



## ROMED Trainer's Handbook

European training programme  
on intercultural mediation for Roma communities

Funded  
by the European Union



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# ROMED1 TRAINER'S HANDBOOK

European training programme  
on intercultural mediation  
for Roma communities

**A European Union and  
Council of Europe Joint Programme**

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# Foreword

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**T**his handbook is intended for trainers who followed a course of training for trainers in the framework of the ROMED1 programme. It contains the key information trainers need for the delivery of the ROMED1 training. The content of the materials is to be adapted to the specific context in the countries involved and to the profile of the mediators participating in the training, particularly as concerns the terminology used. The handbook also contains the handouts to be distributed to mediators during the training.

The first edition of the handbook was compiled in 2011. This is the second edition and includes additional elements and adjustments generated by the feedback received after the delivery of the training sessions during the first years of implementation of the programme.

# Acknowledgements

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**W**e would like to express our gratitude to all those who contributed to the design and development of the ROMED1 programme. Among those who contributed substantially to the shaping of the programme we must mention here Nicolae Gheorghe, Jean-Pierre Liégeois, Arthur Ivatts, Nicoleta Bitu, Mariana Buceanu, Dominique Steinberger and Jan Hero. We also thank Valeriu Nicolae for his recommendations following the first stocktaking exercise.

Many people contributed to the development, testing and implementation of the ROMED1 curriculum. The list would be too long to mention everybody individually. The programme's development and evolution took into account the feedback and suggestions of the members of the ROMED1 Pool of Trainers, the National Focal Points and the representatives of various national Roma NGOs and public institutions working on Roma issues in the countries involved.

We also thank all the mediators who participated in the programme and who contributed to the development of the curriculum through their experience, practice and feedback from field work.

A substantial part of this curriculum is inspired and based on the adaptation of existing pedagogical materials from other sectors of the Council of Europe, particularly from the Youth Department. We therefore acknowledge and thank our colleagues involved in producing these materials.

The development of the programme would not have been possible without the strong political support of the leaders of two organisations: Mrs Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth; and Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Part I

**ROMED1:  
the European training programme  
on intercultural mediation  
for Roma communities**

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## Chapter 1

# The mission defined in the Strasbourg Declaration

In the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma, adopted in October 2010 at the High-Level Meeting on Roma,<sup>1</sup> representatives of member states agreed that the Council of Europe should implement a **European training programme on intercultural mediation for Roma communities** in order to consolidate the existing training programmes and more effectively use existing Council of Europe resources, standards, methodology, networks and infrastructure, in close co-operation with national and local authorities.

### Some achievements and elements of impact (2011-15)

The implementation of the programme started in November 2010 with the consultation of key stakeholders in the field and with the selection of the first group of trainers, and continued with the training of trainers, while the delivery of the first training sessions for mediators started in the spring of 2011.

In the period 2011-15 several key achievements can be mentioned:

- a. A set of reference documents:
  - ▶ design and elaboration of a new **Training Curriculum for Mediators** (described further in this document and available in 20 languages);
  - ▶ a **European Code of Ethics for Mediators**:<sup>2</sup> a set of core principles and norms to guide the work of mediators has been identified as a key tool for protecting the mediator against abuse and for enhancing the quality of the services provided;
  - ▶ adoption by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers of the **Recommendation CM/Rec (2012)9 on mediation as an effective tool for promoting respect for human rights and social inclusion of Roma**.<sup>3</sup>
- b. Influence on national policies:
  - ▶ **mediation** increasingly present in **the National Strategies for Roma Integration** elaborated on the basis of the EU framework;
  - ▶ **increased visibility and enhancement** of existing mediation systems or of on-going processes through a snowball effect in Ukraine, Greece, Romania, Germany, Bulgaria, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Portugal and Kosovo;<sup>4</sup>
  - ▶ **institutionalisation of mediation** in the Republic of Moldova and "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".
- c. Impact on the practice and training of mediators:
  - ▶ **improved perception of the mediator** and her/his role by the public institutions (around 700 representatives from national and local institutions involved in activities);
  - ▶ **improved awareness of their role among mediators**: intense peer networking, exchange of experiences and ability to build collective responses to problems;
  - ▶ **creation of a European pool of ROMED1 trainers**, more than half being Roma, able to deliver the ROMED1 curriculum in 20 languages;
  - ▶ **over 1 258 mediators trained and certified in 22 countries**: a very large majority of mediators are Roma (see Figure I), the others have a very good knowledge of the Roma community.

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

2. Appendix II – Code of Ethics for Mediators.

3. Appendix III – Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)9.

4. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

**Figure 1 – Overall percentage of mediators of Roma origin trained, 2011-2015**

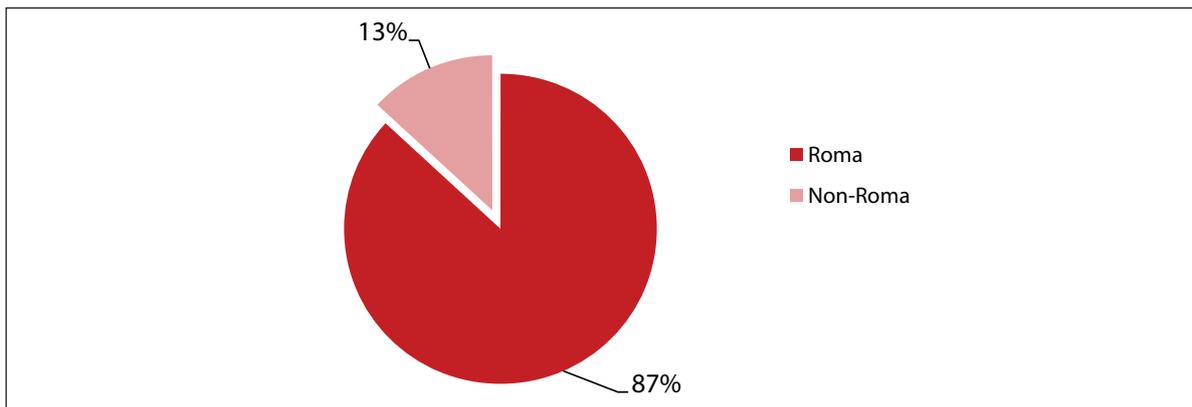


Figure 2 reflects the distribution by country of the mediators who completed the ROMED1 training process.

**Figure 2 – Mediators trained, 2011-2015**

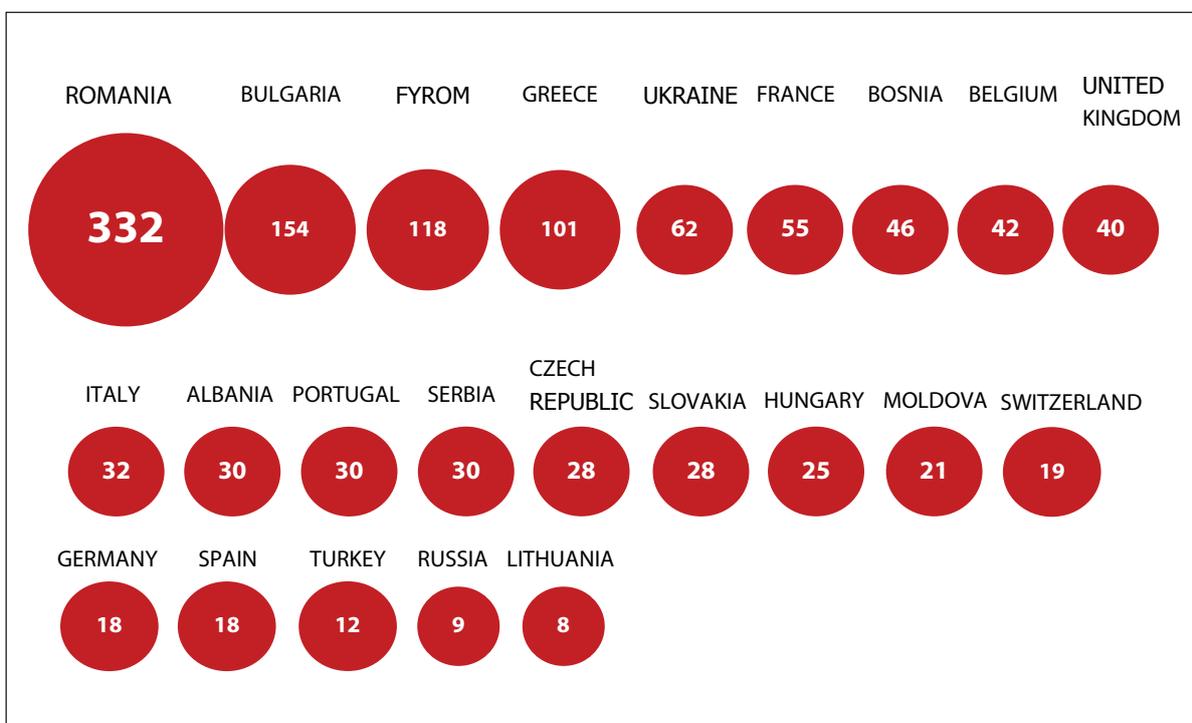
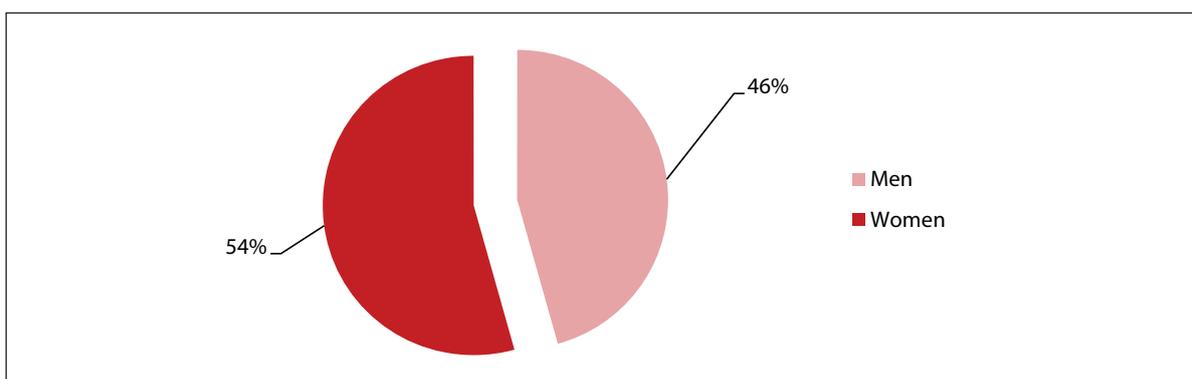


Figure 3 shows that the number of female mediators trained is larger than the number of male mediators trained.

**Figure 3 – Overall balance in gender participation in ROMED1, 2011-2015**



A **European Database of Mediators** has been set up as a valuable resource with up-to-date information on various aspects of Roma mediation in a number of countries.

Mediators trained work either with institutions in a specific field (education, health care, employment) or in a transversal way with various local institutions.

### **Starting points: facts, challenges and vision**

Mediation is one of the measures used across Europe to tackle the inequalities Roma face in terms of access to employment, health-care services and quality education. It consists of employing people with a Roma background, from local Roma communities, or with a good knowledge of Roma issues, to act as mediators between the Roma and the public institutions.

### **A diversity of situations and tasks**

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Many differences exist between countries, both in the situation and needs of the Roma communities, in the terminology used, and in the extent to which mediators are professionally employed and trained, with job profiles varying. An important additional challenge is raised by Roma migrating, permanently or temporarily, to other countries.

### **A pragmatic approach to target group identification**

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Considering this diversity of situations, and in order to avoid the resistances which may be generated by an attempt to impose a common standard and terminology, the ROMED programme took a pragmatic approach and focused on supporting all professionals whose tasks and responsibilities include facilitating communication and improving the direct co-operation between Roma and a public institution. As shown in the previous section and according to the provisions of the recommendations of the Committee of Ministers, most of the mediators targeted have a Roma background and, where needed, speak the language of the Roma community they are working with.

### **Challenges in the practice of mediation**

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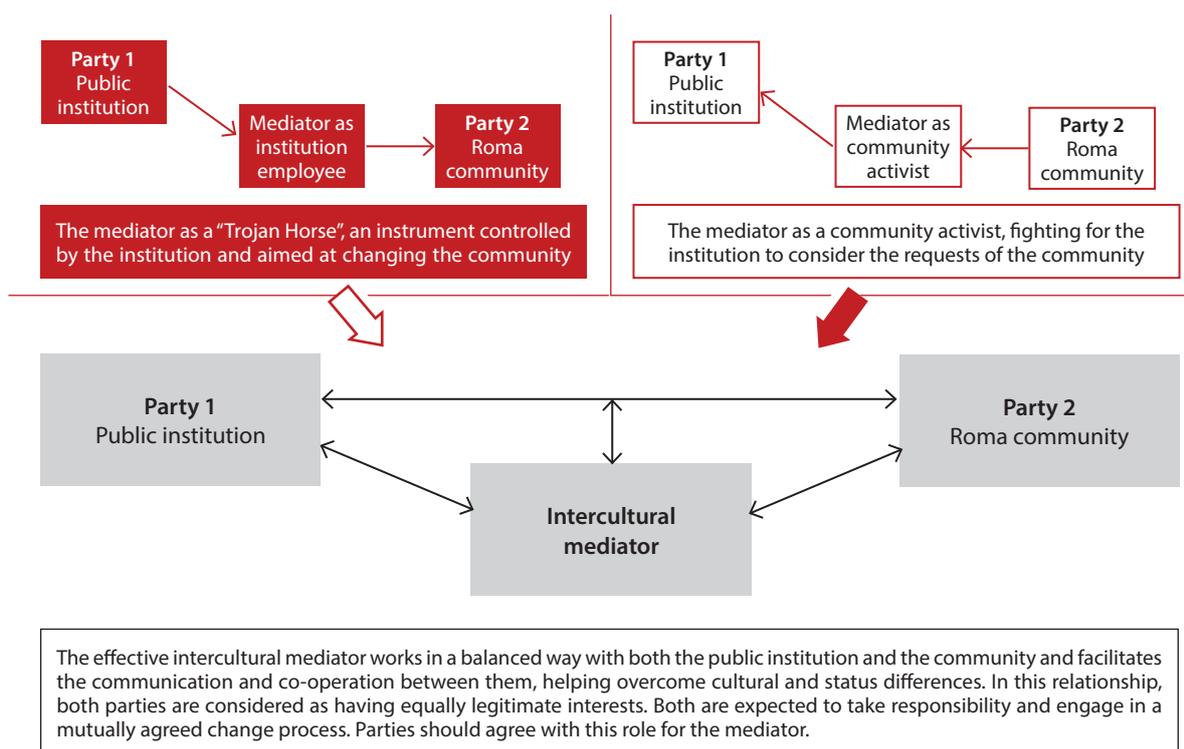
Mediation has often led to significant improvements, but its effectiveness is frequently challenged by issues such as the low status of mediators and a precarious employment, dependency (to the head of the institution, to political influence, to community leaders), or the assignment of additional minor tasks, sometimes not included in the job profile. In addition, mediators might be used by the staff of public institutions as an excuse to avoid direct contact with the community, or are expected to shoulder full responsibility for solving problems. Sometimes, Roma community members have a distorted perception of the role of the mediators, expecting them to solve their problems, thus maintaining a position of dependence, or perceiving them as representatives of the institution. Often mediators work day to day, in a reactive way, only responding to the occurrence of problematic situations, with little or no planning, with inconsistent evaluation and lacking support in performing the job. Such factors mean that success is strongly dependent on the mediator's personal qualities and on personal attitudes of the staff of the institutions the mediator works with.

Three types of approach can be identified (Figure 4):

- ▶ the "Trojan Horse" (the mediator is an instrument of the institution, having as mission to reach out to the community with the aim of changing its attitudes and behaviours);
- ▶ the community activist (the mediator is perceived as a representative of the community, fighting against the institution, for the rights of the Roma);
- ▶ the real intercultural mediator (has a good knowledge of the "cultural codes" of the community and of the institution, is impartial and focused on improving communication and co-operation and on stimulating both parties to take responsibilities and to be actively involved in a change process).

The ROMED programme is focusing on the promotion of the third approach: effective intercultural mediation.

**Figure 4 – From a “Trojan Horse” or a community activist to an effective intercultural mediator**



## General aim and objectives

The general aim of ROMED1 is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the work of school, health, employment and community mediators, with a view to supporting better communication and co-operation between Roma and public institutions (school, health-care providers, employment offices, local authorities, etc.)

To contribute to the achievement of the general aim, the ROMED1 programme was focused on the following three objectives:

1. to promote effective intercultural mediation to improve the communication and co-operation between Roma and public institutions;
2. to ensure the integration of a rights-based approach in the mediation between Roma communities and public institutions;
3. to support the work of mediators by providing tools for planning and implementation of their activities which encourage democratic participation while generating empowerment of Roma communities and increased accountability of public institutions.

