that outlook is also shared, or even perceived, by a large number of Roma young people. It continues to be very difficult for any Roma related youth work to mobilise large numbers of young people and to keep them engaged, and although this is certainly because of a lack of resources, it is not the only reason. The dilemma this poses for RYAP is that it is not clear what the 'movement' in the Roma youth movement really is, for the Roma Youth Networks and for the other stakeholders. In and of itself this is not the problem - this is the case for many 'movements'. However, it does require clarification and explicit discussion. That clarification will have important consequences for the objectives and potential impact of RYAP in the future. A key question in this relation is how the focus of RYAP on Roma identity and culture can contribute to this process of clarification, and whether a more overtly political approach might be useful.

Dilemma 8: No one wants to be coordinated!

Whatever the rhetoric, it is most unusual for institutions and donors to submit to coordination by any other institution or donor. The experience of RYAP in the areas of partnership and of intersectoral cooperation is no exception. Although there are key overlaps in the objectives of the partners in the ICG, RYAP is faced with the challenge that some partners feel more ownership for its agenda than others. The dilemma here is how to create shared leadership out of shared ownership, so that the form of cooperation represented by RYAP is not one of coordination, but of real collaboration around a common agenda and set of goals that helps each partner to meet their own objectives, at the same time as meeting those common to the collaboration.

Dilemma 9: If you want action, you need more than a plan

Finally, and as has been repeated again and again in this report, the Roma Youth Action Plan was never endowed with either the necessary political will from the institutional powers that be with the exception of the Youth Department, or adequately resourced to meet its ambitions, which although highly relevant, given the context, were not very realistic. Having a plan is important, but as the Youth Department trains its trainees to practice, projects have a limited time frame, SMART objectives, a team with a clear division of responsibilities and activities commensurate with their resources. Too few of the things that needed to happen to make it possible for RYAP to deliver on its objectives actually happened, despite the many excellent, standard setting activities that were organised and the valuable experiences these activities proved to be for their participants. The dilemma for any new iteration of RYAP is that not delivering on expectations serves to delegitimise the action of the stakeholders, creating a cycle of disappointment and mistrust.

Dilemma 10: Walking the walk - first at home, then elsewhere

As noted above, the double mainstreaming agenda inside the Council of Europe is an objective for which some impact has been achieved through RYAP, although there are notable gaps and exceptions, even inside the Youth Department and its statutory bodies. The double mainstreaming agenda does not necessarily require expensive discrete activities to be undertaken, but rather a constant vigilance for the meaningful and empowered participation and inclusion of young Roma. This is something the Youth Department is attempting to do, but a more systematic approach would support these efforts. The same can be said for the political opportunities that arise for the promotion of the Roma youth agenda in the rest of the Council of Europe system, so that all processes relevant to that agenda and especially the new SG Action Plan on Roma, are used to their best potential in the service of Roma young people. Roma youth representatives need to be more visibly present in all these processes. RYAP did not have a specific objective targeting the capacity of the internal partners and stakeholders to address these issues and to be inclusive of Roma youth. Rather, it placed the onus for becoming competent for engaging with the policy stakeholders on Roma youth leaders. And yet, as the evaluation has also revealed, once Roma youth are at the table, the political culture begins to change. The dilemma for RYAP is how to get the stakeholders concerned inside the Council of Europe to reflect on their own capacity for inclusion, and to take the risks involved in being more inclusive, in a political system that is not yet open enough to giving the 'beneficiaries' of its interventions a seat at the decision making table where it really counts (in this case, NOT the statutory bodies of the Youth Department).

Participant testimony

Yanna Petraki, Greece

The first time I heard about the Roma Youth Action Plan was back in 2012, while I was working as a Project Coordinator for the action "Health Promotion of Roma Children" within the EU Operational Programme: "The Education of Roma Children" at the University of Athens.

At that time, the Course: "Training Roma youth leaders and activists for promoting human rights and taking action against discrimination" which I participated was a great chance to broaden my network, both nationally and internationally, and to start realising the initiatives that had been taken so far for the promotion of human rights of Roma people.

Moreover, through this course I was given the chance, for the first time in my life, to design and implement a successful pilot project called "Young Roma Health Mediators", run by PRAKSIS NGO in cooperation with the M.Sc. "International Medicine-Health Crisis Management", which was funded by the European Youth Foundation and, further on, to produce the related publications: "Trainers' Guide", "Participants' Manual" and "Practical Guide for Implementing Health Promotion Activities with Roma".

Through the above mentioned experiences I got more and more involved with Roma communities and their needs, as well as with young Roma who were willing to become more active socially. In 2014, I also took part in the conference "United for Dignity, conference on the specific situation of young Roma people", which was also organised in the framework of the Roma Youth Action Plan. I had the chance to meet wonderful Roma and non Roma people from several European countries and to exchange with them stories and practices for combating anti-discrimination.

Furthermore, also in 2014, I was trainer and member of the organizing group for the first "National Training Course in Human Rights Education", a course which was supported by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe as an integral part of its Human Rights Education Youth Programme and the RYAP and was run by the United Societies of Balkans at Thessaloniki, Greece. The experiences that I gained through this period were valuable, as the feelings and the relationships that were built among young Roma and non Roma coming from different cities of Greece were very strong.

Over the last two years I have been working as a project coordinator for the Roma Population Component in the epidemiological study entitled: "Project Design, Data Collection and Program Development for the Control of HIV and Viral Hepatitis B and C infection in the general population and displaced people", run by the Medical School of Athens. My next steps are to start my PhD, which will be based on the above mentioned study, as well as to study anthropology and have a focus on Roma people.

Concluding, through the activities under RYAP, I had the chance to build a strong network of organisations and activists that work pro Roma, to work as an expert for studies that focus on Roma health promotion in Greece, to move on with my academic interests, to further develop my skills as a trainer (especially in non formal education) and to gain all these valuable experiences on a personal level.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

To sum we would like to consider the added-value of the RYAP as a response to the needs and aspirations of Roma youth and the European context of work to promote Roma rights.

The evaluation finds that RYAP's added value lies in three dimensions key aspects unique to this framework if one looks at other sectors of the Council of Europe and other institutions.

In the first place, its principles of action (as outlined above in the description of RYAP by way of introduction) place young people and their concerns at the centre of action, and it gives Roma young people's representatives the opportunity, space, platform and some resources to represent those concerns, primarily to the Council of Europe political system, but also to other institutions and donors, through the ICG.

In the second place, RYAP put the entire instrumentarium of the Youth Department at the disposal of this agenda, ranging from its educational approaches, tools and interventions through policy related activities to the European Youth Foundation.

And in the third place, it undertook a complex and quite comprehensive series of activities to promote Roma youth as actors of social and political change across sectors within the Council of Europe, across institutions in the Roma rights sector. Even if this effort has not been as visible at the national level in the member states so far, the role of RYAP appears ever more relevant to that sphere of governance and action.

In so doing it has begun the long process of opening the eyes of institutional policy makers to the benefits of engaging with young people in marginalised communities, and of making them aware of the risks and future consequences of not doing so, primarily inside, but also outside, the Council of Europe. This will inevitably lead to changes in practice and approach, even if such change does not happen overnight. Other Roma related agendas inside the Council of Europe will in the long run benefit from the 'breath of fresh air' younger, better educated and more active Roma community representatives bring to the table. Even so, the struggle for participation and representation is far from over. These potential gains remain within the Council of Europe system and need to be extended to Roma Integration Strategies and other processes and policy forums which nominally aim to promote Roma rights at national and municipal levels.

For the programme and policy of the Council of Europe's Youth Sector, RYAP clearly coheres with several of its priorities, and contributes notably to keeping social cohesion and inclusion high on the agenda. Yet this is not its specific added value for the youth sector of the Council of Europe. The CDEJ has been slow to respond with action, with the exception of some specific governments. Yet, through RYAP debate and dialogue has been created in the Statutory Bodies, and has included governmental representatives, who

in their decision making on the programme and budget of the Youth Department have been put in the position of having to decide between giving priority to Roma youth over other things. So while ‘the long march through the institutions’⁴ is yet to truly begin for Roma youth, it is not far off.

At the same time and, overall, the information presented in previous chapters points to this first phase of RYAP having been ‘a good start’ at systematising the work of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, primarily, concerning the promotion of a Roma youth agenda, again primarily towards the Council of Europe system. When we say start, we mean exactly that - the beginnings of what might, with concerted effort, investment, monitoring and evaluation, and systematic consideration of such results, become a coherent and intensified work programme with reach wider and impact deeper than its direct participants. When we say good, we refer to the fact that in those areas on which the Youth Department has a mandate, leverage or functioning partnerships, RYAP made good progress towards its objectives.

And yet, it cannot be evaluated as more than a good start. Through the previous explorations of perspectives and information available we have seen the extent to which progress in its work areas has been vulnerable to the vagaries of international cooperation inside and outside the Council of Europe, internal and external politics around Roma rights and the poor level of cooperation and coordination among institutions and donors active in the promotion of Roma rights.