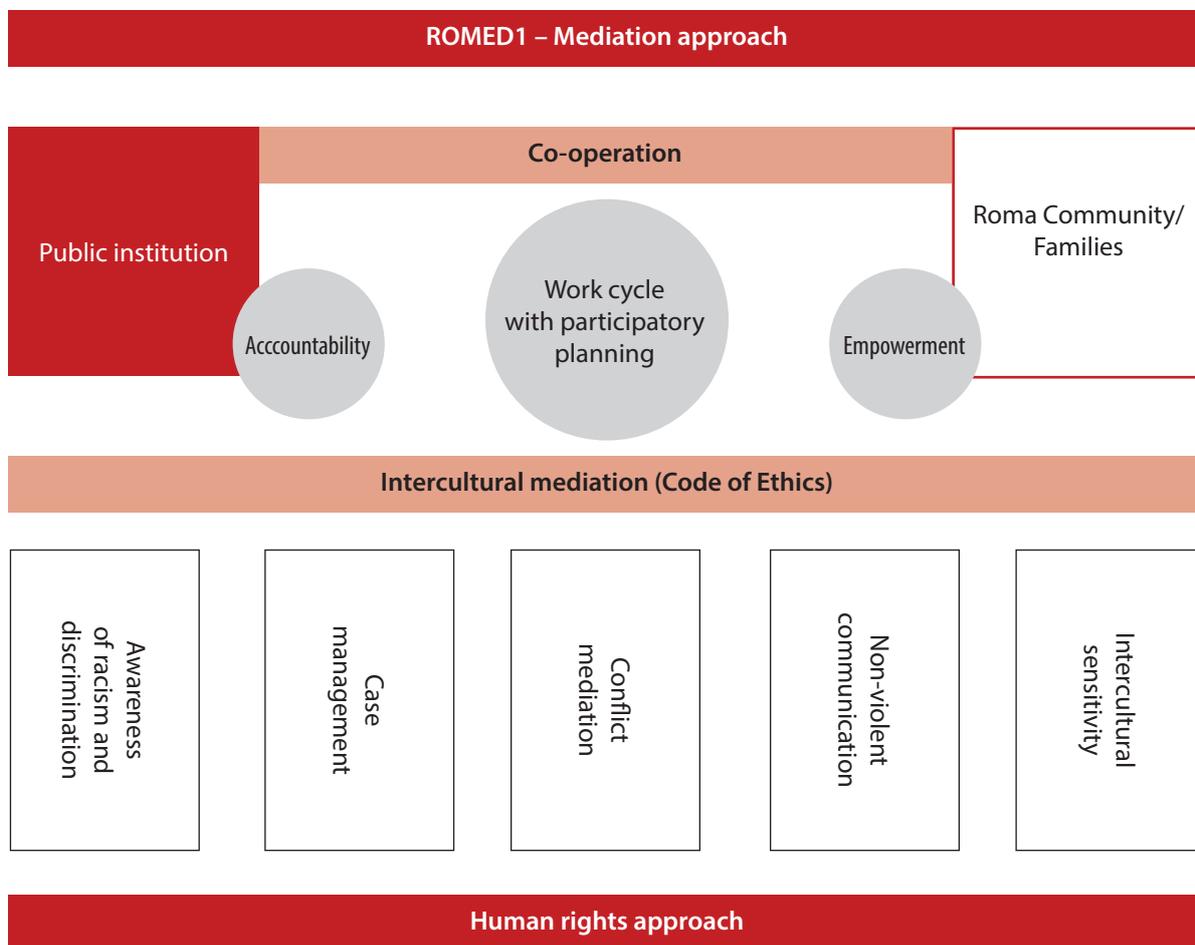
Effective intercultural mediation is understood as in Figure 4, above. This means that mediators, their employers, public institutions in general, as well as members of the Roma communities, need to clearly understand and accept co-operation based on the principles of mediation. Mediators therefore need support and specific competences to perform their role from this perspective.

The human rights based approach, which is one of the pillars of the work of the Council of Europe, is essential for overcoming the paternalistic perspective often encountered in public institutions, as well as the tendency for complacency in a situation of dependency, often encountered among members of the disadvantaged Roma communities, mainly because they do not trust that it is possible otherwise. Thus, the ROMED1 programme promotes the idea that the intervention of a mediator is necessary to build trust between Roma and public institutions, not as an act of charity, but as a responsibility for ensuring effective access to fundamental rights of citizens.

To perform their role as intercultural mediators from a rights-based perspective well, mediators also need practical skills, tools and specific methods to organise their work. The ROMED1 programme contributes to the development of the key competences mediators need and proposes a participatory work cycle starting

with the set-up of support teams, both at community level and within the public institutions. The work is structured as a cyclic process including participatory planning, implementation and evaluation, leading to empowerment, accountability and better direct co-operation.

**Figure 5 – ROMED1 mediation approach**



### **A European Code of Ethics for Mediators<sup>5</sup>**

An important contribution to achieving the objectives of the ROMED1 programme is brought by the Code of Ethics, a set of core principles and norms to guide the work of mediators which has been identified based on a wide consultation with specialists and practitioners, as a key tool for protecting the mediator against abuse and for enhancing the quality of the services provided.

A framework curriculum to improve the co-operation between institutions and Roma families, the ROMED1 training relies on a curriculum with a strong focus on practice and adaptable to specific training needs of mediators working in different contexts and with different institutions and Roma communities. Figure 5 illustrates the key ideas described above and the interconnection between the various elements of the curriculum.

The ROMED1 training does not replace or duplicate existing training programmes at local or national levels, but rather completes them, providing additional tools and methodologies, and contributing to the development of the core competencies all mediators need. ROMED1 also assists countries in setting up training programmes and encourages all relevant stakeholders to include its principles, tools and materials into local and national training programmes for mediators.

<sup>5</sup> Appendix II – Code of Ethics for Mediators.

## Competences of mediators

In order to accomplish their task, mediators need:

- ▶ A set of core competences:
  - general communication competence;
  - intercultural communication competence;
  - mediation and conflict management competence;
  - knowledge and understanding of the socio-cultural and historic background of the communities they are supporting, including understanding of recent migration processes and patterns;
  - competence in assessment of the local situation, organising participatory planning, monitoring implementation and evaluation.
- ▶ Specific competences (specific to the concrete – national/local/sectorial – work context):
  - knowledge of the institutional and legal framework in which they are working;
  - elements related to the sector they are working in (education, health care or employment);
  - knowledge of the needs and background of the specific subgroups and categories of beneficiaries of their work.

They will also need to be able to deal with a number of challenges and sensitive issues, including:

- ▶ motivating and encouraging Roma people to access the respective institutions, considering the frequent lack of trust in the possibility of improving their life, based on previous negative experiences and general negative attitudes they or their fellows encountered;
- ▶ dealing with sensitive issues related to identity, ethno-cultural affiliation and intergroup relations and representations;
- ▶ dealing with prejudice and often unconscious discriminatory behaviour of the staff in the institutions, as well as with preconceptions and practices, sometimes rooted in the communities' social and cultural background, which are not compatible with the principles of democracy and human rights;
- ▶ working, in co-operation with other professionals, with people in situations of deep social exclusion and marginalisation;
- ▶ compensating the significant inequalities of status between Roma and the staff in order to establish interactions which are compliant with the principles of mediation, which must ensure equal recognition and concern for the needs and interests of both parties;
- ▶ remaining impartial, while maintaining the trust of both parties and providing the necessary support to the Roma people they are serving;
- ▶ avoiding being assigned tasks which are unrelated to their job description and obtaining professional recognition for their role and achievements as mediator;
- ▶ mobilising additional community and institutional support in order to enhance effectiveness of their work and achieve stronger improvements in the situation of the people and of the communities they are serving.

## Training topics

Considering the aim and the objectives of the training, as well as the competences listed above, and taking into account that the ROMED1 training is supposed to complement local or national training, which is in a better position to deal with the specific competences related to the field of work and the legal, administrative and socio-cultural context, the following training topics have been included in the curriculum:

- ▶ role and tasks of mediators – What is real and effective intercultural mediation?;
- ▶ consequences of racism, discrimination and marginalisation;
- ▶ cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights;
- ▶ Code of Ethics for Mediators;
- ▶ the annual work cycle of a mediator (assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring, evaluation or self-evaluation);
- ▶ strategies for building confidence and consensus based on non-violent communication;
- ▶ interaction with members of the Roma communities and facilitating intercultural communication;
- ▶ case management;

- ▶ management of conflicts through mediation;
- ▶ identity and cultural issues in the work of mediators;
- ▶ dealing with sensitive issues in the relations of Roma communities with public institutions;
- ▶ peer support and networking among mediators;
- ▶ ensuring sustainability of the work by engaging local stakeholders.

## Structure of the training programme

The ROMED programme was developed and implemented by the Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Roma issues, and since 2014 has come under the Strategic Partnership Unit of the same entity within the Council of Europe.

The training programme consists of two sessions, the first one of four days and the second of three days, separated by a period of around six months during which mediators are expected to implement in their work elements acquired in the first training. The practical activities are monitored and supported by a local support team, co-ordinated by the National Focal Point which is in contact with the Council of Europe. This approach is likely to prevent the tendencies often encountered in training delivery, where participants are not actually applying what they learn in the training.

It is obvious that mediators cannot successfully implement what they have learnt in the training unless they are allowed to do so and are supported by their employers and the public institutions they work with. Therefore, the structure of the training has been designed to include the presence in each of the two sessions of local stakeholders, mainly from the institutions with which mediators are working.

The training consists of 26 modules and the order in which some of the modules are delivered can be changed to accommodate the various local situations, particularly regarding the presence of local stakeholders.

The standard training structure is based on the assumption that local stakeholders attend the last day of the first session and the first day of the second session. The rest of the time, the first three days of the first session and the last two days of the second session, the training is meant to be only for the mediators.

Under this structure, the goal of day 1 is to clarify the idea of “effective intercultural mediation” and to emphasise a rights-based approach in the work of mediators. Day 2 will focus on the work cycle of the mediator, developing competences needed particularly for the preparatory phase, the initial assessment and the participatory planning, as well as developing non-violent communication skills. Day 3 includes activities about the interaction with the main types of stakeholders, the use of mediation as a conflict management instrument, as well as a more flexible session which can be used for topics related to the specific needs of the group. Day 4 will address mainly implementation and will ensure that both mediators and the local support team have a clear understanding of what they will do in their communities until the second training session.

Participants are expected to start working after the first training session and perform six months of practice.

The goals of the second training session are to facilitate sharing of experiences and reflection on practice (thus, the second training session starts with a review of the activities done by participants), to further develop competences of participants for dealing with the challenges they encounter in practice and to support with specific tools the evaluation process. The inclusion of a session for which the content is defined by participants allows for increased flexibility and active involvement of mediators in their professional development. Representatives of the public institutions with which the mediators work are invited to participate in the first day of the second training and contribute to reflection on practice.

A general structure, built around the objectives of the training programme stated above, has been elaborated to guide the trainers in the adaptation and delivery of the training. This structure can be particularised for the three types of specialised mediators (school, health or employment) through the inclusion of one field-specific module in the first training session and, optionally, also in the second training session. These specific modules can also be adjusted for the case of multi-sector or community mediators. The actual delivery of the training is even more particularised, both to the specific type of mediator and to the specific needs and context at national or local levels due to the interactive methodological approach chosen.

## The support structures and their roles

The effective implementation of the training programme, including the selection of participants, the organisation of the training, the supervision of the practice and the support for follow-up and sustainability, can only be done through a close co-operation of various key actors at European, national and local levels.

Here are the key responsibilities of the main categories of stakeholders involved in the ROMED1 programme.

### Council of Europe

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The Council of Europe ensures the overall co-ordination of the programme through the work of the Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues. Other Council of Europe structures, such as the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, provide support. The Council of Europe encourages member states to use members of the ROMED1 European Pool of Trainers to train mediators. Throughout the process, the Council of Europe maintains close communication with Roma organisations active at European level, and with other European and international organisations, to ensure co-ordination and support for the programme. The programme can only be successful if a variety of stakeholders contribute.

### National and local authorities

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National and local authorities:

- ▶ identify and select the mediators who will be trained;
- ▶ ensure that representatives from local institutions participate during the last day of the first training and encourage them to provide support for mediators at local level;
- ▶ participate in European events and reflect on possible policy responses;
- ▶ engage in transnational bilateral or multilateral co-operation with similar structures in other countries. Considering that international Roma mobility is a key issue in the work of mediators, co-operation is particularly relevant between structures in countries of origin and destination countries as a useful tool for support and sustainability;

In cases where the ROMED1 training programme is being used as part of an initial training for new mediators, it is also the responsibility of the local, regional or national authorities to provide employment for the mediators included in the training or to provide funding for their employment by non-governmental structures.

### Relevant institutions at local level

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Relevant institutions, such as schools, health-care providers, or employment offices at local level:

- ▶ attend the last day of the first training session together with the mediators and, if possible, also the first day of the second training session;
- ▶ support mediators to carry out practical activities based on the approach promoted by the Council of Europe;
- ▶ provide feedback to the focal points on co-operation.

### Mediators

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The responsibility of mediators is to:

- ▶ establish a relationship of trust and open communication with and between representatives of public institutions and members of the Roma community;
- ▶ seek to understand the situation in order to reflect the respective viewpoints and the basis for opinions, feelings, attitudes and actions;
- ▶ establish local support groups within the community and within the institution and engage these groups in a participatory planning resulting in a joint plan including commitments of the various stakeholders;
- ▶ facilitate and support the implementation of the plan and the evaluation in a participatory way of its results, in order to ensure visible improvements both in the actual situation of the Roma community and the access of its members to public services, and in the mutual attitudes and the co-operation between communities and the public institutions.

## National Focal Point

The National Focal Point:

- ▶ supports the mediators in carrying out practical activities in the six-month interval between the two training sessions;
- ▶ supports the Council of Europe in the monitoring process;
- ▶ provides input to the trainers to help prepare the second training session;
- ▶ provides feedback on the national activities during the transnational events organised by the Council of Europe.

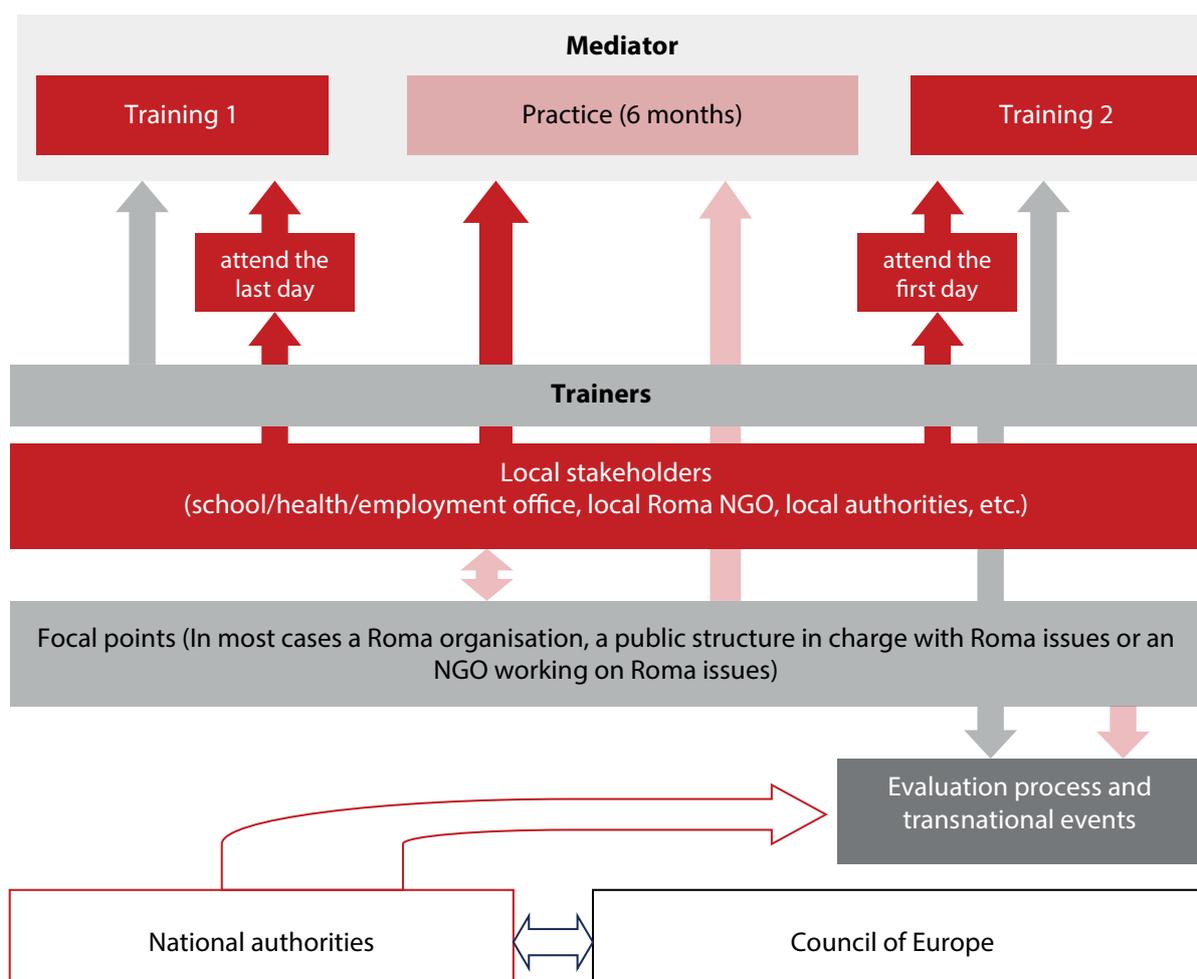
## Roma organisations

Roma organisations:

- ▶ support the implementation of the programme at local level;
- ▶ provide feedback and suggestions to the focal point;
- ▶ contribute to the evaluation process and to the identification of suggestions for policy adjustments.

Figure 6 summarises the structure of the programme and the role of the various stakeholders.

**Figure 6 – Programme structure and stakeholders' roles**





## Chapter 2

# The first training session

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**T**he objectives of the first training session are:

- ▶ to allow participants to get to know each other and create the conditions for a good team working atmosphere;
- ▶ to introduce the key elements related to the ROMED approach to mediation;
- ▶ to develop core competences of participants and the ability to use specific tools in their work as mediators;
- ▶ to prepare the participants for an effective implementation in their practice of elements of the ROMED approach to mediation.

For this purpose, the programme has been structured over four days, as specified below:

- ▶ the first day, besides the opening and introductory elements, will emphasise the role of mediator, as well as the human rights and anti-discrimination principles on which the work of a mediator should rely;
- ▶ the second day will be focused on the work cycle of mediators, with special attention to the first three phases: preparation, assessment and participatory planning, as well as on developing skills for non-violent communication;
- ▶ the third day offers opportunities for learning and reflection on the interaction of mediators with staff in the public institutions and with members of the Roma communities. It will also develop case management and conflict management skills based on mediation and includes a session for which the content can be adapted based on the needs of the group;
- ▶ the fourth day, which representatives of local public institutions are invited to attend, is focusing on implementation and on obtaining the support of the public institutions.

The tasks mediators are expected to implement during the six months of practice are communicated and discussed in the morning of the last day. The practical organisation of the last day depends on the types of guests that confirm attendance and might include an official round table discussion. If national-level officials attend and if the mediators have specific requests to address to them, it might be useful to take some time in the evening before to allow mediators to formulate their message.

It can be useful to also have one or more evening activities, for example on issues related to Roma history and culture. This should be decided based on the needs and interests of the group and depending on the actual location of the training.