The dilemmas outlined in the previous chapter point to 10 key areas that will need to be addressed both explicitly and in detail for any new iteration of RYAP to avoid the pitfalls and shortcomings it has experienced in this first period of action.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudi_Dutschke

Appendix 1: The Roma Youth Action Plan 2012

Introduction

The Roma Youth Action Plan (hereinafter the Action Plan) is a response of the Council of Europe to the challenges faced by Roma young people in Europe, particularly in relation to their empowerment, participation in policy and decision-making processes and structures at European level, and the realities of discrimination, particularly antigypsyism, with which they are confronted.

The Action Plan takes into account the results of the Roma Youth Conference, co-organised by the team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Roma issues and the Youth Department of the Council of Europe in September 2011, and the guidelines and proposals drawn up by the participants who represented Roma young people and youth organisations.

The Action Plan has been prepared and will be implemented in the spirit of the Council of Europe Strasbourg Declaration on Roma, which it complements by associating Roma youth, and will take into account the challenges faced by young Roma and their priorities. The major rationale for the Action Plan is the marked absence of Roma youth issues and concerns in policies and programmes addressing the Roma communities.

The Council of Europe Youth Department is coordinating the implementation of the Action Plan in accordance with the principles of youth participation and agency of young people in youth policy, of which the co-management system of the Council of Europe youth sector is the key stone. The Youth Department will ensure Roma youth organisations and the various Council of Europe sectors working on Roma and youth policy issues are involved in the definition and coordination of the Action Plan and its activities.

An Informal Contact Group on Roma Youth (ICG) was set up following the Conference in September 2011. FERYP – Forum of European Roma Young People, ternYpe – International Roma Youth Network, the Open Society Foundations, the European Roma Rights Centre, the European Youth Forum and other relevant stakeholders are part of the informal group together with different sectors from the Council of Europe. The role of the ICG is to promote communication and coordination among the various partners and stakeholders, as well as ownership of the Action Plan by Roma young people and the Roma civil society.

The Joint Council on Youth, as the co-management body of the Youth Department, is responsible for including the Action Plan in the Youth Department's programme and for its evaluation. Members of the Advisory Council on Youth and of the European Steering Committee on Youth take part in the ICG's meetings.

The Action Plan includes activities of the Youth Department and of other sectors of the Council of Europe as well as activities proposed by other partners, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, cooperating with the Council of Europe and interested in securing the maximum impact of their activities by creating synergies while avoiding duplication. The activities are complementary to other national and European initiatives which play a fundamental role in addressing and overcoming the structural forms of discrimination and social exclusion affecting Roma across Europe.

The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly and potentially expand beyond the first biennial budget and programme of the Council of Europe (2012-2013).

Principles of action

The Action Plan has been prepared and developed within the framework of the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma and of the youth policy of the Council of Europe. It takes into account the challenges of gaining personal autonomy, which are common to all young people, by promoting equality of opportunities for young people so they may develop “knowledge, skills and competencies to play a full part in all aspects of society”.⁵ It also addresses the specific challenges and hurdles faced by Roma young people, starting with the fact they are denied “the right to be young”.

In most European societies, Roma young people have a hard time in asserting their rights, affirming their identity and belonging. Other problems faced by Roma communities are reflected in young Roma’s transition to adulthood, namely poverty and lack of opportunities within and outside the community, as well as difficulties in accessing their human rights.

The situation can be considerably worse for Roma girls and young women and for invisible groups among Roma youth such as young people with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transsexual persons; and migrants and undocumented young people.

With all this in mind, the Action Plan sets out to:

- a) support the creation in Europe of an environment where Roma youth can grow up free from discrimination, confident about their future perspectives and appreciate their plural cultural backgrounds and affiliations as young people, as Roma, as citizens of their countries and as active Europeans;
- b) change prejudices and stereotypical attitudes against Roma;
- c) support and develop the participation and autonomy of Roma youth at European, national and local levels;

⁵ Agenda 2020 on the youth policy of the Council of Europe

- d) defend the human rights of Roma by preventing future violations and by empowering young Roma through human rights education;
- e) promote real equal opportunities for Roma young people in all aspects of life, including education, employment, health and housing;
- f) promote the de-segregation of Roma schools and settlements;
- g) adopt an integrated approach to all Roma youth related policies;
- h) promote the respect and development of a Roma identity, culture and language.

The Roma Youth Action plan is based upon the following principles and values:

- a) Participation and consultation of Roma youth and Roma youth organisations, including their involvement in youth policy design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- b) Linking Roma youth projects to the situation of Roma communities in Europe and the need for systemic changes to address structural forms of discrimination.
- c) Integration of a gender equality dimension, including the prevention of domestic violence and gender-based discrimination.
- d) Human-rights based approaches to the challenges faced by young Roma and the empowerment of Roma young people in addressing and finding responses to them.
- e) Explicit but not exclusive targeting of the Roma. It focus on Roma youth as a target group but not to the exclusion of other young people who share similar realities and without prejudice to broader policy initiatives which also impact on Roma youth.
- f) Motivating Roma youth to take part in mainstream youth programmes as well as in decision-making processes of youth policies.
- g) Encouraging member states of the Council of Europe to adopt positive duty policies, where national and local authorities will be responsible for the monitoring, implementation and reporting on the Roma youth actions and the Roma organisations should be equal partners.
- h) Capacity-building activities such as training for trainers as well as training in management, advocacy and fundraising, using information and communication technologies, etc.
- i) Ensuring that Roma youth issues are placed in the agenda of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Roma (CAHROM) and that Roma youth networks are invited to their meetings.
- j) Involvement of all active stakeholders who are not members of the Informal Contact Group in the implementation of the action plan.

Objectives and expected results

The overall objectives of the Action Plan are to improve the participation of Roma youth in European youth and Roma policies, and to initiate pilot programmes and initiatives to combat discrimination against young Roma. The expected results are:

1. The Action Plan is set up with input and contributions from various stakeholders; an informal Roma youth contact group is established and facilitated; Roma youth issues are mainstreamed in the Council of Europe's programme of activities.
2. Roma youth leaders and activists are trained in human rights, anti-discrimination and active youth participation. Projects on anti-discrimination and human rights are initiated and the participation of young Roma at local, national and international levels is improved.
3. Awareness is raised of the history of and diversity within Roma communities, as well as of the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by Roma women and migrants, LGBT persons and religious minorities.
4. Successful projects and initiatives are implemented based on the Action Plan's objectives and guiding principles.
5. Strategies for creating a Roma youth fund in order to ensure the sustainability of the Action Plan are developed and sustainable funds for local Roma youth structures are sought; resources are mobilised for the Action Plan, including a coordinator (who should be a Roma young person). This result is dependent on the allocation of sufficient resources.

Means and resources

Resources for the implementation of the Action Plan are being mobilised by the various partners; advocacy and mobilisation strategies which aim to bring in other partners and funders are being devised jointly by the Youth Department and the Roma youth networks. The European Youth Foundation has a particular role to play, notably through its regular support to European activities with Roma youth and to local pilot projects.

A fundraising strategy is also to be developed with the support of the Informal Contact Group.

Working groups may be set up for specific Action Plan objectives and activities (with the commitment and participation of Roma youth networks).

Thematic areas

At its first meeting (EYC Budapest, March 2012), the Informal Contact Group identified and prioritised several thematic areas and specific objectives and outcomes for each. While the implementation of the proposals depends on stakeholders' support, all six areas are of equal relevance to the Action Plan.

1. Strengthening Roma youth identity

The specific objective is to support the creation in Europe of an environment where Roma young people can grow up free from discrimination, confident about their identity and future perspectives, and appreciate their history, plural cultural backgrounds and affiliations as young people, as Roma, as citizens of their countries and as active Europeans.

The expected outcomes relevant to this objective are:

- knowledge about Roma history and language is promoted among young people, both within and outside Roma communities. Specific events, for example International Roma Day (8 April), and Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day (2 August), are used to strengthen Roma identity and raise awareness of Roma history and language;
- good practices and positive examples of initiatives and policies that support Roma identity are promoted to trigger other initiatives, through exchanges of practices;
- non-formal educational approaches are used more widely in youth activities to foster Roma identity and to overcome discrimination.

2. Diversity within the Roma community

The specific objective is to empower groups that suffer discrimination within Roma communities, including young women, LGBT, religious, migrant and other minority groups.

The expected outcomes relevant to this objective are:

- awareness is raised of multiple discrimination and diversity among young Roma, particularly in relation to the situation of young women and LGBT groups;
- networking with non-Roma youth networks and organisations on specific human rights and diversity matters affecting minorities within Roma communities is reinforced;
- research on the diversity within Roma communities, on perceptions of Roma about diversity within the community, and on access to basic rights is regularly developed.

3. Building a strong Roma youth movement

The specific objective is to facilitate and enable Roma youth alliances within and outside Roma communities, through existing and new structures, to mobilize Roma youth, make their voice heard and stake their position in their communities and in European society at large.