## Programme of the first training session

Session1	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	
09.00-10.30	1. Opening session  2. Challenges in the interaction of Roma with public institutions	6. The work cycle of a mediator	10. Interaction with members of the Roma communities and facilitation of intercultural communication	14. Tasks for the six months of practice. Expectations of mediators from institutions and local support structures. Local peer help structures	15. Information for local stakeholders
10.30-11.00	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	
11.00-12.30	3. Roles and tasks of mediators – What is effective intercultural mediation?  Code of Ethics for Mediators	7. Strategies for building trust and consensus	11. Interaction with public institutions  Case management	16. Mediator in action: implementation, monitoring and involving key stakeholders	
12.30-14.00	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	
14.00-15.30	4. Consequences of racism, discrimination and marginalisation	8. Preparatory phase and initial assessment in the work of a mediator	12. Topic adapted to the needs of the group	17. Planning local implementation. Overcoming challenges. (Joint session: mediators and support structures)	
15.30-16.00	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	
16.00-17.30	5. Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights	9. Participatory, transparent and empowering planning	13. Management of conflicts through mediation	18. Closing and evaluation (Joint session: mediators and support structures)	
17.30-18.00 Evening (optional)	Review and conclusions of the day  Roma history and socio-cultural background	Review and conclusions of the day	Review and conclusions of the day		

## Chapter 3

# The second training session

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**T**he objectives of the second training session are:

- ▶ to review the practical activities and to use them as a source of peer learning;
- ▶ to stimulate the understanding of the key elements of the Code of Ethics and to support its further effective use in practice;
- ▶ to enhance the capacity of the mediators to organise and learn from a participatory evaluation process, with a view to ensuring quality and sustainability in their work;
- ▶ to develop additional competences, adapted to the specific needs of the mediators.

For this purpose, the programme is structured over three days, as specified below:

- ▶ the first day (a joint day, with mediators and representatives of the local institutions mediators work with on a daily basis), will be dedicated to the review of the practice and use of the Code of Ethics for Mediators;
- ▶ the second day will introduce some new training topics, including evaluation and ways to deal with identity and sensitive issues in the work of mediators; it will also include a session where trainers will have to choose from several options the one that fits best the needs of your group;
- ▶ the first half of the third day will be focused on responding to the specific needs of the mediators by using a flexible training methodology, while the second half will cover issues related to the sustainability and final evaluation of the training.

This builds on the first training session and on the work done by the mediators during the six months of practice. Several lessons learnt from programme implementation include:

- ▶ the need to be flexible and address the various needs of the participants:
  - now trainers know the participants and can choose what is more appropriate;
  - for half a day the content will be decided by the participants but trainers still have a key role in this process. Allowing the mediators to participate actively in the structuring of their learning and encouraging them to become contributors, not just receivers in this process is totally in line with the principles promoted by the programme. However, the experience reveals that unless a proper mechanism is generated, adapted to the situation of participants, in most cases they will not take this opportunity;
- ▶ the need to keep the content simple and practical and avoid long presentations and abstract theories; no presentation should be longer than 10 minutes and all points should be illustrated with examples referring to situations and issues familiar to participants:
  - the need to insist on the key messages of ROMED, particularly related to human rights, anti-discrimination, participation and to close the work cycle approach with the evaluation phase;
  - the need to continue to provide opportunities for peer learning and for interaction in a training setting with partners from public institutions;
  - the need to stimulate a reflection on the future, on sustainability and impact.

The order of the sessions during the second day can change as the topics are not directly connected to each other.

## Programme of the second training session

Session 2	Day 1*	Day 2	Day 3
09.00-10.30	Opening session 19. Review of practical activities	20. Human rights as basis for the work of mediators	24. Resources and approaches for improving the work of mediators
10.30-11.00	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	Agenda designed by mediators  Questions and answers
11.00-12.30	19. Review of practical activities	21. Tackling issues of culture and identity in the work of mediators	
12.30-14.00	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>
14.00-15.30	19. Review of practical activities	22. Tackling sensitive issues in the relationship between public institutions and the Roma community. Responding to discrimination complaints and building confidence through participation	25. Ensuring effective and sustainable impact
15.30-16.00	<i>Break</i>	<i>Break</i>	26. Conclusions and evaluation
16.00-17.30	19. Review of practical activities	23. Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator	Departures
17.30-18.00	Conclusions of the day	Conclusions of the day	

\* During Day 1 mediators will work together with representatives of local/national institutions.

## Variations of the training structure based on practice

The practice of delivering the training also allows the formulation of some suggestions for adaptation:

- ▶ For groups with less experience, it might be necessary to spend more time (particularly for practical exercises) related to non-violent communication and the work cycle of the mediator. This might require skipping or shortening one or two sessions planned for the third day. However, the session on mediation as a conflict management strategy should not be affected.
- ▶ For more experienced groups or for groups with a smaller size, the programme can be adapted for a three-day training session, by reducing some elements in the first day and some in the third day of the standard programme.

Regarding the presence of other stakeholders in the training sessions, the practice also revealed a variety of situations demanding the adaptation of the standard training structure to meet specific possibilities and needs. Thus, the following cases have been encountered:

1. Tandem training: mediators trained together with their counterparts from the institution. This is a very productive type of training because it not only equips mediators with competences but it also builds a good relationship and prepares the ground for a good co-operation with the institution.

Here are two examples of such a situation:

a. In Portugal the majority of participants in the ROMED1 training were mediators employed in the Municipality Mediators Programme promoted by ACM (High Commissioner for Migration, former ACIDI High Commissioner for Integration and Intercultural Dialogue), which were paid partly by the central government and partly by the municipalities. Mediators attended in tandem with a technician from the social inclusion

department of the municipalities. Therefore a large part of the training was done together with more attention given to the Code of Ethics, to the work cycle and the use of the GROW model for participatory planning.

*b.* In Romania, for one of the groups, the school mediators were trained together with their respective school directors. This allowed for the development of mutual empathy and of a more realistic plan of future activities but also required the adaptation of some modules, particularly those referring to the awareness of discrimination of Roma, the preparatory phase and the interaction with Roma parents.

2. Participation of local stakeholders during the first day instead of the last day in the first session: in some cases, representatives of the institutions could be present for the first day of training, usually also in order to be part of the opening of the training session in the presence of national authorities.

In such cases the structure of the agenda was changed, by including the presentation of the work cycle and the session on participatory planning in the afternoon of the first day and moving the modules planned for the first afternoon in the standard structure to the second afternoon. In this way the local stakeholders, usually representatives of the institutions that mediators work with on a regular basis, will be exposed to the most important elements of the ROMED approach and will understand how to support mediators in their work from this perspective.

3. Training only delivered to mediators: in some cases, for various reasons, it is not possible to have the presence of representatives of local institutions during the training. In this case, the last day of the first session will be adapted to the situation, particularly by asking mediators to support each other in the planning of future activities. Also, in this case special attention needs to be given to the preparatory phase during the second day, in order to ensure that mediators are themselves able to convey in an effective way the key message of the ROMED approach to their local partners.



Part II

## **Training modules**

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# First training session

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## Module 1 Opening session

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour, morning of the first day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To get to know each other as people and as professionals working in specific work contexts.
2. To understand the basic elements of the training approach and of the training programme: objectives, structure, link between training and practice.
3. To clarify key elements concerning relationships and communication procedures during the training.
4. To express expectations and fears related to the training and becoming aware of the expectations and fears of the others.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Post-its of two colours, the programme on a flip-chart sheet (optional)
- ▶ Slide presentation: Opening session
- ▶ Programme leaflet

### Description of the module

The first part includes a brief welcome by the trainers and an activity allowing participants to get to know each other and to learn some elements about their specific work contexts. This activity will be chosen

depending on the composition of the group (there might be groups of participants who know each other from before, participants might all be meeting for the first time, etc.).

The second part includes a presentation of the aims and objectives of the training, as well as some of the main elements behind the training approach. After an overview of the overall structure of the training, details of the first training session will be provided. The explicit focus on the planning by the participants of some practical activities that they are expected to implement after the training will increase the attention to training content and will encourage the connection of this content with the daily work and the specific local context of each participant. The order of these first two parts can also be reversed.

The third part focuses on more practical issues, including distribution of training support materials, evaluation procedures, communication procedures, including the “post-box” and the “message board”, meals, division by groups and the rooms allocated to each group, the consultation session, rules concerning, for instance, the use of mobile phones or smoking, etc.

In the final part of the session the trainers will ask participants to write on Post-Its some of their expectations regarding the training and some things they hope to avoid during the training. Distinct colour Post-Its will be used for expectations and for fears. They will be displayed on the wall in a place accessible to all and participants are encouraged to read them during the break. Trainers will consider them in adapting the delivery of the programme and will get back to them during the last session of the training to check if they were taken into account.

## Module 2

# Challenges in the interaction of Roma with public institutions (school, employment office, health-care service)

### Duration and place in the programme

30 minutes, morning of the first day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To list the challenges, issues and difficulties perceived in relation to Roma with education, employment and access to health services.
2. To compare opinions regarding the challenges identified and categorise the challenges.

### Resources needed

- ▶ A4 paper sheets, markers
- ▶ Place to display results preferably until the end of the training session

### Description of the module

Divided into small groups of 4-5 people (if possible, people from the same area should stay together),

participants are asked, based on their experience, to discuss and agree on five main challenges they consider associated with education, employment and access to health services of Roma. Each issue will be written on a separate piece of paper as a statement as concise but also as clear as possible. To facilitate understanding of the task, the trainer will show an example, writing a common challenge with a marker on an A4 sheet of paper (15 minutes).

All papers will be displayed on a wall in a random order, regardless of the group that produced them. Participants are given a few minutes to read all the statements. Participants may ask clarification questions. After a short common reflection on the similarities and differences between the issues identified they will be categorised in clusters. This will be done by two volunteers from the group, guided by all participants. Challenges that are similar will be joined together. A trainer will ask for confirmation and comments from participants and will stimulate a joint reflection on the main categories identified (15 minutes).

During the next training sessions, whenever appropriate, trainers will make connections with the categories and issues identified.

## Module 3

# Role and tasks of mediators – What is effective intercultural mediation?

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, last part of the morning of the first day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To understand the different possible approaches to mediation.
2. To know the key elements of a real and effective intercultural mediation.
3. To compare the current task and role with the idea of real and effective intercultural mediation and with the principles listed in the Code of Ethics.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart and markers
- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slide presentation and handout (Handout 1 – Effective intercultural mediation, Handout 10 – Critical incident analysis form)

### Description of the module

This approach assumes that participants in training are mediators who are already working. If participants are going to start working as mediators after the training, this session should be adapted accordingly.

The session is divided into three parts: review of current roles and tasks of the participating mediators, presentation on effective intercultural mediation and on the Code of Ethics, and comparison of current practice with the characteristics of effective intercultural mediation and with the provisions of the Code of Ethics.

1. Participants are asked to reflect on their work as mediators, to think about an ordinary week and list the activities they do as mediators. The trainers should give an example and show how they should fill in the handout (10 minutes).

For each task, participants will then connect each activity and task with a challenge concerning the relationship of the Roma with the public institution. It might happen that for some activities there is no direct connection. In that case the space in the handout will be left empty. If a connection is not clear, a question mark should be added. Once more, the trainer will show how to do this task, with an example (10 minutes).

Participants are then asked to share their tasks by using the following procedure:

- ▶ One participant starts by sharing one activity and the corresponding challenge addressed. The trainer will record the ideas on the flipchart. The participants who shared the idea will designate a colleague, who will share one other idea. The cycle will continue, until all activities are recorded. Each participant will share and designate the person to speak next, giving priority to the ones who did not have the chance to share. If a person designated does not have anything new to add, s/he will simply pass the floor to someone else (15 minutes).

2. The other trainer will then introduce the key elements of “real and effective mediation”, starting with the analysis of the different possible approaches to mediation and making, whenever possible, connections with the list of activities and the challenges addressed. The trainer will also introduce the Code of Ethics for Mediators and will emphasise that over the next modules there will be time to go into detail about the approach of real and effective intercultural mediation and about how it could actually be implemented in practice. A few minutes should be kept at the end for clarification questions (30 minutes).

3. In groups of four, participants are asked to compare their current practice with the characteristics of effective intercultural mediation and with the provisions of the Code of Ethics. Each group should pick up one element that they think should be changed or improved in their work, in line with the principles of effective intercultural mediation, and point out what would be the benefit of such a change (10 minutes). Each group briefly shares the conclusion reached and the trainer makes a closing statement underlining that the approach that will be suggested during the training will provide opportunities for improvement of the quality and effectiveness of the work, based on democratic principles, whatever the current situation is.

## Module 4

# Consequences of racism, discrimination and marginalisation

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, group, afternoon of the first day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To clarify the meaning and consequences of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, the relations between these concepts and their relevance for the work of Roma mediators.
2. To raise awareness on the subtle, often unconscious and unwanted forms of prejudice and discrimination.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slide presentation and handout (Handout 2 – Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination)
- ▶ Role cards (in case Plan A below is used)
- ▶ An area big enough for the group to move or to have chairs organised in a circle
- ▶ A short video or photos in electronic format to illustrate the concept of stereotype

### Description of the module

The module will be organised in three parts:

- ▶ part 1 is an exercise focused on discrimination, with debriefing (two options are suggested below);
- ▶ part 2 is a brief exercise with visual support focused on stereotypes and prejudices;
- ▶ part 3 is an input and whole-group discussion on the relationship between stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, racism, consequences or prejudice and discrimination and strategies to improve intergroup relations (see Handout 2 – Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination).

Two options are suggested for part 1:

### Plan A

An adapted version of the exercise “Take a step forward”, from COMPASS, Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People, published by the Council of Europe (60 minutes). Its main goals are to make participants aware of the differences and inequalities in society and of the consequences of the inequalities on the life of various categories of people, as well as to develop empathy with people facing prejudice and discrimination.

### Procedure

Each participant is handed out a role card randomly. They are asked not to show it to anyone else. In order to help the participants get into their role, the facilitator reads the following questions, giving the participants time to reflect:

- ▶ What was your childhood like? What sort of house did you live in? What kind of games did you play? What sort of work did your parents do?
- ▶ What is your everyday life like now? Where do you socialise? What do you do in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening?
- ▶ What sort of lifestyle do you have? Where do you live? How much money do you earn each month? What do you do in your leisure time? What you do in your holidays?
- ▶ What excites you and what are you afraid of?

Next, the participants are asked to line up beside each other (like on a starting line) and the facilitator explains to the participants that while a series of statements are presented, they should take a step forward if they can answer “yes” to the statement. Otherwise, they should stay where they are and not move.

The statements are read out one by one and participants are given the time to move. At the end, participants are invited to take note of their final position and are given a couple of minutes to come out of role before debriefing in plenary.

## Debriefing

The participants are asked about what happened and how they felt about the activity and then they are asked to talk about the issues raised and what they learnt.

1. How did people feel stepping forward – or not?
2. For those who stepped forward often, at what point did they begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as they were?
3. Did anyone feel that there were moments when their basic human rights were being ignored?
4. Can people guess each other's roles? (People can reveal their roles during this part of the discussion.)
5. How easy or difficult was it to play the different roles? How did they imagine what the person they were playing was like?
6. Does the exercise mirror society in some way? How?
7. Which human rights are at stake for each of the roles? Could anyone say that their human rights were not being respected or that they did not have access to them?
8. What first steps could be taken to address the inequalities in society?

## Role cards

You are an unmarried mother and you don't have a job.	You are the president of a youth organisation in a leading party.
You are the daughter of the director of the bank in your city. You study economics at university.	You are the son of a restaurant owner who recently returned from abroad.
You are a civil servant in a local public institution.	You are the daughter of the American Ambassador.
You are a girl living with your parents who are devoutly religious people belonging to a minority religious group.	You own a successful import-export company.
You are a disabled young man who can only move in a wheelchair.	You are a worker, retired from a textiles factory.
You are a 17-year-old Roma girl who never finished primary school.	You are the leader of a Roma organisation.
You are an unmarried young Roma and you are pregnant.	You are a Roma football player.
You are an experienced teacher in a prestigious school.	You are a young Roma teacher.
You are a middle-aged Roma man who worked in construction and was recently fired.	You are a 27-year-old Roma who has nowhere to live.
You are a young Roma woman who recently graduated from law school.	You are the 19-year-old son of a farmer in an isolated village in the mountains.

## Situations and events

- ▶ You have never encountered any serious financial difficulty.
- ▶ You have decent housing with a telephone line and television.
- ▶ You feel your language, religion and culture are respected in the society where you live.
- ▶ You feel that your opinions on social and political issues matter, and your views are listened to.
- ▶ Other people consult you about different issues.
- ▶ You have the chance to continue your education if you want to.
- ▶ You have adequate social and medical protection for your needs.
- ▶ You feel that your role in the society is not inferior to others.
- ▶ You have never felt discriminated against because of your origin.
- ▶ You can go away on holiday once a year.
- ▶ You have an interesting life and you are positive about your future.
- ▶ You feel you can study and follow the profession of your choice.
- ▶ You are not afraid of being harassed or attacked in the streets, or in the media.
- ▶ You can vote in national and local elections.
- ▶ You feel that you have been given the same opportunities as other people.
- ▶ You can easily find a job if you want to.
- ▶ You can go to the cinema or the theatre at least once a week.
- ▶ You are not afraid for the future of your children.
- ▶ You can buy new clothes at least once every three months.
- ▶ You can fall in love with the person of your choice.
- ▶ You feel that your competence is appreciated and respected in the society where you live.

## Plan B

### **Structured discussion on prejudice and discrimination based on experiences shared by participants.**

Participants are asked to think about situations of discrimination which affected them or which they witnessed. Ask them first to describe the situation, then to analyse the feelings of those involved and the reaction of those directly involved and of those who just witnessed the situation. A general debriefing could be done around questions like:

- ▶ What are the similarities and differences between the stories shared?
- ▶ What type of reaction can one expect from someone facing such a situation on a regular basis?
- ▶ Can you think of alternative responses, as a witness and as a person affected by a discriminatory behaviour? What would be the consequences of these alternative responses?

The key answers will be recorded on flipchart paper.