The expected outcomes relevant to this objective are:

- Roma young people participate as equals in society and in the development, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes related to them;

- cooperation and networking with non Roma youth structures, organisations, institutions and population in general is stronger;
- mechanisms are developed and capacity of local Roma youth structures is strengthened in order to ensure their sustainability and promote cooperation and networking;
- positive role models at the local level are promoted in order to change existing stereotypes about Roma people in society, thus the Roma youth movement promotes the Roma identity;
- cooperation with existing youth structures is ensured and new structures are created, whenever needed, so young Roma can be and have the space to be active citizens, especially at the grassroots level.

4. Policies and programmes

The specific objective is to build on existing programmes and schemes so as to achieve active Roma youth participation, as partners, in decision-making processes in order to mainstream Roma issues in youth policies, and youth issues in Roma policies and programmes.

The expected outcomes particularly relevant to this objective are:

- youth issues are mainstreamed into Roma policies and Roma youth issues are mainstreamed into youth policies;
- participation of young Roma and Roma youth organisations as equal partners at the decision-making table is ensured;
- capacity building with regard to policy making and knowledge of youth policies that respond to the needs of Roma youth and Roma youth organisations is ensured.

5. Human rights and human rights education

The specific objectives are to raise awareness of the human rights situation of young Roma and to promote a culture of human rights. In this respect, NGOs, institutions and young people promote, initiate, implement and monitor local, regional, national and international actions to fight and prevent human rights violations that affect young Roma.

The expected outcomes relevant to this objective are:

- young people are able to react to human rights violations and become human rights defenders;
- Roma and non-Roma youth organisations are in a position to use a rights-based approach to human rights violations affecting young people;
- the measures and actions implemented are continuously monitored to ensure Roma young people have access to their human rights;

- capacity building efforts for youth organisations, policy-makers and the wider public regarding human rights are continued to enable individuals and groups to react to human rights violations thus promoting a culture of human rights.

6. Fighting discrimination and Anti-gypsyism

The specific objectives are to initiate and promote systemic changes to structural forms of discrimination and to combat Anti-gypsyism through initiatives at all levels of society by enforcing existing anti-discrimination norms and human rights education.

The expected outcomes relevant to this objective are:

- awareness is raised of discrimination against Roma within and outside Roma communities and Roma make use of the existing anti-discrimination legislation;
- young people youth organisations and institutions, both Roma and non-Roma, develop and carry out actions which aim to combat discrimination and antigypsyism;
- serious, sustainable, accountable and realistic policies combating discrimination against young Roma are adopted by policy-makers and anti-discrimination measures are implemented.

Appendix 2: The Evaluation Plan (status April 2015)

Further to an initial discussion with Mara Georgescu, educational advisor in charge of the evaluation, we understand that there are **some basic parameters** applying to this evaluation **that cannot change**, especially the **time frame and the resources available for evaluation activities**, and which **limit the scope of evaluation approaches and activities**. Furthermore, the call for expressions of interest for the evaluation outlines the overall framework for the enquiry, including objectives, key evaluation questions, sources of information and stakeholders to be included. These follow for reference:

Objectives

- To determine the overall worth and specific added-value of the RYAP project within today's European context and as a response to the Roma youth needs and aspirations;
- To identify the main results and achievement of the RYAP, especially in relation to its objectives and double mainstreaming approach;
- To support the development of future programmes and policies for and with Roma youth;
- To learn more about the challenges of Roma young people and their situation;
- To review the process of implementing the RYAP, and review its management.

Key evaluation questions (to be further elaborated upon in the preparatory phase)

- To which extent have the RYAP principles and objectives been relevant to the situation of Roma young people in Europe?
- How efficiently have resources been mobilised and used?
- What has the RYAP achieved so far?
- To what extent does the RYAP implementation promotes youth participation and double mainstreaming?
- What should be the future directions of action of the RYAP in order to secure and extend the results achieved and make them sustainable? What changes has the RYAP brought about in people, processes and policies concerned by youth and Roma issues?
- What is the specificity of the RYAP in relation to other Council of Europe interventions on Rom and how does it support them? How does it support the youth policy and programme of the Council of Europe?
- What did the participants in RYAP activities learn or change in their competences and actions?
- What are the results of the RYAP regarding the ICG partners, especially Roma youth organisations?