The second part of the module will be shorter and will focus on the concepts of stereotype and prejudice. An effective way to do this is by showing a short video (or a picture) illustrating a situation where stereotypes are

activated and where people tend to infer judgments about people based on a set of external characteristics or on their membership of a specific group. The film used in the training has an unexpected end, contradicting the stereotypes of a poor person and of a rich person. The trainer stops the film before the end and asks participants to comment. This is when stereotypes and prejudices are expressed, whether in a negative way or in a positive but patronising way. Then, a new series of comments is opened after the end of the film is shown. Participants will be asked to watch the short video again and the second time they will notice many hints that clearly anticipate the end of the video, if they were taken into account. The conclusion is that, because we sometimes tend to rely on stereotypes, we ignore information and make judgments which can prove to rely on false evidence.

The session will end with an input from the trainer on stereotypes, prejudices, discrimination and racism, and the connections between them. A slide presentation will be used and a few minutes will be left at the end for questions and clarifications. The concluding remarks should encourage participants to reflect on how the issues discussed in this module are relevant for their practice.

If projecting the film is not possible, an alternative would be to present a set of photos illustrating people in ways that contradict the stereotype of their group.

Comments: for the first part of the module, the choice between Plan A and Plan B can be made depending on a variety of factors, such as the involvement, attitudes and reactions of participants during the previous sessions, or the training location (Plan A implies availability of a large enough area for the participants to move freely, while Plan B requires the possibility of organising chairs in a circle, without tables in the middle). If the group atmosphere is appropriate and

the trainer is experienced, an alternative possibility is to take advantage of the fact that this session comes just after the lunch break to organise a version of the famous exercise "Blue eyes, brown eyes" developed by Jane Elliott. However, this can only be done if participants are not aware that the topic of the relevant module is discrimination. In this case, the module could be labelled in the programme that is given to participants as "Challenges of diversity" or something similar that will not divulge the purpose of the exercise. If time allows, as an optional evening activity, this can be connected with a film session: "A class divided", by Jane Elliott, followed by discussions.

## Module 5

# Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the first day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To connect the work of the mediator with the principles of human rights and non-discrimination.
2. To reflect on the possible conflicts between cultural differences and human rights principles in the work of a mediator.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Handout set 3 – Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights
  - Handout 3.a – Case studies: critical incidents from the work of mediators
  - Handout 3.b – Case analysis form
  - Handout 3.c – Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ▶ Flipchart and markers

### Description of the module

Participants are divided into groups of four and each group receives the handout with a case describing a critical incident in the work of a mediator. It can be the same for all groups but it is better to have different cases. All cases should be directly relevant for the group members. Each case should present a controversial situation where several human rights are being violated and where rights are being violated both by members of the Roma community and by staff of a public institution.

Participants read the case individually. Each group receives the handout with the analysis questions and with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and will discuss the case with the aims of:

- ▶ identifying what rights have been violated and in what way;
- ▶ how the work of a mediator can contribute to eliminating the violation of rights and to preventing such situations from appearing in the future.

Each group presents the conclusions (starting, if appropriate, with reading the case out loud) and gets feedback from the trainer and participants.

The session ends with a general discussion on:

- ▶ the importance of the human rights background for the work of the mediators;
- ▶ the contribution a mediator has for ensuring equal access to human rights and preventing discrimination;
- ▶ limits in the acceptance of cultural differences, defined by human rights principles;
- ▶ strategies for the mediator to convey (in a way that can be understood and accepted) to the staff of the institution and to the members of the community the idea that his/her work is grounded on the protection of human rights.

Key ideas resulting from the discussion can be written by the trainer on a flipchart.

### Alternative options

- ▶ Depending on the group's experience, the case studies can be prepared during the first part of the session by the group members. Thus, the first task of each group would be to identify and describe a case. The cases are then passed over to the next group in order to be analysed and the rest of the process can go on as described above.
- ▶ A good option would also be that the group, or a part of the small groups, works based on other international documents related to human rights which contain provisions directly relevant for the work of the mediators (European Social Charter,<sup>6</sup> Convention for the Protection of the Rights of the Child<sup>7</sup>).

6. European Social Charter: [www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/035](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/035); European Social Charter (revised): [www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/163](http://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/163).

7. UN Convention for the Protection of the Rights of the Child: [www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx).

## Module 6

# The work cycle of a mediator

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the second day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To know the work cycle approach and clarify the role of the mediator in each phase.
2. To identify advantages and threats associated with including this approach in the work of mediators.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slides presentation and handouts (Handout set 4 – Participatory work cycle management)
  - Handout 4.a – From day-to-day work to participatory planning
  - Handout 4.b – Phase 0: Preparation
  - Handout 4.c – Phase 1: Assessment of situation
  - Handout 4.d – Phase 2: Participatory planning
  - Handout 4.e – Phase 3: Implementation
  - Handout 4.f – Phase 4: Evaluation

### Description of the module

The first part of the module is a presentation by the trainer of the approach based on the work cycle. This starts with emphasising the difference between a day-by-day organisation of the work and more structured work, based on the work cycle, briefly describing each phase (10 minutes). Participants are asked to share situations from their practice where it would have been better to make a plan and address the root cause

of a problem, instead of dealing with individual cases (5 minutes). Once it is clear to participants to what types of issue the cycle applies, the trainer presents the key elements of each phase of the cycle one by one (10 minutes).

Participants will be divided into four groups:

- ▶ Two groups are asked to identify what the advantages of such an approach are.
- ▶ The other two groups will identify the key challenges of an approach based on a work cycle organised in a participatory way.

Then, the two groups which had the same task will negotiate a common list of advantages/challenges (40 minutes).

A representative of each group will present the results. In a discussion in plenary, the two lists are compared and participants are asked to reflect on the following questions:

- ▶ Are the advantages bigger than the disadvantages/challenges?
- ▶ Are the advantages important enough to make an effort to overcome the disadvantages/challenges?
- ▶ What is needed to reduce the impact of the challenges identified?
- ▶ Would the use of a participatory work cycle approach improve the overall status of the mediator and the effectiveness of the work?

Following the discussions, there might be amendments to the lists, which should be made provided that the group agrees to it. The two lists will remain displayed and might be modified during the next activities. During the following modules, references will be made to these lists (for example, how the use of a non-violent communication approach, presented in the next module, can help overcome some of the challenges) (25 minutes).

## Module 7

# Strategies for building trust and consensus

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the second day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To understand the communication approach which can facilitate a successful implementation of the various phases of the work cycle.
2. To develop communication skills adapted for a successful communication with Roma community members and with the staff of the public institutions.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slides and handouts (Handout set 5 – Building confidence and consensus)
  - Handout 5.a – Skills for effective communication
  - Handout 5.b – 8 tips for effective communication

### Description of the module

Participants are put in pairs, sitting with their backs to each other. One member of each pair gets an envelope with pieces of paper of different shapes and colours. The other member gets a white sheet of paper and coloured pencils. The first member of the pair will use the pieces of paper in the envelope to build a complex shape. Then, he/she will describe the shape to the other partner. The partner will have to reproduce the shape on the sheet of paper, based

on the description heard, but without seeing the shape which is described. At the end, the original is compared with the drawing. A simpler version of the exercise can consist in giving the same set of pieces of paper to both partners. In this case, the shape is reconstructed by positioning the pieces of paper, not by drawing (10 minutes).

Based on the exercise, the trainer asks participants to reflect on the communication process. Was the communication effective? What challenges appeared? What facilitated the communication? The trainer gathers the ideas expressed and insists on the importance of explicit and specific communication, together with active listening (10 minutes).

The next part of the module is an input by the trainer, based on a slide presentation, on rules for constructive and non-violent communication (20 minutes).

For the following part (20 minutes), groups of three are formed and members of each group take turns in the following roles:

- ▶ mediator (using non-violent and constructive communication);
- ▶ staff of the institution or member of the Roma community (complaining);
- ▶ observer (checks if the rules introduced are being respected).

In groups resulting from two smaller groups joined together, participants share and discuss what they noticed as observers. The conclusions of each group are presented in plenary. The module will close with a general reflection on the way the non-violent communication approach is useful for the communication of a mediator with the various people involved at local level (30 minutes).

## Module 8

# Preparatory phase and initial assessment in the work of a mediator

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the second day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To provide a detailed description of the preparatory phase and of the initial assessment phase, from the work of the mediators.
2. To practise the skills and approaches required for a successful implementation of these phases.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Work cycle on a flipchart sheet
- ▶ Handout 6 – Guidelines for preparation
- ▶ Handout 7 – Guidelines for initial assessment

### Description of the module

The first part of the session reviews the main elements of the preparatory phase. Since, in most cases, participants will already have work experience as

mediators, some of the tasks envisaged for this phase would probably have been done already.

Under these circumstances, participants will be asked to reflect in groups of four on the way they have made contact with the community, the institution and the other relevant stakeholders and on the way in which they are doing the assessment of the needs of the community. They will also be asked to identify the differences between their current practice and the approach presented in the handout and to consider if this approach could help improve the effectiveness of the work of the mediators. The key conclusions of each group will be presented in plenary.

The remaining part of the session will be a simulation of the meeting of a mediator with the head of the institution in order to develop the agreement suggested in the methodology. This will be based on the fishbowl method, with two participants playing the roles and the others being observers and sitting in a circle surrounding the two players. If time allows, several pairs of participants can take over the role of mediator and head of institution.

A summary of the issues to take into account during this process, resulting from the comments of the observers, will be made by the trainer at the end.

## Module 9

# Participatory, transparent and empowering planning

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the second day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To understand the principles and the practical steps of a participatory planning session involving community members and staff of the institution.
2. To develop the skills which mediators need to facilitate this process successfully.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slide presentation and handout depending on the option chosen (Handout set 8 – Guidelines for participatory planning)
  - Handout 8.a – Planning with GROW
  - Handout 8.b – Checklist for participatory planning
- ▶ Work cycle on a flipchart sheet

### Description of the module

This module will be implemented as a complex simulation. After a brief review of the whole work cycle and

of the main principles of non-violent communication, the trainer introduces the key elements of a participatory planning process. This can be based on the GROW model or on a simple planning process where participants are presented with the conclusions of the initial assessment and are asked how they can contribute to an improvement. For both options, the organisation of the simulation is the same.

Participants will choose or be assigned roles covering the variety of stakeholders involved in this process in real life, as well as several observers.

At different moments in the simulation the trainer will suspend the simulation and engage in a discussion with participants on:

- ▶ the tasks they have corresponding with the planning phase;
- ▶ the way the players use non-violent communication principles;
- ▶ similarities and differences between their local contexts;
- ▶ risks to take into account;
- ▶ the most effective strategies for success.

A final discussion will review the key conclusions and lessons learnt by participants in the exercise, emphasising the elements which contribute to empowerment of the Roma community and increased accountability on the part of the staff of the institution.

## Module 10

# Interaction with members of the Roma communities and facilitation of intercultural communication

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the third day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To develop communication skills adapted for a successful communication with Roma community members.
2. To develop positive attitudes and the ability to overcome simplistic perceptions and prejudice.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slide presentation and handout (Handout 9 – Intercultural communication)

### Description of the module

The trainer makes an introduction about the importance and the challenges of good communication with the members of the Roma community or communities. The trainer will emphasise that in an interaction, behind visible behaviour and behind what is being said, there are reasons, evaluations, decisions, thoughts which might not be so obvious, particularly

when differences in cultural background and/or social status are involved (10 minutes).

Mini Forum Theatre<sup>8</sup> (1 hour): Participants identify situations of miscommunication between Roma community members, the mediator and the staff of public institutions. One situation is selected and participants assume roles related to the situation (including the two parties concerned, but also other relevant stakeholders). The other participants will be the audience. The “actors” act out the situation. After each major scene, the trainer asks the audience about what they think is the problem in the scene and invites them to try out and show, “on stage”, how they would behave to improve the communication. Afterwards the statements and behaviour of the specta(c)tors are analysed. For each of the attempts, actors and members of the audience will express their thoughts and the reasoning behind them.

The last part of the module will be a debriefing focusing on feelings and key ideas learnt and concluding with comments on how the mediators can:

- ▶ react in difficult situations revealed in the play;
- ▶ help Roma community members better convey their message to the staff of public institutions;
- ▶ help the staff of public institutions understand better the underlying assumptions and judgments beneath the behaviour and reactions of the Roma.

8. Forum Theatre is a method developed by Augusto Boal and used as a tool to favour emancipation of disadvantaged communities all over the world via stimulating dialogue about social transformation. The story of the play/scene is developed based on a real life experience of participants. So, the actors are ordinary people playing something directly related to their life, while the audience consists of community members. After the play, the “curinga” (moderator) of the group invites the specta(c)tors to show on stage what they would have done if they had been in the same situation as the protagonist. The “forum” after the play consists of acting interventions on stage and dialogue about the possibility of applying the proposals to change the situation in real life, which might give concrete ideas for the real conflicts on the very next day.

## Module 11

# Interaction with public institutions. Case management

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the third day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To develop skills for effective communication with the staff of public institutions.
2. To develop empathy with the staff of public institutions and ability to identify appropriate strategies.
3. To develop case management skills.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart paper, markers
- ▶ Place to display results
- ▶ Handout 10 – Critical incident analysis form

### Description of the module

This session addresses two different issues and therefore is divided in two parts. If participants need more time for the first part, the part on case management can be combined with the following session, addressing issues specific to the field of work of the mediators.

The first part should start with an introduction about types of interaction between mediators and the staff of the institutions in the framework of the role of the mediators:

- ▶ agreeing on a contract with the head of the institution and initial introduction to the staff;
- ▶ mediator attends staff meetings;
- ▶ mediator as moderator of staff – community meetings (planning, monitoring and evaluation);
- ▶ mediator as facilitator of communication: staff – community member (10 minutes).

This needs to be adapted to the specific work context of the mediators trained, considering the type of institution concerned, and depending also on the type of relationship the mediators have with the institution:

- ▶ if they are employees of that respective institution;
- ▶ if they are employed by an NGO having an agreement with the institution;
- ▶ if they are part of a project, etc.

### Group work

Participants are split into four groups, each two groups with the following tasks:

1. identify expectations of mediators from head and staff of the institution;
2. identify expectations of the head/staff of the institutions from the mediator.

Then, in mixed groups, participants discuss what can be done in order to maintain a positive relationship and to support the work of the mediator, to have realistic expectations and to accomplish them. Results are presented on flipchart paper (30 minutes).

Experience of training shows that this exercise is very important as it stimulates mediators to put themselves in the position of their partners in the institution and also to clarify what they actually expect from the co-operation with them.

An alternative way to organise this part of the session is to make a simulation of situations which involves interaction of the mediator with the head of the institution (other than the discussion in the preparatory phase with the head of the institution, which was done in a previous session), by applying the principles set in the session on building trust and consensus.

For the second part of the session, on case management, the trainer will remind participants that the work of a mediator is divided between addressing specific cases and addressing more structural and more general matters. It should be emphasised again that dealing only with individual cases is not productive; however, having the abilities needed to deal with cases is also essential for a good mediator.

In groups of 4-5, participants choose one specific case from the experience of one of them. The group will analyse the case answering the following questions:

1. How were the principles stated in the Code of Ethics reflected in the way the case was managed?
2. What competences were needed for the mediator to manage the case successfully?
3. What lessons can be drawn from analysing the case in order to improve future management of such cases?

It could be necessary to start the process with an example case presented and analysed together in plenary and once the process is clear, the work can move in small groups. Also, for smaller groups, the whole process can be done using the fishbowl method.

## Module 12

### Topic adapted to the needs of the group

#### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the third day, first training session

#### Objectives

1. To give specific field information on different issues related directly with their field of work (health care, education or employment).
2. To develop the capacity to put their daily experience under a more general framework.
3. To develop planning and management skills for implementing activities to address the issues identified.

#### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slides presentation and handout (Handout 11 – Example of field-specific topic: vaccination of Roma children)
- ▶ Flipcharts and markers

#### Description of the session

The suggested general structure for the module is as follows:

- a. general discussion (to reveal how various participants see the topic);
- b. input (provided by the trainer, by a guest speaker or by trainer supported by an experienced resource person in the group), followed by questions;
- c. group work;
- d. sharing results in plenary and general discussion.

This should, of course, be adapted depending on the concrete situation of the target group and on the availability of a resource person.

The trainer will choose a field-specific issue, which should be one which appeared more frequently during the previous discussions (could be on the list of challenges identified in Module 2). It is also possible to include more issues in the input and to divide the group into subgroups, each dealing with one issue.

Below are examples of how such a module can be organised.

a. The trainer asks participants to explain, in a few words, something from their work related to the topic chosen. Four or five participants can share and the trainer writes the keywords on a flipchart. The trainer will then emphasise the need to analyse current work practice and to take time to think about methods to improve the situation (5 minutes).

b. The input (20-35 minutes):

- ▶ If a guest speaker can be invited, that is a very good option. It can be a specialist on the topic from an institution or an NGO, an experienced mediator, a trainer, a policy maker, etc. The guest speaker has to be prepared in advance, to make sure that they avoid using specialised or over-sophisticated language, that they select information directly relevant to the work of mediators and that the speech will not be longer than 20 minutes. Do not forget to introduce the speaker briefly, showing their competence and thanking them for being there. It is important to ask the speaker to say a few words of appreciation for the work done by mediators and particularly for those, like your participants, who attend training courses and are concerned with improving the quality of their work.
- ▶ If you have a more experienced person in the group, with specific knowledge and practice in the selected topic, they can serve as a resource person and be asked to share the experience with the other participants. The role of the trainer in this case is rather one of a moderator.
- ▶ A trainer can also be the one to deliver the input. Keep it short, and close to the interests of participants.

A question and answer session should follow the input, but should not be of more than 10-15 minutes' duration.

c. Working groups (45 minutes): the participants will split into four working groups with the following tasks:

Groups 1 and 2

- ▶ Design an information/awareness-raising activity, describing methods used and stakeholders to involve.

### Groups 3 and 4

- ▶ Plan an activity aimed at improving the situation of the Roma community, implemented together with the staff of the institution.

d. The results will be discussed in the big group (30 minutes). The trainer should stress the importance of freedom of choice for vaccination and the involvement of the medical staff in the campaign. In practice, often, doctors tend to leave these tasks entirely to health mediators.

### Examples of concrete tasks for groups

Type of mediator	Examples of information activity	Examples of joint activity with the staff
Health	Campaign on the importance of vaccination	Vaccination campaign in the European week of vaccination
Education	Information about registration at school	Activity to prevent dropping-out
Employment	Information on employment and professional development opportunities	Registration in vocational courses

On education, additional examples of topics to address (concerning, for example, the communication of the mediator with children, or ways for involving Roma parents in school activities), as well as elements for input on these topics can be found in the Guide of

Roma School Mediators and Assistants, published by the Council of Europe in the framework of the project "Education of Roma children in Europe" ([www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/schoolMediators\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/schoolMediators_en.asp)).

## Module 13

# Management of conflicts through mediation

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the third day, first training session

### Objectives

1. To identify the various possibilities for addressing a conflict situation and to distinguish mediation from other conflict management strategies.
2. To know the steps and procedures of conflict mediation.
3. To develop conflict management skills.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart paper, markers
- ▶ Place to display results
- ▶ Laptop and video projector
- ▶ Slides presentation and handout (Handout 12 – Conflict management)

### Description of the module

This module can take two shapes, depending on whether participants have knowledge about mediation and experience as mediators or not. This has to be checked with participants prior to the training or during the opening session. Simply being employed as a mediator does not necessarily mean having a clear understanding of mediation as a conflict management approach and appropriate mediation skills.

1. If participants have little or no experience with mediation as a conflict management approach, the module has two parts.

Part 1 focuses on ways to deal with a conflict situation.

The trainer presents with slides some key ideas about conflict management.

In small groups, participants are requested to identify conflict situations from their experience and to associate with each of them the most appropriate attitude

towards conflict and the most relevant conflict management strategies, based on the previous presentation.

Part 2 will focus on mediation.

The trainer reminds participants of the key principles of mediation and develops the steps leading to successful conflict mediation.

In groups of four, participants simulate a mediation process (the two parties, the mediator and an observer). In each group, the roles switch, so that in the end everybody gets to be mediator and observer.

During the last 10 minutes a general discussion allows for reflections and comments on the most interesting elements revealed by the simulations.

2. If the group is experienced with mediation, the module will focus on further developing mediation skills based on an analysis of challenging situations of mediation encountered by participants in their work.

The trainer will briefly remind participants of the key principles and steps of mediation, and will situate mediation in the context of conflict management strategies.

Divided in groups of four, participants will take turns in sharing with group members one experience of mediating a conflict which they found particularly challenging, which taught them something new about mediation, or in which they found an interesting way to respond. It could be a successful mediation, but some lessons can also be drawn from a failed mediation. Participants should be encouraged to think particularly of experiences in which cultural differences or specific cultural practices of the Roma community interfere with the mediation process.

After each presentation, the group analyses the case and identifies key issues which should be considered for a successful mediation of conflicts in an intercultural setting. For each person in the group, the presentation and discussion of the case will be limited to 15 minutes.

The last part of the module will be a discussion with the whole group, based on sharing the results obtained in small groups and on connecting them with the key principles of mediation.

## Module 14

# Tasks for the six months of practice. Expectations of mediators from institutions and local support structures. Local peer help structures

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, first session in the morning of the fourth day, first training session

This session takes place with the mediators only, while the group of local stakeholders invited to attend the last day of training receives background information about the programme in a separate room.

### Objectives

1. To understand the tasks for the six months of practice.
2. To identify the expectations mediators can have from local institutions and other support structures in order to implement the tasks.
3. To understand the benefits of peer support and develop skills for sharing experiences and for asking advice from peers.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart and markers (optional, computer with video projector)
- ▶ Handout 13 – Tasks for the six months of practice
- ▶ Handout 14 – Report form for the six months of practice
- ▶ Handout 15 – Guidelines for peer support groups

### Description of the module

The trainer reminds participants that mediators are asked to implement elements introduced during the training in their practice for six months. A handout with the tasks is given and explained, together with the report form to be used. Clarification questions are answered. The trainer specifies that for the rest of the day there will be several moments to discuss the support that will be provided to each mediator for accomplishing these tasks. Of course, the mediators know that representatives of relevant institutions from their municipalities are being introduced to the programme at the same time (15 minutes).

In groups of four or five, mediators will reflect on the type of support they will need from the representatives

of the institutions which joined for the last day of training. The trainer stresses that these expectations should be related to the tasks and responsibilities of these people and that they should be realistic and achievable with the resources that the institution has or is likely to have in the near future (15 minutes).

Each group will take turns in sharing one expectation and the trainer writes these on a flipchart or on computer (projected on the screen). Only new ideas are added, until all groups finish sharing all the expectations they identified. The list is checked (to make sure it includes only realistic expectations), and similar ideas can be grouped together (15 minutes).

The next part of the module will focus on the role of peer support in improving the motivation of mediators as well as the quality and effectiveness of their work. This will be done by modelling a session of exchange of experiences, followed by a reflection on the process and on how this could be implemented at local level.

The approach recommended is inspired by the Balint Group method and trainers are advised to read some background materials on this topic before the training.

You can mention that a psychologist called Balint realised in the 1950s that providing doctors with opportunities for sharing their feelings and opinions about the relationship with patients regularly can be very useful. This approach can be equally useful for the work of mediators.

Participants are divided into two equal groups, each moderated by a trainer or by one of the more experienced participants. The process starts with the question “Who wants to share a case?” The case is described, with the emphasis not on the technical details but on the relationships with the persons involved. The other group members are asked to give feedback, to ask questions, etc.

During the last 15 minutes of the session a trainer will ask participants to reflect on the process and on the benefits that such a process can bring for their work. A brief discussion can follow about practicalities for arranging such meetings to take place during the following six months, once a month or at least every two months. The trainer writes the key messages that appear from the discussion on a flipchart.

## Module 15

### Information for local stakeholders

#### Duration and place in the programme

■ 1 hour 30 minutes, first session in the morning of the fourth day, first training session

This session takes place in a separate room for the group of local stakeholders invited to attend the last day of training.

#### Objectives

1. To provide background information about the ROMED programme and about the key elements of the approach proposed by the programme to the local stakeholders.
2. To understand the role of the mediator and the type of support needed from other local stakeholders.

#### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Handout 1 – Effective intercultural mediation
- ▶ Handout 4.a – From day-to-day work to participatory planning (containing work cycle)
- ▶ Flipchart and markers

#### Description of the module

After a brief round table of introductions, the trainer gives an overview of the ROMED programme and of its key elements:

- ▶ the approach of effective intercultural mediation;
- ▶ the work cycle approach.

The slide presentations are the same as those used for the respective sessions with the mediators (45 minutes).

In groups of four or five, members of local support groups are asked to reflect on how they (and the institutions and organisations they represent) can help the mediators in their work, in implementing the approach described.

Results are shared by a representative of each group and the session closes with a general discussion. This will stress the key role that local stakeholders have for making the work of mediators effective for the local community.

## Module 16

# Mediator in action: implementation, monitoring and involving key stakeholders

### Duration and place in the programme

■ 1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the fourth day, first training session

This session is a joint session with the mediators and the local support people. The local support people have been informed about the approach of intercultural mediation promoted by ROMED during the morning and they have been able to reflect on the role of the mediator and the support which should be provided.

### Objectives

1. To initiate a team-building process between mediators and members of the local support groups.
2. To prepare mediators for adapting and using some simple tools in their work.
3. To identify the most effective ways to obtain support from various local institutions and organisations.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Flipchart and markers
- ▶ Handout 16 – Tools for implementing and monitoring the work

### Description of the module

Since this is the first joint session of the mediators with the local support people, the first part of the module will focus on establishing a positive and co-operative atmosphere between them. This will be done by using the method of “appreciative inquiry”. Each mediator will sit with the support person (who is normally a representative of the institution he/she is working with, of the municipality, etc.). The mediator is asked to share a positive experience he/she had with the institution. The representative of the institution is asked to share a positive experience with members of the Roma community. Then, each will ask the other for some information: the representative of the institution will ask something about the Roma community, the mediator will ask something about the institution (15 minutes).

For the next part of the module, the trainer reminds participants about the work cycle of the mediator, the tasks of the mediator and the main conclusions from the session on planning. This is followed by an introduction of some simple tools: the diary, the report folder, the list of contacts and the case folder (20 minutes).

In groups of six (three mediators and three support people) participants will list the stakeholders at local level who should be involved in the activities. For each of them, the group will reflect on the most appropriate ways to obtain their support and to motivate them to be actively involved. Each group will share the results in plenary.

## Module 17

# Planning local implementation. Overcoming challenges

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the fourth day, first training session

This is the second joint session with the mediators and the local support people.

### Objectives

1. To anticipate obstacles and finding constructive solutions for overcoming them based on co-operation and support from various stakeholders.
2. To understand the shared responsibility but the key role of the mediator in the implementation of the plan agreed with the school staff and with the community representatives.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart and markers
- ▶ Handout 17 – Personal action plan

### Description of the module

The trainer asks the mediators to get back to the conclusions of the session on planning and to review the types of elements which might be included in their local action plan. Then the trainer introduces the task for group work.

### Step 1

Participants will work in small mixed groups consisting of two mediators and their local support people. Their task is:

- ▶ to draw up a draft action plan based on the concrete situation of the community and including tasks done by the mediator alone, by other stakeholders, both Roma and others, and by the mediator in co-operation with other stakeholders.

### Step 2

Groups are switched, so that each pair works with a pair from a different community. In these new groups, the following structure of interaction will be used:

- ▶ one of the mediators starts by describing how they would implement elements of the plan (e.g. organise informal activity for parents in school in order to improve their perception of the school);
- ▶ the other group members are listening and when they think a challenge could occur, they will have to signal it;
- ▶ all group members reflect on a solution;
- ▶ the other mediator will continue by describing different situations which might occur in implementing the plan (e.g. meet with Roma parents to address situations of drop-out);
- ▶ the cycle continues, making sure that both mediators get to reflect on what is to be done in a balanced way and that everyone in the group is asked to suggest solutions for overcoming obstacles.

This takes in total around 1 hour.

### General discussion (30 minutes)

Participants are asked to share some of the most important elements from their discussions and to reflect on what they have learnt about the potential of peer support, of asking for help in an appropriate way and of motivating various stakeholders to get involved in supporting the tasks set in the mediator's plan.

## Module 18

# Closing and evaluation

### Duration and place in the programme

■ 1 hour, afternoon of the fourth day, first training session

This session is a joint session with the mediators and the local support people.

### Objectives

1. To get feedback from participants about the training session.
2. To create a positive and constructive attitude towards co-operation in the future.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Handout 18 – Evaluation form at the end of the first session

### Description of the module

The trainer starts by reminding participants of the focus on practice of the training programme and the fact that all the topics addressed are meant to contribute to improving the quality and effectiveness of the work of mediators. The trainer will also remind them that during the six months in between the first training session and the second, mediators will integrate in their practice the elements presented in the training session. During all this time, they will need the support of the local stakeholders and they will also be supported by the National Focal Point.

The floor is now given to the representative of the focal point, to present the organisation or institution hosting the focal point and explaining how the mediators can communicate with the respective person or structure.

Both the mediators and the support people are then asked to say a few words about their commitments, hopes and thoughts for the future six months.

Trainers will also say some final words and ask participants to complete the evaluation forms.

# Second training session

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## Module 19

### Review of practical activities

#### Duration and place in the programme

- All of the first day, second training session

#### Objectives

1. To stimulate a joint reflection on the implementation of the work cycle approach during the six months of practice.
2. To provide opportunities for peer learning based on case management analysis.
3. To connect the provisions of the Code of Ethics with the practice of mediators.

#### Resources needed

- ▶ Depending on the method chosen, mainly a place where participants can display their portfolios, possibly also flipchart, paper, markers or computer with video projector

#### Description of the module

This is a session attended jointly by mediators and representatives of local public institutions (at least for the first two or three sessions).

At the end of the first training session participants received three main tasks, related to:

- ▶ implementation of the work cycle approach;
- ▶ reflection on one case chosen from their experience;
- ▶ reflection on the use of the Code of Ethics.

After the opening session (which should include introductions, considering that some of the representatives of public institutions might not be the same as for the last day of the first training session), the morning

should be dedicated to presentations and discussions about the implementation of the work cycle approach.

The first session of the afternoon can be used for reflection on the cases and the last session of the day can be dedicated to the Code of Ethics.

The way to organise the exchanges and discussions will vary considering the size of the group and other specific elements. It is important to avoid long sequences of presentations that are hard to follow and have little learning value. Therefore, for the first part it is preferable to organise presentations in the form of an exhibition or brief comments, or to divide participants into several groups. Interactions between mediators and representatives of public institutions should be encouraged, together with constructive in-depth discussions of sensitive or problematic issues.

The session on case management analysis works well if participants are divided into groups and share their cases, with one case from each group being selected and presented to all participants.

For the session on the Code of Ethics two possibilities are proposed.

The first option is to work in two larger groups, each one moderated by a trainer, with each point of the code projected on the screen and read out loud by a participant and with the request to all participants to share any element from their practice related to that point. It can be a situation where the provision of the Code of Ethics has been successfully applied, or it can be a case where it could or should have been applied but it was not. The trainers can also add questions or examples from practice where elements of the code apply. For some of the points in the code, such as the one concerning respect for cultural differences and traditions, it is possible to skip the discussion, as there will be time to address the issue in depth during the following day.

The second option is with participants divided into five groups. Each of them receives two principles from the Code of Ethics. The group is asked to analyse these principles and to find one example for each of the two from the practice of the mediator which can help them explain the principle to the big group (time for the group work 40 minutes). Back in the plenary participants present the principles of the Code of Ethics and the examples identified by their groups. During the presentations the Code of Ethics is projected so participants can follow it. Clarifications are made

after each of the presentations. Following all group presentations a few debriefing points are discussed:

- ▶ reflecting the relevance of the Code of Ethics for the work of the mediators;
- ▶ issues which come up most often in their work;
- ▶ missing/additional elements which could be proposed.

If this option is chosen, it is essential for the trainers to follow closely the discussions in the small groups and help with questions and comments where blockages or risks of misunderstanding appear.

## Module 20

# Human rights as basis for the work of mediators

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the second day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To improve the mediators' understanding of human rights.
2. To develop awareness that human rights issues are closely related to the life and work of mediators.
3. To draw some conclusions on the importance of integrating the human rights approach in the mediators' work.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart and markers
- ▶ Computer with video projector

#### For Option 1

- ▶ Handout 3.c – Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

#### For Option 2

- ▶ One statement written per flipchart
- ▶ Paper tape to divide the room in two
- ▶ Signs reading "I agree" and "I disagree".

### Description of the module

This session has two parts – practical exercise and theoretical input on human rights. There are two options proposed for the exercise. If the group dynamic allows, it is also possible to consider doing both exercises during the session.

Option 1: Putting rights on the map (adapted from *Compasito*<sup>9</sup>)

This option works well when the group is small, when there are several participants from the same city and if they have limited knowledge about human rights.

In pairs or small groups, participants are asked to draw a map of their city or village, showing the area where they are working as mediators and how it is located with regard to the rest of the locality.

When the maps are ready, participants receive copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and are asked to identify on the map places which are related to specific rights (e.g. the school is connected with the right to education). They can mark on the map the numbers of articles in the Universal Declaration associated with the respective place. They are free to add more places and details to the map if they consider that they are relevant for human rights.

Participants then display and present briefly their maps and the connections they made between places on the map and human rights.

The debriefing can be based on the following questions:

- ▶ Was it difficult to connect places on the map and rights? Why?
- ▶ Are there differences among groups in locating rights on the map?
- ▶ Are there interesting issues revealed by the map in terms of access to rights of the Roma, segregation, etc?
- ▶ Are there fundamental rights missing from the map?
- ▶ What should be added to the map or what should change to ensure equal access to rights for members of the Roma community?

The conclusion should emphasise that human rights are part of our daily life and not remote and abstract concepts. The maps should stay displayed for the remainder of the training session and connections can be made to them during the following modules.

Option 2: Where do you stand? (adapted from COMPASS, see below)

Start the session with a short introduction about the objectives of the session. Then start the exercise. Plan about 50 minutes for the activity and 40 minutes for the input.

### Preparation for the exercise

Divide the room into two parts with the paper tape and stick posters on the opposite sides with the signs reading "I agree" and "I disagree". Write in advance each of the statements on a separate flipchart sheet. Choose a maximum of five statements and prioritise them according to their importance for the session. Below are some examples for statements, but you can also choose others.

<sup>9</sup> www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/.

## Running the exercise

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Ask participants to gather in the middle of the room. Explain that you will be showing them different statements and that they will be asked to take positions on one of the two sides according to whether they agree or disagree. There will be no middle option, so they should have clear positions. Once the positions of the participants are clear they will have the chance to explain why they took their position and must try to convince the participants on the opposite side to join them. The discussion participants can change positions if they change their opinion about the statement. Explain that it is very important that only one person speaks at a time and that everybody listens actively. Ensure that everyone who wants to speak has the chance to do so and at times encourage silent participants to take the floor.

At the end of discussing each statement ask if there are participants who want to change positions and then ask the group to come to the middle again before announcing the new statement.

Plan about 20 minutes for debriefing of the activity.

## Debriefing questions

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- ▶ How did participants feel during the exercise?
- ▶ Were there any questions that people found impossible to answer – either because it was difficult to make up their own mind, or because the question was badly phrased?
- ▶ Why did people change position during the discussions?
- ▶ Were people surprised by the extent of disagreement on the issues?
- ▶ Which rights were addressed during this activity?
- ▶ What did participants learn from this experience?

## Examples of statements

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- ▶ Every person has human rights.
- ▶ The right to access health care is more important than the right to vote.
- ▶ If Roma people want their human rights respected, they should fulfil their civic responsibilities.

- ▶ Roma is a person who identifies as such.
- ▶ Equal treatment means having the same approach to everyone.
- ▶ Cultural differences should always be respected.

## Theoretical input

It would be good if during the theoretical input the facilitator can make a link with the statements and make the necessary clarifications. The structure of the input is proposed in a PowerPoint presentation. It includes a definition of human rights, introducing the generation of rights, the characteristics of human rights and some instruments used by the Council of Europe in promoting human rights relevant to the situation of Roma. A section on the civic responsibilities described in the constitution of the country can also be included.