Key stakeholders to be included in the evaluation:

- The members of the ICG of the RYAP (Roma youth networks, European Youth Forum, OSCE-ODIHR, OSF Roma Initiative, SALTO)
- The statutory bodies of the youth sector of the Council of Europe
- Relevant teams and sectors from the Council of Europe that were involved in the RYAP
- Multipliers reached by the RYAP activities
- Governmental institutions reached by the RYAP activities
- Young people involved in the RYAP activities on the local levels
- Trainers and experts involved in RYAP activities
- The secretariat of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe.

It is on this basis that we propose, the following evaluation plan, which will focus collecting information relevant to the production of **a concise strategic document, concentrating on three main areas: results, challenges, opportunities and emergent concerns, and recommendation for future action.**

Proposed evaluation tasks in an initial schedule

Timeframe	Task description	Action required by	Deliverables
Until the end of April	Task 0 – Development and finalization of the evaluation plan	Yael & Marija with Mara RYAP staff	Detailed evaluation plan
Until the end of May	Task Group 1 – Initial review of documents; compilation of existing data according to evaluation criteria		Table containing overview of data
	Kick off meeting (virtual) between RYAP staff, Marija and Yael to discuss the evaluation plan, immediate next steps, any challenges foreseen and any other issues	RYAP staffer, Marija & Yael, eventually Mara	Table containing overview of quantitative information available from the review of documents
	Familiarization with available RYAP documentation	Yael & Marija	
	Development of tools for compiling available evaluation information according to identified indicators	Marija and Yael	
	Compilation of quantitative data using tool provided	RYAP staffer	
	Compilation of qualitative data using tool provided	Marija	
	Review of strategic documents about RYAP	Yael	

Until the 9 – 10 June preparatory meeting for the Roma Youth Conference	Task Group 2 – identification of gaps in data; stakeholders to be interviewed; interview / focus group methodology		List of key stakeholders to be interviewed
	Identification of gaps in available information and data that still needs to be collected to be able to answer the pre-defined evaluation questions	Yael & Marija	Interview and / or focus group methodology
	Identification of key stakeholders to be interviewed (including life story candidates)	Yael, Marija & RYAP staff	
	Development of the interview and / or focus group methodology (key questions)	Yael & Marija	
	Preparation of a presentation to present progress so far and any interim results		
9 – 10 June preparatory meeting for the Roma Youth Conference	Task Group 3 – Presentation of progress and any interim results; further collection of information through interviews and / or focus groups		Presentation of progress so far and any interim results (PPT delivered orally)
	Interviews, focus groups and any other information collection activities	Yael & Marija	
	Initial structuring and drafting of the evaluation report	Yael & Marija	Initial structure of the report
End-August / early-September	Task Group 4 – Drafting meeting in Berlin		
Until 15 September	Task Group 5 – Drafting		Analysis, draft contents
	Further analysis and drafting	Yael & Marija	
	Additional information collection as necessary		
	Preparation of first complete draft of the evaluation report for submission and feedback		
	Consultation of key partners to ensure basic validation of findings, compilation of feedback and sharing with evaluation team until the last week of September	RYAP / YD Staff	Feedback on validity of results

Until October 2015	5	Task Group 5 – Finalization of the evaluation report		Final evaluation report
		Finalization of the evaluation report based on feedback collected	Marija & Yael	Presentation of findings
		Preparation of the presentation of findings for the Roma Youth Conference	Marija & Yael	
18 – 22 October		Task Group 6 – Presentation of evaluation findings	Marija & Yael	Evaluation findings
Roma Youth Conference				

Appendix 3: List of interviews conducted during the evaluation

- Adem Ademi, formerly FERYP
- Alexandra Raykova, formerly FERYP
- Aurora Ailincai, ROMED / ROMACT, Council of Europe
- Branko Socanac, CAHROM Special Rapporteur
- Gyorgy Lissauer, formerly OSF YI
- Karolina Mirga, ternYpe
- Mara Georgescu, Youth Department, Council of Europe
- Marietta Herfort, Phiren Amenca
- Michael Guet, Roma Unit, Council of Europe
- Mirjam Karoli, ODIHR OSCE
- Orhan Usein, Roma Decade Secretariat
- Ramon Flores, FERYP
- Robert Rustem, ERTF
- Rui Gomes, Youth Department, Council of Europe
- Tatjana Peric, ODIHR OSCE

Appendix 4: Interview questions asked of interviewees

- To which extent would you consider the RYAP objectives relevant to the situation of Roma youth in Europe based on your experience?
- Which challenges of Roma youth has RYAP been able to address?
- Which results or achievements can you observe in RYAP, if any?
- What do you think were RYAP's main shortcomings? And what challenges did it face, in terms of political and technical implementation?
- Impressions of how RYAP worked – effectiveness regarding objectives / double mainstreaming agenda?
- Impressions regarding strengthening of the Roma Youth Movements, in particular?
- How did the cooperation with the Council of Europe's work / what did not work / what could have been better?
- Do you have any recommendations for the future?