It is important to clarify the following aspects in the input:

- ▶ that the rights are not conditional on whether the person is complying with his or her civic responsibilities but that human rights also have a dimension of responsibilities. That means that Roma have human rights because they are also humans and that it is the only necessary precondition for that;
- ▶ the characteristics of human rights should be explained and an example of a holistic approach in planning and working on Roma issues should be provided. A reference to statement number 3 can be made;
- ▶ outlining the state's responsibility for ensuring the access of citizens to rights and the role of the mediators in it, especially if they are employed by a public institution;
- ▶ linking the human rights session with other training modules and discussing the need for affirmative action;
- ▶ underlining the importance of having a human rights approach in the work especially when confronting a dilemma, how much to intervene in cultural practices which are contradictory to human rights, and clarifying how much these are cultural.

For further preparation and reference please use COMPASS: Chapter 4 – Background information on human rights, [www.eycb.coe.int/compass/](http://www.eycb.coe.int/compass/).

## Module 21

# Tackling issues of culture and identity in the work of mediators

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, morning of the second day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To make participants aware of some challenges related to issues of identity and culture in their work.
2. To develop their capacity to react in an appropriate way to such issues, in line with the Code of Ethics.
3. To develop their capacity to counteract opposition which they might face to the idea of adapted policies and measures targeting Roma.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart, paper, markers
- ▶ Handout 19 – Tackling issues of culture and identity in the work of mediators
- ▶ A wall visible and accessible to participants
- ▶ Computer with projector
- ▶ Slide presentation with issues of identity and culture

### Description of the module

Make a brief introduction to clarify the terms of cultural identity and cultural differences. Explain them in a way adapted to the participants, with some examples (possibly using relevant pictures) (5 minutes).

In small groups of four or five people, participants are asked to identify from their experience and share among themselves situations when issues related to identity and culture appeared particularly important. Specify how the facts were and how they should have been (20 minutes).

Each group will share briefly some of the examples discussed. While listening, a trainer writes a brief description on a flipchart sheet (20 minutes).

Input by the trainer based on slides, making connections, whenever possible, to the examples presented. Participants are encouraged to comment and discuss each point (20 minutes).

A trainer sticks the myths related to positive action for Roma on the wall and the other distributes papers with answers to these myths. Participants will stand up, read the myths and the statements on their paper and find out to which myth their paper corresponds. If disagreements arise, the whole group is consulted (20 minutes).

Closing remarks about the importance of understanding and managing in an appropriate way issues of identity and culture, also considering the Code of Ethics (5 minutes).

## Module 22

# Tackling sensitive issues in the relationship between public institutions and the Roma community. Responding to discrimination complaints and building confidence through participation

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the second day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To develop the capacity of participants to understand and identify the types of reaction the institutions they are working with have and should have in a situation when a discrimination complaint is received.
2. To stimulate reflection on the way a mediator can contribute to building trust between the community and the institution.
3. To equip participants with a tool for understanding different types of involvement of community members in relation to the institution.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Handout 20 – Tackling sensitive issues in relations of institutions with Roma community
- ▶ Computer with video projector
- ▶ Slide presentation and handout (Handout 21 – The ladder of participation)

### Description of the module

In small groups of four or five, participants receive the first pages of the handout and are asked to read individually and answer the first question in their group (10 minutes).

The groups' answers are collected (5 minutes).

Participants are asked to answer the second set of questions and discuss the answers in their groups (15 minutes).

Groups share key ideas from their discussions (15 minutes).

A trainer presents the ladder of participation (10 minutes). The presentations should be done by starting at the bottom of the ladder and moving upwards and giving brief examples regarding each step of the ladder adapted to the specific work context of the mediators.

In groups, participants answer the questions (15 minutes).

Groups present their conclusions, followed by a general discussion around what the mediator can do to help institution and community to move up the ladder of participation (20 minutes).

## Module 23

# Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the second day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To develop understanding of the benefits and challenges of using a participatory approach to evaluation.
2. To develop skills for planning and conducting a participatory evaluation session.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart, paper, markers
- ▶ Computer, video projector
- ▶ Handout 22 – Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator

### Description of the module

The trainer gives an introduction based on slides about participatory evaluation. This can also be preceded by a brief general discussion based on the questions

“Do you do evaluation in your work?” and “Why?” The trainer can write the answers on a flipchart sheet and refer to them during the presentation.

Participants are divided into four groups, two groups looking at benefits and two looking at the challenges of a participatory evaluation approach. Groups share their key findings and a general discussion follows.

It turns out that benefits are important but there are real challenges that should not be ignored. They can be overcome through good planning.

The next activity is about planning a participatory evaluation session in small groups, following the sequence of questions in the handouts.

Each group presents the results and the other participants are invited to comment. For this activity it is very important that trainers assist the groups during the work to avoid misunderstanding of the task.

The feedback from the trainer is also essential both after each presentation and at the end. If there are groups who did not understand what a plan of participatory evaluation should look like, the trainer will explain, referring to the handouts and giving a concrete example about how it should be done.

## Module 24

# Resources and approaches for improving the work of mediators

### Duration and place in the programme

All morning on the third day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To respond to specific needs mediators might have.
2. To stimulate further peer learning and support.
3. To clarify issues that are still confusing for some members of the group.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Various, depending on the specific method chosen. If a method inspired by Open Space Technology is used, an appropriate place and a wall to post the agenda are needed. If the box questions method is used, a box and pieces of paper will be necessary.

### Description of the module

At the opening session of the second training session, participants should be informed that the morning of the last day is flexible and that they are invited to contribute to it:

- ▶ by addressing questions about issues they have found difficult or they did not understand;
- ▶ by offering to share some specific ideas or experiences from their practice;
- ▶ by submitting a specific case or situation to the attention of their colleagues to get feedback and suggestions;
- ▶ by requesting advice or input on topics they consider useful and that have not been addressed during the training.

They should be reminded of these at different points in the programme and offered a place where they can share questions, proposals, ideas and requests.

If by the end of the second day there are enough elements collected, the morning can be organised based on an adaptation of the Open Space method.

If there are just a few ideas or questions, then the first part of the morning can be used to address them and the second part for an exercise, as follows. If there are no proposals from participants about issues to address, the first part of the morning can be used to clarify issues that trainers have identified as problematic, even if participants did not report them as such.

In order to stimulate participants to express their concerns and the issues they are not confident with, while encouraging a constructive attitude, the following exercise can take place during the second part of the morning.

Each participant receives a small piece of paper and is asked to write a question about the topics addressed in the training, particularly related to something they need clarification about. All papers are then collected in a box. Participants will take turns in extracting one question from the box and reading it out loud to the whole group. Anyone who has an answer is invited to communicate it. Several answers or comments are possible for each question. This goes on until all questions have been dealt with.

Trainers should avoid:

- ▶ spending too much time on one question, by moving on to the next one;
- ▶ a contradictory dialogue between two participants, by asking the other what they think;
- ▶ the same person taking the floor to answer all the questions, by explicitly stating that everybody is expected to contribute;
- ▶ the lack of an answer to one or more questions, by persisting with additional questions or by providing an answer and asking the group's opinion of it.

## Module 25

# Ensuring effective and sustainable impact

### Duration and place in the programme

— 1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the third day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To develop constructive thinking and planning skills of participants.
2. To stimulate positive attitudes towards the future implementation of the elements addressed in the training.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart, paper, markers
- ▶ Computer, video projector
- ▶ Handout 23 – Thinking about the future

### Description of the module

Participants are divided into groups of four or five and asked to respond together to the questions in the handout. If possible, the groupings should take into account the similarities of participants (those who come from the same city or region, those working in the same kind of institutions or communities, etc., should be together).

A representative of each group will then share the main elements of the responses identified.

A general discussion should emphasise how participants should contribute to ensuring a sustainable use in their practice of the ROMED1 approach to mediation.

## Module 26

# Conclusions and evaluation

### Duration and place in the programme

1 hour 30 minutes, afternoon of the third day, second training session

### Objectives

1. To get feedback from participants about the training.
2. To conclude the training process.

### Resources needed

- ▶ Flipchart, paper, markers
- ▶ Handout 24 – Final evaluation form

### Description of the module

This session is similar to the equivalent session at the end of the first training session.

Part III

**Handouts to be used in  
the training or distributed  
after the training sessions**

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# Handout 1

## Effective intercultural mediation

Considering that the aim of ROMED1 is “to improve the quality and effectiveness of the work of school/health/employment mediators, with a view to supporting improved communication and co-operation between Roma and public institutions (school/health-care providers/employment office)”, the first questions to ask are:

- ▶ Why is an improvement needed? and
- ▶ What does effective mediation actually mean?

### Learning from experiences across Europe

- ▶ The employment of people with a Roma background to facilitate the relationship between Roma community members and public institutions is a practice found in many countries.
- ▶ The terminology used, as well as many other aspects (job profile, educational background, professional training, type of contract, etc.), vary widely.
- ▶ In general, the employment of mediators has brought positive (in some cases even spectacular) results: a higher number of Roma have access to education/health care/employment, the institutions have a more adapted way of addressing Roma needs and the mutual relations and perceptions have improved.
- ▶ However, analysis of practices reveals a number of unwanted negative side effects which hinder the effectiveness of the work of the mediators.

The most commonly mentioned negative side effects are:

- ▶ dependency (to the head of the institution, to political influence, to community leaders);
- ▶ assignment of minor tasks, sometimes not included in the job profile, or assignment of tasks which should be performed by other professionals;
- ▶ lack of power, rejection of the mediator by members of the local community and an inferior status in the institution;
- ▶ use of the mediator by the institution to avoid direct contact with community members;

- ▶ all the responsibility is given to the mediator, both by the community (to solve their problems with the institution) and by the institution (to make sure that Roma comply with the rules and procedures);
- ▶ work is organised on a day-by-day basis, is reactive (responding to problems), and not based on a structured planning;
- ▶ sometimes the mediator is evaluated based on fixed indicators (and therefore is working towards the indicators, not necessarily to address the main issues in the community), at other times there is no evaluation.

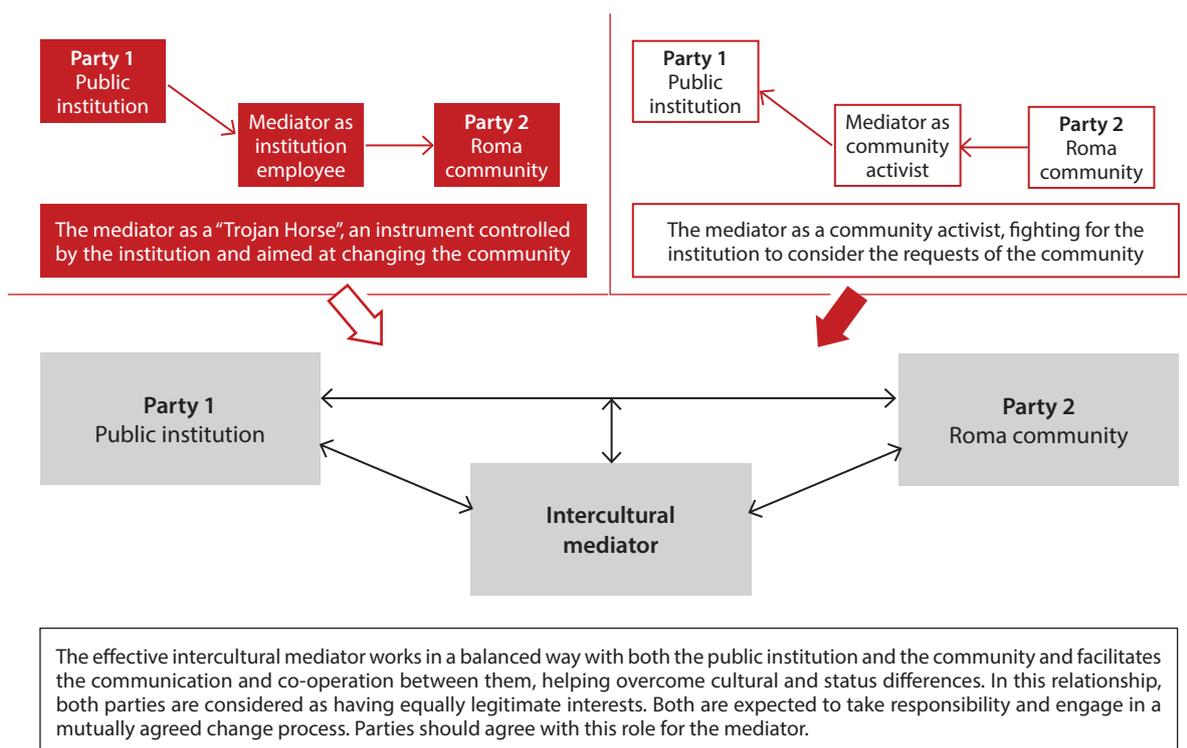
In many cases the success is dependent on the personal qualities of the mediator, on his/her ability to organise the work and to be persuasive. In many other cases the effectiveness of the work of the mediator depends on the personal attitude of the staff and on the leadership of the institution: the leader of the institution might concede to make adjustments to the way procedures are implemented and to pay attention to the specific needs and possibilities of the Roma, as a personal option, not as an explicit and transparent policy.

Three types of approach can be identified in practice:

- ▶ the Trojan Horse: the mediator is an instrument of the institution, having a mission to reach out to the community with the aim of changing its attitudes and behaviours;
- ▶ the community activist: is more a representative of the community, fighting against the institution, for the rights of the Roma;
- ▶ the intercultural mediator: is impartial, with a good knowledge of the “cultural codes” of the community and of the institution, focused on improving communication and co-operation and stimulating both parties to take responsibilities and to be actively involved in a change process.

The training will support the process of moving away from a “Trojan Horse” approach or the perception of the mediator as a community activist towards a real intercultural mediation approach, as illustrated by the diagram below.

**Figure 4 – From a “Trojan Horse” or a community activist to an effective intercultural mediator**



### Towards effective intercultural mediation

The notion of mediation is mainly used currently with two different, but compatible, meanings:

1. in the management of conflicts (as a strategy for dealing with conflicts through the intervention of a so-called “neutral third party”);
2. in intercultural relations, for the prevention of misunderstandings resulting from cultural differences and facilitating the communication between people having different cultural backgrounds and possibly speaking different languages.

In the approach suggested by our training course, we combine elements of these two approaches in the understanding of the work of mediators working with Roma communities.

From the approach of mediation as a conflict management strategy, we can take the following ideas:

- ▶ the mediator works with the agreement and support of the parties;
- ▶ both parties take and share responsibility. Decisions are taken by the parties, not by the mediator, but the mediator contributes and facilitates the process;

- ▶ the mediator’s role is to help the parties communicate and reach a mutually satisfying agreement;
- ▶ in order to fulfil this role, the mediator:
  - must have both parties’ confidence;
  - should support both parties in a balanced way and be recognised by both as impartial;
  - is not the only one responsible for the outcomes: it’s a shared responsibility;
- ▶ the power of the mediator comes from the process and from the agreement of the parties, not from his/her personal abilities to solve problems or persuade.

We want to contribute to providing support for mediators to take the role of an effective intercultural mediator, with a focus on:

- ▶ establishing a relationship of trust and open communication with both Roma and the staff of public institutions;
- ▶ seeking to understand the situation in order to reflect the respective viewpoints and the basis for opinions, feelings, attitudes and actions;
- ▶ establishing contacts between parties by ensuring effective communication;
- ▶ facilitating and/or reinforcing the communication and relations between the Roma communities and the public institutions.

## Effective intercultural mediation

We assume that institutions are open and ready to find adapted solutions. For a mediation process with sustainable impact, it is essential to have the support of the institutions concerned and an agreement of the institution on understanding the role of mediators as described above. For this reason, during the last day of the training representatives of institutions are invited to attend, in order to get to know this approach and to contribute to the planning.

There are advantages if the mediator comes from the Roma community. Having a Roma background can facilitate the process of building a relationship of trust, and the understanding of the points of view, opinions, requests and actions of the members of the Roma community, as well as the appropriate formulation of the messages addressed to Roma.

A major challenge for the work of the mediators relates to the differences in terms of power and status between the Roma communities and institutions. An effective mediation supposes that both parties are treated equally. Thus, despite the unbalanced situation we find in reality, the mediator has to find ways to put both parties at equal level and to emphasise that the needs, interests and viewpoints of both parties have equal legitimacy and importance. A key question is: "How can the mediator be impartial, while at the same time belonging to the Roma community?" Considering the above, being impartial often means for the mediator to be protected against the abuses of the institution, as well as against the pressure of requests on the part of community members.

In several European countries public authorities are employing members of immigrant groups as "intercultural mediators" with the aim of addressing the needs concerning the integration of immigrants. They have a good knowledge of the language and cultural background of the immigrants, as well as of the institutional framework in the host country. Therefore, considering also the needs of many Roma who are not nationals of their country of residence, learning from the experience of intercultural mediators is a useful idea. However, pointing out the differences between the cases of Roma and of immigrants is also important.

From this perspective, an effective mediator should have the following types of competence:

- ▶ core competences:
  - general communication competences;
  - intercultural communication competences;
  - mediation and conflict management competences;

- knowledge and understanding of the socio-cultural and historic background of the communities they are supporting, including understanding of recent migration processes and patterns;
- planning, monitoring and (self-)evaluation competences;
- case management competences;
- ▶ competence on adapting principles, procedures and instruments to a specific work context;
- ▶ specific competences related to the sector targeted (education, health care or employment);
- ▶ competences to deal in an effective way with a number of challenges and sensitive issues:
  - motivating and encouraging Roma people to access the respective institutions, considering the frequent lack of trust in the possibility of improving their life, based on previous negative experiences and general negative attitudes they or their fellows encountered;
  - dealing with sensitive issues relating to identity, ethno-cultural affiliation and intergroup relations and representations;
  - dealing with prejudice and often unconscious discriminatory behaviour of the staff in the institutions, as well as with preconceptions and practices, sometimes rooted in the communities' social and cultural background, which are not compatible with the principles of democracy and human rights;
  - working, in co-operation with other professionals, with people in situations of deep social exclusion and marginalisation;
  - compensating the significant inequalities of status between Roma and the staff in order to establish interactions which are compliant with the principles of mediation, which must ensure equal recognition and concern for the needs and interests of both parties;
  - keeping impartial, while maintaining the trust of both parties and providing the necessary support to the Roma people they are serving;
  - avoiding being assigned tasks which are unrelated to their job description and obtaining professional recognition for the role and achievements as mediator;
  - mobilising additional community and institutional support in order to enhance the effectiveness of their work and achieve stronger improvements in the situation of the people and of the communities they are serving.