Appendix 5: Blank survey targeting participants of RYAP activities

The Youth Department of the Council of Europe is currently carrying an evaluation of the Roma Youth Action Plan. We would like to invite all those that took part in activities of the RYAP to contribute to this evaluation by filling in an online survey. The survey takes 10 minutes or less.

Your personal information will be used exclusively for the purposes of this evaluation, will be seen only by the evaluators and the staff of the Youth Department, and will be safeguarded by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe in accordance with data protection procedures currently applying in the Council of Europe. No personal information will appear in the evaluation report or any other public document.

We thank you in advance for your participation!

Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other / Prefer not to say

Year of birth

Country of residence

What is your connection to the Roma community?

(Choose one)

- I identify myself as a member of the Roma community
- I am not a member of the Roma community myself, but I work with Roma young people or Roma communities
- Other, please specify

What is your current role in the Roma youth movement?

(Please check as many statements as you feel apply to you)

- I am part of an informal group working in a Roma community
- I am a volunteer in an organisation working with Roma youth or Roma communities

- I am member of an organisation
- I am a youth leader in a youth organisation
- I am a trainer in an organisation
- I am a youth worker
- I work in public services
- I am a researcher
- I am not currently involved in the Roma youth movement
- Other (please specify)

1/ Which Roma Youth Action Plan activity/ies did you participate in?

(Please check as many statements as you feel apply to you)

- youth meeting
- Roma youth conference
- seminar
- study session
- training course
- national level meeting or training course
- consultative meeting
- meetings of the Informal Contact Group
- testing of educational manuals
- other (please specify)

2/ What was the impact of that activity on you?

(Please check as many statements as you feel apply to you)

- I got a better understanding of the topics addressed through the activities (situation of Roma youth, discrimination, human rights, advocacy, participation etc.)

- I improved my competence for working with Roma youth through human rights education and other non-formal educational approaches
- I have more confidence for advocating on behalf of Roma youth
- I understand the issues and concerns of Roma youth better
- I learned about practices for improving Roma youth inclusion and participation in processes that are important for them (youth policy, local decision making, community participation, etc.)
- I understood more about how the European level can help me to be effective in my context
- I gained access to funding for my project with Roma youth
- I got the chance to network with people working for similar goals
- I got new educational tools to use in my practice with young people
- Other (please specify)

Briefly explain your choices.

3/ What have you done since then with what you gained from your participation?

Please choose as many statements as you think apply to your situation.

- I developed and organised one or more projects with Roma youth (or Roma and non-Roma youth)
- I raised awareness for the need to mainstream Roma and / or youth issues through the work of my organisation / institution
- I advocated for the improvement of youth and social policies to include the concerns of Roma youth towards policy actors
- I trained young people in human rights education
- I informed my colleagues about what I learnt
- I worked towards the development of new partnerships (inside / outside the Roma community) to support the achievement of RYAP objectives

- I started to make public protests, or petitions to improve the situation in the Roma communities
- Other (please specify)

Please briefly explain your choices

For example, if you checked the box for 'I organised one or more projects with Roma youth', please tell us something about those projects, including how many, whether they were organised at local, regional, national or European level, and how many young people participated. If you chose the option, 'I trained (other) Roma young people in Human Rights Education', then please say a few words about how many were trained, in what and for what purposes.

4/ What do you think should be the priorities of the RYAP going forward?

You can check the current RYAP priorities here: <http://enter.coe.int/roma/Roma-Youth-Action-Plan/Areas-of-action>

Appendix 6: Overview bibliography of reference material consulted during the desk review