## **Keys for effective intercultural mediation**

An effective intercultural mediator shows intercultural sensitivity. That means, among other things, to switch from one “cultural code” to another, to identify and overcome the risks of misunderstanding, by requesting additional information, by rephrasing statements, without changing their meaning, by checking in a culturally appropriate way for opinions and feelings.

A way to deal with the challenges is by using non-violent and constructive communication strategies. They are described and illustrated in another module.

Although the mediator is expected to have an impressive list of competences, a key to success is to trust that positive results can be achieved by using specific tools and engaging in a structured process based on principles of democratic participation (which will be described in another module). This will mean relying on the process rather than the personal qualities of the mediator or of the staff of the institutions.

## Handout 2

# Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination

The work of mediators often implies facing situations when members of the Roma communities are treated in an unfair way or are subject to discrimination. For this reason, mediators need to understand:

- ▶ the meaning of concepts such as stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination and the connection between them;
- ▶ the consequences of prejudice and discrimination against Roma, reflected in different types of responses and behaviours of members of Roma communities;
- ▶ the way to deal with such situations in a manner that will not escalate conflict and will lead to awareness and trust, while clearly stating that discrimination is not acceptable.

This text mainly deals with the first two ideas above, as details of the third is provided in Module 22 – Tackling sensitive issues in the relationship between public institutions and the Roma community. Responding to discrimination complaints and building confidence through participation

### **What is the meaning of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination?**

As has been proved by numerous studies, diversity in general, and cultural diversity in particular, automatically tends to generate tendencies to favour those that are similar and disregard or disfavour those that are different. It also naturally leads to overgeneralisation and to labelling, as well as to perceiving the members of disadvantaged minorities as very similar between themselves, while the members of the dominant group are seen as individuals, with different personalities.

Stereotypes are representations (“pictures in our heads”) that are associated with members of a specific group. They describe characteristics, attributes, and behaviours of members of various groups and are shared by most members of a society and integrated in cultural representations. Although some characteristics rely on “a kernel of truth”, stereotypes are abusive generalisations that simplify the way we describe and understand diversity in society. Some groups have predominantly positive stereotypes, while disadvantaged minorities usually are associated with very negative stereotypes.

Prejudices are attitudes directed towards people because they are members of a specific social group.

They include evaluations of the members of the group, as well as emotions felt when thinking about or interacting with members of that group. Prejudices can also be positive or mixed but in the case of disadvantaged groups they are usually very negative. Racism is a prejudice.

If stereotypes are representations and prejudices are attitudes, discrimination is behaviour: treating some people differently from others based primarily on their belonging to a social group. Ethno-cultural background is only one of the many criteria for discrimination but a very important factor that affects social relations.

Discrimination can occur in interpersonal relations but can also be situated at institutional and cultural levels.

We can speak of direct discrimination, when a person is prevented from accessing rights or is treated in a different way than others, based on their belonging to a group or category of people.

Indirect discrimination appears when a criterion, measure or procedure is defined in an apparently neutral way, but in fact they result in inequalities between individuals and groups.

Some speak also of structural discrimination, which results from the fact that overall resources in society are unevenly distributed and the structures of the society contribute to maintaining such inequalities.

### **Prejudiced people tend to discriminate and rely on stereotypes**

Research has proved that people having strong negative prejudices are more likely to commit acts of discrimination and that they rely more than the others on stereotypes to justify their negative attitudes and behaviours.

Stereotypes are part of the normal functioning of our brain, which has the tendency to categorise elements of reality and simplify the perception. We cannot get rid of stereotypes but we can decide if we rely on them in our attitudes and behaviours towards other people, or not. Having a high level of prejudice does not necessarily mean committing discrimination. Some people maintain strong prejudices but refrain from discriminating for various reasons (they know it's not right, they are afraid of consequences, etc.)

## Racism and discrimination against Roma

Obviously, the stereotype of Roma is predominantly negative in most European societies. This reflects the fact that Roma are a minority with a particular status, at the European level in general. Situated for centuries in an inferior position in society, Roma are often seen as a symbol for cultural difference. This is also the result of century-old exclusionary policies, repression, forced assimilation and even physical annihilation.

This is why the case of Roma also illustrates very well the psycho-sociological scapegoat theory: particularly during periods of change, crisis and uncertainty, the frustration accumulated by the majority is transformed into aggressive attitudes and behaviours towards a minority group that is held responsible for the difficulties that society is facing.

Anti-discrimination legislation and special anti-discrimination bodies exist all over Europe. However, addressing discrimination only from a legal and institutional perspective is not enough. This is because, besides the classical, overt form of discrimination, there are other forms, more subtle and harder to identify, often manifested in an unconscious way. We argue that these can be understood best within the framework offered by the study of racism, even if this concept is still not well accepted as such in the European context. Here are some definitions of racism from different countries:

- ▶ "Conduct or words or practices which disadvantage or advantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin." (England)
- ▶ "Racism is something someone does or says that offends someone else in connection with their colour, background, culture or religion." (USA)
- ▶ "Behaviour or language that makes a person feel unwelcome or marginalised because of their colour, ethnicity, culture, religion or national origin." (Northern Ireland)

Classical, overt racism against Roma, also called anti-Gypsyism, has deep roots in history. It is translated into an explicit negative attitude and discriminatory behaviour against Roma in general or against members of specific subgroups. People that behave in such a way maintain a positive image of them and justify their position by attributing to Roma a set of characteristics that put them in inferiority compared with the other groups in society. Most of them claim that these characterise all Roma, despite some variations of intensity among groups and among persons, and they see them as fixed and impossible to change. Such people believe in genetic transmission of behavioural tendencies and are sceptical about the effectiveness of any educational, socio-economic or other measures aimed at improving the situation of Roma. Their

position could be summarised as: "This is how they are, nothing to be done about it, they will never be like us." It is important to mention, however, that there are very few people who would label themselves as "racist", although most of them would have no difficulty expressing their views in public.

A second category is that of modern or hidden racism. It concerns situations where there is a gap between discourse and behaviour. Such people have a discourse that affirms treating everybody the same, claiming that differences between people are mainly due to circumstances or to various objective factors and that they have little or no relation with the ethnic background. It just happens that some social requirements result in a systematic disadvantage of Roma. They reject policies for disadvantaged minorities and sometimes say that the Roma receive or ask for too much and unjustified special attention is given to them. Their position could be summarised as "I make no difference between Roma and others; for me all are the same, but everybody must comply with the law/regulation/social norms/etc."

The third type of racism is aversive racism, a much more subtle form that is even harder to identify, not only to others, but also in one's own attitudes. This is why it is also even harder to combat. This concerns people who have about them an image of tolerance, who can even express honest opinions in favour of equality among groups and reject racism. However, these persons produce, in an unconscious way, acts of discrimination due to their automatic preference for members of their own group. Thus, discrimination occurs not so much by disadvantaging Roma, than by favouring non-Roma, or by attitudes towards Roma that situate them in an inferior position. This case can be illustrated by statements like "They (the Roma) are human too."

## Consequences of racism and discrimination

The existence in society of tendencies towards discrimination against Roma has several types of consequence: social, economic and psychological. A very destructive negative consequence is the internalisation of the negative image of the Roma and the adoption of negative, anti-social behaviours that also confirm the prediction of the negative stereotype. This generates a vicious circle very hard to overcome and affects deeply the individuals affected by this process.

But, taking into account the predominantly negative image of Roma as a group, how do Roma respond to the need of every person to look for a positive social identity by feeling affiliated with groups with a positive image in society? Research identified several identity-related strategies, both individual and collective.

A frequently used individual strategy is that of leaving the group, of refusing the Roma identity and of assimilation into another group.

Among the collective strategies we can mention:

- ▶ social creativity, referring to the tendency to identify criteria of comparison that put Roma in a favourable situation in relation with other groups (Roma have highly developed practical thinking, they are very creative, they are the best musicians etc.);
- ▶ redefining characteristics, meaning the re-evaluation of some stereotypical characteristics from a perspective that puts them into a positive light (Roma know how to live their life, they are happier; even if they are poor, they feel more free);
- ▶ social competition, consisting in engagement in a process leading to the change of overall relationships between groups by formulating and supporting public requests on this matter.

This last strategy is the one adopted by activists involved in the “Roma movement”, at national and international levels. It is a fact that Roma NGOs have been among the first to speak about discrimination and to raise general awareness on this matter and thus contributed to the recent changes in legislation, public policies and public discourse on discrimination.

Indeed, one can hardly speak about an effective protection against discrimination in the absence of an appropriate institutional framework and in the absence of a clearly anti-discrimination message expressed by public institutions. However important, anti-discrimination legislation and institutions working on combating discrimination are not enough to ensure effective results. The more subtle forms of racism and discrimination can only be influenced through awareness-raising activities at different levels, targeting civil servants, the general public, as well as members of the Roma community, which in most cases are not aware of the mistreatment that they are subject to and of their rights in such situations. Measures taken at the level of different types of public institutions can have a very important impact in this respect.

## The Dosta! campaign

The Council of Europe is strongly engaged in this respect in supporting various local stakeholders in fighting discrimination against Roma, anti-Gypsyism and Romaphobia, by providing information and awareness-raising materials in various languages within a Europe-wide campaign initiated in South-East Europe under the name of Dosta! These materials can be accessed on the Roma portal of the Council of Europe ([www.coe.int/en/web/portal/roma](http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/roma)) and on the Dosta! website ([www.dosta.org](http://www.dosta.org)).

## Mediators facing discrimination and prejudice

In many situations the presence of a mediator, particularly one with a Roma background, has as an immediate effect a decrease in manifested prejudice and discrimination by the staff of the institution. The extent of this effect also depends on the position expressed by the mediator. The Council of Europe's European Training Programme for Mediators has as one of its main objectives the integration of a human rights and anti-discrimination approach in the work of the mediators. However, affirming explicitly that discrimination is not acceptable does not mean that the mediator should take any opportunity to position him/herself in opposition to the staff of the institution and take the role of an activist. As specified in the Code of Ethics, the mediator should make it clear from the start, both to community members and to the staff of the institution, that:

- ▶ his/her job implies reacting without delay in all cases of discrimination, according to procedures defined in advance with the leadership of the institution;
- ▶ signalling cases of discrimination does not mean questioning a person or an institution, but a behaviour, a decision, or a procedure which might need to be revised.

Other elements, related to the management of sensitive cases when an institution is accused of discrimination, will be included in a module of the second training session.

## Handout set 3

# Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights

### Handout 3.a

#### Case studies: critical incidents from the work of mediators

Only one case should be used, depending on the type of mediators. Other similar cases inspired by local reality can be described for the other groups.

#### Health

A Roma girl, 17 years old, mother of two children, only finished primary school. She gets high fever and pain. The family calls an ambulance and the ambulance refuses to come because the neighbourhood in which she lives is famous for being the Gypsy area. Finally the family gets her to the emergency room at the nearest hospital and the doctor gives her some initial treatment but says he cannot keep her for more than three days in the hospital as she is not insured. After her mother-in-law complains, a nurse comes to her to get her hospitalised in another location. She is put in a hospital room which the nurse describes as being "the room for those of your kind".

#### Education

A Roma couple has two sons and one daughter. In mid-September, they returned to their place of birth after spending six months in another country. The older son had accompanied them, while the daughter and the younger son stayed with their grandparents. The mother goes to school to register the younger son in the first grade (as he has just turned 6). She is told that her son will be in a class with only Roma children. The head teacher says that this is because they all registered late for school and that, in any case, it will be easier for the Roma children if they are together. Because the class was set up at the last moment, a converted storage room will be used as a

classroom, and children will have desks left over after the renovation of a few classrooms over the summer. The mother also asks how her older son can return to school to finish compulsory education. She is told that after leaving school last spring, the older son has to repeat the year. The teacher in charge of that class is called but she complains and says that she does not want the boy in her class, as there are already too many pupils, since a group of four new pupils has joined the class from another school. The mother does not mention anything about the daughter, who is 12 years old and is expected to stay home and take over some of the household responsibilities.

#### Employment

A young Roma man comes to the employment office to ask for support in getting a job. He stands in a queue, waiting for his turn to speak to a person at the information desk but, just before his turn comes, another person comes and steps in front, getting an immediate appointment with an adviser. The young Roma asks why that happened and he is told that "he's an engineer and he does not need to wait behind you". Finally, the young Roma gets to speak to an adviser and is asked to provide proof that he is unemployed and a CV. The young Roma does not know what a CV is and has no idea how he can obtain the proof of unemployment. He is embarrassed to admit this and he tells the adviser he will come back with the necessary documents. In fact, he gives up and goes to find a new job on the black market through an influential person recommended by his uncle. After his departure, the adviser says: "Where is my pen? I cannot find it. I'm sure that Gypsy took it from me." At the end of the day he finds his pen under the table.



## Handout 3.c

# Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

### Summary of the preamble

The General Assembly of the United Nations recognises that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world; human rights should be protected by the rule of law; and friendly relations between nations must be fostered. The peoples of the UN have affirmed their faith in human rights, the dignity and the worth of the human person and the equal rights of men and women. They are determined to promote social progress, better standards of life and larger freedom and have promised to promote human rights and a common understanding of these rights.

### Summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. Everyone is free and we should all be treated in the same way.
2. Everyone is equal despite differences in skin colour, sex, religion or language, for example.
3. Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
4. No one has the right to treat you as a slave nor should you make anyone your slave.
5. No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.
6. Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.
7. The law is the same for everyone, it should be applied in the same way to all.
8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their rights are not respected.
9. No one has the right to imprison you unjustly or expel you from your own country.
10. Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial.
11. Everyone should be considered innocent until guilt is proved.
12. Everyone has the right to ask for help if someone tries to harm you, but no one can enter your home, open your letters or bother you or your family without a good reason.
13. Everyone has the right to travel as they wish.
14. Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being persecuted or are in danger of being persecuted.
15. Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish to.
16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.
17. Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.
18. Everyone has the right to practise and observe all aspects of their own religion and change their religion if they want to.
19. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to give and receive information.
20. Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.
21. Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of their country.
22. Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop their skills.
23. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.
24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.
25. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help if they are ill.
26. Everyone has the right to go to school.
27. Everyone has the right to share in their community's cultural life.
28. Everyone must respect the "social order" that is necessary for all these rights to be available.
29. Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.
30. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948, now celebrated as the International Day of Human Rights.

## Handout set 4

# Participatory work cycle management

One of the objectives of the training programme is to support the work of mediators by providing tools for planning and implementation of their activities which encourage democratic participation while generating empowerment of Roma communities and increased accountability of public institutions.

The list of competences that an effective mediator should have includes those related to planning,

monitoring and (self-)evaluation, together with case management competences.

Mediators encounter many challenges in their practice, including that of keeping their day-to-day work responsive to new problems, without structured planning.

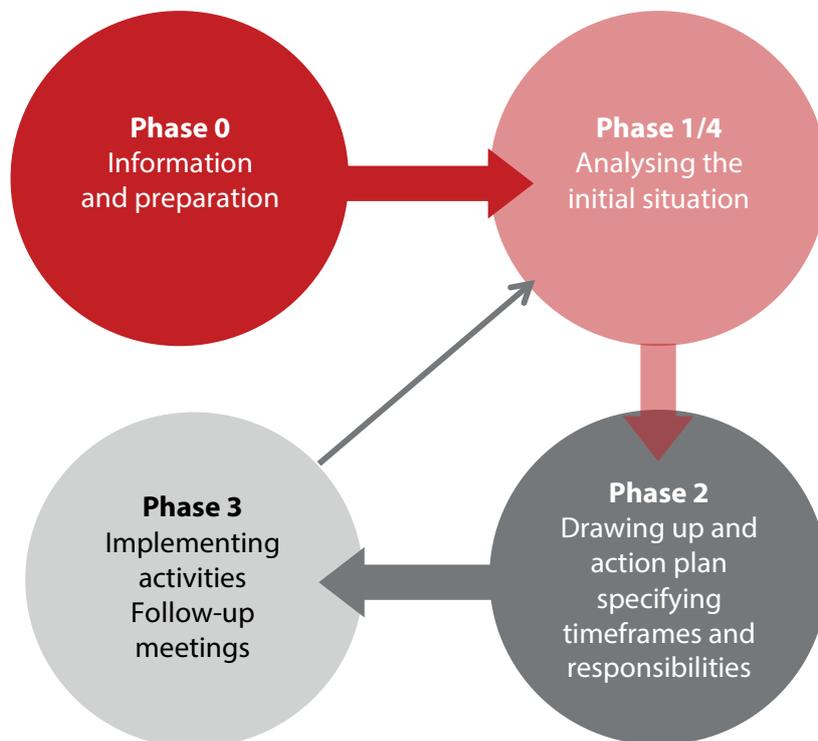
### Handout 4.a

## From day-to-day work to participatory planning

Organising the work in a cycle including a planning process with involvement of various stakeholders (from the Roma side and from the side of the institution) has positive effects:

- ▶ shared responsibility;
- ▶ accountability and transparency;
- ▶ empowerment (of the mediator, of the members of the Roma community and of the staff of the institution).

### A work cycle that enhances empowerment and accountability



## Handout 4.b

### Phase 0: Preparation

This phase is normally done only once, at the start of the work as mediator, or when the work is reorganised based on the cycle above. The goals of this phase are:

- ▶ to identify the key stakeholders (map stakeholders) and make sure they are all aware of the role and tasks of the mediator, as well as of the Code of Ethics of mediators;
- ▶ to establish a clear agreement and work procedures with the head of the institution (as a reference point for future co-operation);
- ▶ to establish a support group consisting of several committed community members and several people from the staff of the institution.

If you start working as a mediator in a specific community this phase is essential, and you will focus initially on making contacts with the relevant stakeholders. However, going through this phase is relevant even if you are an experienced mediator, as using this approach might represent a significant change in the procedures and instruments used for managing your work. Thus, even if everyone knows you as a person, relevant stakeholders should also be informed about the Code of Ethics, the work cycle approach and the fact that they are expected to participate in the process in an active way.

The achievement of the first goal can be done through:

- ▶ attending a staff meeting of the institution and explaining the role and the process envisaged, and informing about the Code of Ethics;
- ▶ meeting key figures in the Roma community to explain what will happen, what could be the

benefits for individuals and for the overall community of an active engagement of Roma, and also clarifying the key elements of the Code of Ethics;

- ▶ meeting any other individuals and representatives of public institutions or NGOs relevant to the work as a mediator, and presenting the same type of information.