2011	
	26-30 September - Roma Youth Conference
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call for participants EN/FR/Rom - Programme - presentation - HR Commissioner message of support - Thomas Hammarberg - Report RYAP Guidelines EN/ROM - Report - List of participants - RYC video - RYC podcast - Momentum for change - RYC podcast - Rui Gomes
	12-13 December - Informal Contact Group Meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roma Youth Action Plan draft 1 - Roma Youth Guidelines (Romani) - Roma Youth Guidelines Final 17 Nov 2011 - Meeting agenda
2012	
	12-13 March - Informal Contact Group Meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting agenda • Meeting report
	15-22 April - FERYP Study Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for participants • Programme of the study session (word/pdf) • Study session report • List of participants • FERYP participants interviews
	14-20 October - Phiren Amenca Study Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info pack • List of participants • The European Boogie Man Complex – publication/study session report
	21-24 November - Seminar on segregation in school environments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for participants • List of participants • Presentation of the seminar • Seminar programme • Seminar report – proofread 23.09.13
	07-08 December - Informal Contact Group Meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report RYAP ICG • RYAP ICG meeting agenda • RYAP final 22.05.2012 • RYAP 22.02.2012 • RYAP developments 2012 • Report on the training course for Roma youth leaders and the project proposals of participants • RYAP template for activities
	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
	<p>Consultation meeting 7 June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • List of participants • Meeting report <p>Consultation meeting 25 November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the consultative meeting • Meeting notes • List of participants • Meeting programme • Congress report outline
	July 2012 – October 2013 - Training Course on antidiscrimination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for participants EN/Rom • Information pack – residential seminar • Seminar programme • List of participants (pdf/word) • Training course report
2013	
	7 April – Debate in Roma Youth Identity and Culture (FERYP)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debate application form • Roma Youth Debate Agenda • List of participants
	16-17 June – Roma youth issues and the Decade of Roma Inclusion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept note • Draft report • Draft report with comments • Croatian decade presidency plan (ppt)
	30.07-04.08 - Roma Genocide Commemoration Event (Krakow)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roma Genocide project description • Roma Genocide programme 30.07-04.08 • ternYpe support letter • List of supported participants • Workshop outline – Ellie Keen
	19-23 August – Summer University in Kosice, Slovakia
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme introduction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer university programme • Report summer university • Video
	15-21 September – ternYpe Study Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study session outline • Programme • Evaluation (excel) • Study session evaluation form • Study session declaration (draft) • Participants list
	19-21 November - Seminar on the role of youth policy in support of social inclusion of young Roma
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for participants (word/pdf) • Seminar programme • Participants list
	02-03 December - Informal Contact Group Meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting agenda • RYAP State of Art 2013 • Updated on the RYAP implementation (ppt) • Meeting report
	04-05 December - Roma Genocide Remembrance Consultation Meeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CM agenda and participants list • Remembrance handbook draft
	November 2013 – May 2014 Training Course on Management and Development of Roma Youth Organisations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants list • Participants project summaries/development plans • Call for TC participants • Call for trainers
	EYF Funding
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EYF email correspondence (excel and word files)
2014	
	16-22 March – Phiren Amenca Study Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily programme • Study session outline • Study session programme • List of participants • Study session evaluation form • Team evaluation form • Daily programme (short)
	8 April – European Action Day for Solidarity with the Roma (online activity)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAD online materials • EAD report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAD concept
	06-08 April – Activists’ meeting on ways to combat antigypsyism within the No Hate Speech Movement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info pack and meeting programme • Call for participants and seminar presentation • Report of the meeting • Participants list • Meeting presentation
	29-30 April – Roma Youth Meeting Portugal
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report
	08-15 June – FERYP Study Session
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for participants (Spanish and Romanes) • Study session application form • Study session evaluation form • FERYP study session report
	24-26 June – United for Dignity Conference on the Specific Situation of Roma young People Affected by Multiple Discrimination
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for participants • Presentation of the conference and programme • Participants list • Information pack • Conference report • Media Briefing
	04-08 July – National Training Course in Human Rights Education in Greece
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Info pack (in Greek) • Training report • List of participants
	07-11 July – National Training Course in Human Rights Education in Hungary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programme • Evaluation of participants • Training report • Participants list
	30 July – 04 August – Roma Genocide Remembrance Initiative (Krakow)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for facilitators • Programme of the educational conference • Outline of the educational conference • Participants list • RGRI programme • Secretary General of the Council of Europe patronage letter • NHSM EAD concept note • Budget
	20-23 October – Roma Youth Meeting France
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting presentation (EN/FR)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting report (French)
	Ad Hoc Committee of Expert on Roma Issues (CAHROM)
	7 th CAHROM meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abridged report (FR/EN) • List of participants 8 th CAHROM meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting agenda • Invitation (FR/EN) • List of participants • List of decisions
	Roma Youth Participation Research
	Preparatory meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RYP concept • Draft research methodology • Meeting agenda • Report of the meeting Coordination meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting report • Project activities overview • Meeting agenda
Publications	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RYAP Brochure 2013 • RYAP Brochure 2014 • The European Boogie Man Complex • Barbaripen – Young Roma speak about discrimination • Tomorrow will be a better day – Roma report Flanders • Right to Remember – handbook for education with young people