**In some cases, the idea of making a clear agreement with the head of the institution may appear obsolete or inappropriate, but in reality can have an important role in ensuring effectiveness of the work. As mentioned before, the support from the institution is fundamental for the success of your work as a mediator. Expressing publicly the commitment for support will result in higher awareness and stronger support. Such an agreement should take into account the administrative background related to your employment as mediator and should be defined jointly, to include:**

- ▶ the responsibilities you have as mediator and the agreement to respect the Code of Ethics;
- ▶ the responsibilities of the institution, explaining what kind of support will be provided and how;
- ▶ communication procedures, concerning how you will interact with the staff of the institution;
- ▶ how to proceed in case of disagreement or problems (including alleged discrimination).

**In order to get a clear commitment from the head of the institution, the key factor is to ask what to include in the document, in order to cover all these elements, not to give the impression of imposing predetermined ideas.**

## Handout 4.c

### Phase 1: Assessment of the situation

The goal of this phase is to review the current situation in terms of access of Roma in the local community to services provided by the institution.

For this purpose, all types of data, from any relevant source, can be useful.

It is important to combine information obtained from the institution with information obtained from the community. Other sources, such as other institutions, NGOs, etc., can also be considered. In all cases, objective data (for example statistics, facts) and subjective data (perceptions, opinions) should be included.

Depending on the possibilities, you can engage in collecting data by using various instruments (for example questionnaires, interview guides), but sometimes it can be enough to have access to data that institutions or specific organisations already have available. Do not hesitate to ask for ideas, suggestions and support from the staff or head of the institution in order to accomplish this task.

It is good to start with a plan for collecting data, but be aware that important additional information can be obtained along the process, making a revision of the plan necessary. For example, one person answering a question might also indicate another person or organisation that possesses important information (snowball method).

Co-operation with specialists from the staff of the institution or from other stakeholders in processing the data collected could be a good solution to get as much as possible from the data and to ensure that it is presented in a way that is easy to understand.

If possible, particularly in cases where sensitive issues are revealed, it could be fundamental to get feedback about data and key opinions, in order to prevent misunderstanding and deformation of the intended message. This can be done easily by presenting the summary or conclusions to those who formulated the opinions or provided the data, and asking them to check and review if necessary.

The final presentation of the data should be clear, easy to follow, but data (both objective and subjective) should be presented in a descriptive way, not judged and interpreted in a specific direction. If several different opinions are obtained on one matter, all opinions should be listed. From the final presentation, all information which would allow for the identification of specific people should be removed or reformulated. This way, the outcome is a set of key ideas and not a list of quotes (for example, "Several members of the community express discontent with the procedures used to contact the head of the institution", instead of "Mr X and Ms Y said that they could not contact the head of the institution to signal their problems."

## Handout 4.d

### Phase 2: Participatory planning

The goal of this phase is to produce in a participatory way, in co-operation with both members of the Roma community and the staff of the public institution, a plan outlining what will be done to improve the situation.

This can be done during a joint meeting with representatives of Roma and the institution. This meeting can be organised inside the institution or in another place available (such as a meeting room provided by the municipality). To explore further how to organise these meetings you can get inspiration from the ROMED2 methodological approach, available on the ROMED website ([www.coe-romed.org](http://www.coe-romed.org)).

Organise this meeting by taking into account the specific needs of both sides (for example, avoid distributing documents which use sophisticated language, if this is hard to understand by some members of the Roma community).

Start the meeting by reminding everyone of some basic principles:

- ▶ all opinions are important – everyone has an equal right to speak and ask for clarification;
- ▶ take a constructive approach – avoid personal confrontation and focus on solutions, not on identifying “who is to blame”;
- ▶ decisions should be made by consensus, disagreements should be explained, etc.

Also remind people of the expected outcome of the meeting and insist on the idea of shared responsibility.

One useful method to use in order to obtain an effective plan is the GROW method (initials from Goals, Reality, Obstacles/Options and Way forward). Details about the method are provided in Handout 8.a, below. If appropriate, a simplified version of the method can be used.

In any case, the discussion on what is to be done starts from sharing the results of the assessment, without insisting on who said what, just summarising the main ideas.

Ask what each participant wants to change and what each individual is ready to contribute. Record all proposals and ideas but insist on the fact that it is preferable to focus on the area of responsibility of those who participate (not make a plan about what others should do but a plan about what group members commit themselves to).

Give feedback. At the same time, make sure everybody understands by rephrasing, if necessary, participants’ contributions and facilitate agreement through consensus and shared commitment. Your personal example is essential in order to achieve this. If you show personal commitment and include in the plan actions which you will carry out, others might get motivated to add issues under their responsibility.

Make all commitments public (communicate the plan which results in an appropriate way for each category of audience).

## Handout 4.e

### Phase 3: Implementation

The goal of this phase is to put in practice the commitments formulated in the plan.

From your perspective, as a mediator, this consists of the following:

- ▶ you do your own work (information, case management, managing conflicts, facilitate access and contact between the Roma and the institution, etc.), as specified in the plan and according to the specific needs at local level;
- ▶ monitor the commitments of the others included in the work plan by:
  - asking: “How is it going?” “Can I help?” “Can we get extra help?”
  - acknowledging success. “Great!” “Thank you!” “Congratulations!”
- ▶ make progress public;
- ▶ make sure that all stakeholders are informed about advancements in the implementation of the plan, about what you do, your own achievements and challenges, but also about what all

other people and institutions involved are doing. This is a major tool for motivating everyone to keep to the commitments and contribute to improving the situation.

The monitoring can also imply organising monitoring meetings, with relevant stakeholders. Monitoring meetings should not be too frequent, in order to allow for enough time to record some progress and to avoid taking too much time from those concerned.

Having separate monitoring meetings with community members and with representatives of the institution can also be a good option. In this case, you will start by informing what “the others” have been doing, underlining progress and successes, and then ask participants to present what they are doing. This option has the advantage that you can address each party in a language and format that is more familiar to them.

If a joint monitoring meeting is organised, the same concerns as for the planning meeting will apply.

## Handout 4.f

### Phase 4: Evaluation

The goal of this phase is to check what has been achieved and to review the situation at the end of a work cycle, in order to set the basis for the start of a new cycle.

The evaluation process should also be participatory and constructive. All the ideas and principles mentioned for the initial assessment, planning and monitoring should be taken into account.

Two approaches should be simultaneously envisaged:

- ▶ we need to know what did not work, so as to correct it in the future;
- ▶ we need to know what worked, to reflect how to have more of that for more people.

The evaluation process can be organised as a joint meeting, similar to the others mentioned above, but it can also be preceded by a phase where you collect information in a confidential way from various stakeholders. This can include asking beneficiaries and staff of the institution how the work done has affected their mutual perceptions. It might also be appropriate to apply the same methods (and use the same instruments) as in the initial assessment phase.

Your task is not to propose conclusions but to record input from participants and let them formulate the conclusions.

The conclusions of the evaluation should also be communicated to the community members, to the staff of the institution and to other relevant stakeholders.

## Handout set 5

# Building confidence and consensus

### Handout 5.a

## Skills for effective communication

### Key approaches

Refer to the tasks and the process: at all times it is very effective if you specify that what you are doing is not just your own decision but that it is your job to follow a sequence of tasks in a specific way. This way, a lot of opposition and resistance will fade away. The most effective is if you ask explicitly for support from various stakeholders (Roma, institution, etc.): "I have this task to perform, I've got some guidelines I need to follow but I would appreciate your advice. How do you think I should proceed?" Such an approach will immediately create a positive relationship, empathy and support.

Refer to previous agreements: at various points you had agreements with the various stakeholders. Write down these agreements in a way that is visible to those concerned and if possible check with them if you understood correctly. You may, later on, if the person concerned does not seem to keep the agreement, open your diary and say: "I see here that we agreed to do this. Is it OK to keep it like this, or do you want to discuss it again? Can I help to achieve this?" When you do something based on a previous agreement, it's good to specify that: "As we agreed, I am now ...".

Show trust and build trust: showing that you trust people and maintaining a positive attitude towards them will automatically tend to generate a similar positive response. On the contrary, demonstrating suspicion and lack of trust creates the risk of a negative response.

Balance confidentiality with transparency: on the one hand, keeping strict confidentiality when it comes to personal issues, in accordance with the Code of Ethics, is a very good way to gain the trust of the people you are working with. On the other hand, stimulating a transparent process is also very important for achieving success. The work cycle approach described before cannot work if only the mediator has access to information. It has to be an open and participatory process in which all those concerned should have an active role and have access to information. The solution is thus to obtain a balance between confidentiality at the personal level and transparency at the public level

and to make sure that the information made public and discussed is not affecting specific individuals in a negative way.

Develop effective communication skills: this implies, among other things:

- ▶ developing active listening skills and skills for giving constructive feedback;
- ▶ use of a constructive approach in communication and avoiding labelling;
- ▶ use of the "non-violent communication" approach.

### Active listening

#### Pay attention

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Give the speaker your undivided attention and acknowledge the message. Be aware that what is not said also speaks volumes:

- ▶ Look at the speaker directly.
- ▶ Put aside distracting thoughts. Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
- ▶ Avoid being distracted by environmental factors.
- ▶ "Listen" to the speaker's body language.
- ▶ Refrain from side conversations when listening in a group setting.

#### Show that you are listening

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Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention:

- ▶ Nod occasionally.
- ▶ Smile and use other facial expressions.
- ▶ Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.
- ▶ Encourage the speaker to continue by making small verbal comments.

## Provide feedback

Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to understand what is being said. This may require you to reflect what is being said and ask questions.

- ▶ Reflect what has been said by paraphrasing. "What I'm hearing is ..." and "Sounds like you are saying ..." are great ways to reflect back.
- ▶ Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say ...?" "Is this what you mean?"
- ▶ Summarise the speaker's comments periodically.
- ▶ Three rules for providing effective feedback about someone's actions:
  - Don't blame them.
  - Ask what is going well.
  - Ask what needs to go better.

## Constructive communication

- ▶ Destructive communication is not only ineffective, but also harms relationships.
- ▶ Follow some simple but important rules to achieve constructive communication.

## 1. Transmit the entire message using non-violent communication

A theory developed by Marshall B Rosenberg emphasises the distinction between:

- ▶ observations;
- ▶ feelings;
- ▶ needs; and
- ▶ requests.

How?

- ▶ to observe without evaluation, judgment or analysis;
- ▶ to express feelings which these observations evoke;
- ▶ to express needs connected with these feelings;
- ▶ to make a specific request of another person to help meet an unmet need.

Skills of non-violent communication:

- ▶ differentiating observation from evaluation, being able to carefully observe what is happening free of evaluation, and to specify behaviours and conditions that are affecting us;
- ▶ differentiating feeling from thinking, being able to identify and express internal feeling states in a way that does not imply judgment, criticism or blame;

- ▶ connecting with the universal human needs/values (for example sustenance, trust, understanding) in us that are being met or not met in relation to what is happening and how we are feeling; and
- ▶ requesting what we would like in a way that clearly and specifically states what we do want (rather than what we don't want), and that is truly a request and not a demand (that is attempting to motivate, however subtly, out of fear, guilt, shame, obligation, etc., rather than out of willingness and compassionate giving).

These non-violent communication skills can be developed through practice, observation of the way others communicate and self-reflection on our own communication style.

## 2. Use I-messages instead of You-messages

You-messages sound blaming and accusatory. For example:

- ▶ You-message: "You are late for the meeting again."
- ▶ I-message: "When you come late, I feel confused and don't know if we should wait or start without you."
- ▶ "When you ... I feel ..."

## 3. Pay attention to your emotions and avoid becoming overwhelmed; don't use your feelings as weapons and resolve negative feelings

Just describe what you are feeling as objectively as possible, not aggressively. Be as specific as possible and keep your voice under control. For example:

- ▶ Objective: "I felt really hurt when you said that I probably wouldn't be able to accomplish this task."
- ▶ Aggressive (yelling): "You are such an idiot! How dare you insult me like that!"

If you are calm, you are less likely to say things you'll later regret, things that could be destructive to your relationship. You will be less likely to become defensive and shut your partner out. Examples of ways to calm yourself down and avoid getting carried away with emotion include the following:

- ▶ Pay attention to your physical responses. Is your heart racing? Are you breathing faster? If you are, take a time-out.
- ▶ Leave the room. Take a walk. Do something relaxing. Listen to music or do relaxation exercises.
- ▶ Make a conscious effort to calm yourself down. Say things to yourself like the following:
  - "I'm very upset right now, but it's OK, it will pass."
  - "Even though we disagree, we still have a good relationship."
  - "We can work this out. We're a team."

- ▶ If you have bad feelings about someone, take steps to resolve them. Don't let them grow into feelings of contempt. When you engage in behaviour (verbal or non-verbal) that conveys a lack of respect, you are placing your relationship with that person in serious danger. This includes obvious abuse, insults, and name-calling.

#### **4. Use specific language and watch out for mixed messages**

When you have a complaint, be specific. For example:

- ▶ "I'm upset that you did not inform me about what happened"

is clearer than saying,

- ▶ "Thanks for ignoring me again."

The first statement is less likely to produce defensiveness and leaves little room for misunderstanding.

Sometimes, a message can have a secondary meaning, other than the one communicated with the words only. By the way words are pronounced, by the attitude, or non-verbal behaviour, you can send mixed messages, which can often be contradictory, generate confusion and break the trust.

Keep your statements clean, avoiding the temptation to mix compliments and complaints.

#### **5. Focus on the problem, not the person**

- ▶ Consider how different these two statements sound:
  - "You are so unreliable."
  - "I wish you would be on time for the meetings."
- ▶ Attacking someone's personality or character – rather than a specific behaviour – is different from simply expressing a complaint. A complaint focuses on a specific action. Criticism is more blaming and more global. It sounds like this: "You always do this wrong. Can't you do anything right?"

#### **6. Stop bringing up ancient history**

- ▶ It's more constructive to focus on the issue at hand, not bring up past hurts. When you are upset and add past issues to the discussion, it can only escalate the conflict.
- ▶ It feels unfair and can never be productive. If you still have feelings about past issues, it is important

to resolve them and move on, not use them as weapons every time you have a disagreement.

#### **7. Pay attention to your body language**

- ▶ Your words are only part of the message you communicate. If you say "How nice to see you" while frowning, your message becomes unclear. Think about the message you want to convey and be sure that your body is in harmony with it. Watch out for things like these:
  - rolling your eyes;
  - crossing your legs and arms;
  - tapping your foot;
  - clenching your teeth.

#### **8. Don't be defensive and don't shut down**

- ▶ It is understandable to react defensively when you are in a conflict situation, but it can be dangerous. Defensiveness tends to escalate the conflict and does nothing to help resolve it. The following are some examples of defensive behaviour:
  - denying responsibility ("I did not!");
  - making excuses ("I couldn't help it ...");
  - ignoring what the other says and throwing a complaint back ("Yeah, well, what about the things you did yesterday?");
  - saying "Yes, but ...";
  - rolling your eyes or making a face;
  - refusing to communicate, storming out of the room, or any kind of withdrawing action has only negative consequences.
- ▶ When a person is stonewalling, communication is impossible because he or she is refusing to participate. Stonewalling is very damaging to a relationship or a team, particularly when it becomes a regular pattern of communication.

Effects of constructive and non-violent communication:

- ▶ By using these suggestions in communication systematically, you will be able to develop and maintain a relationship based on mutual trust with all those you are working with and, on this basis, you have greater chances to facilitate reaching a consensus, even if perspectives on the situation can be initially very different.

## Handout 5.b

### 8 tips for effective communication

#### **1. Communicate the entire message with non-violent communication**

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- ▶ observation without evaluation, judgment or analysis;
- ▶ interpretation: your own thoughts, opinions and beliefs;
- ▶ emotions: descriptions of your feelings;
- ▶ needs: a specific request of what you need or want from the other person.

#### **2. Use I-messages instead of You-messages**

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- ▶ You-messages sound blaming and accusatory.

#### **3. Pay attention to your emotions and avoid becoming overwhelmed; don't use your feelings as weapons and resolve negative feelings**

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- ▶ Just describe what you are feeling as objectively as possible, not aggressively. Be as specific as possible and keep your voice under control.
- ▶ If you have bad feelings about someone, take steps to resolve them. Don't let them grow into feelings of contempt.

#### **4. Use specific language and watch out for mixed messages**

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- ▶ Keep your statements clean, avoiding the temptation to mix compliments and complaints.

#### **5. Focus on the problem, not the person**

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- ▶ Attacking someone's personality or character – rather than a specific behaviour – is different from simply expressing a complaint.

#### **6. Stop bringing up ancient history**

---

- ▶ It's more constructive to focus on the issue at hand, not bring up past hurts. When you are upset and add past issues to the discussion, it can only escalate the conflict.

#### **7. Pay attention to your body language**

---

- ▶ Your words are only part of the message you communicate.

#### **8. Don't be defensive and don't shut down**

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- ▶ It is understandable to react defensively when you are in a conflict situation, but it can be dangerous. Defensiveness tends to escalate the conflict and does nothing to help resolve it.

# Handout 6

## Guidelines for preparation

When this phase is completed you will have:

- ▶ a list of contacts for people who should be involved in your work (from the Roma community, from the institution you are working with, from other institutions and organisations);
- ▶ confidence that all these people know who you are, what your role is, what the requirements of the Code of Ethics are and what you expect from them;
- ▶ a clear (preferably written) agreement with the head of the institution, specifying:
  - the responsibilities you have as mediator and the agreement to respect the Code of Ethics;
  - the responsibilities of the institution, explaining what kind of support will be provided and how;
  - communication procedures, concerning how you will interact with the staff of the institution;
  - how to proceed in cases of disagreement or problems (including alleged discrimination by the staff of the institution).

**A very good way to get these done is by asking for suggestions and support. This will also build a positive relationship.**

**1. Information about the people in the Roma community who have influence and are likely to support your work (or who you would prefer not to oppose your work) can be obtained from:**

- different members of the Roma community;
- staff of the institutions which are interacting with Roma;
- Roma NGOs;
- etc.

**2. The presentation of your role, tasks and Code of Ethics can be done:**

- in individual and group informal discussions with community members and leaders;
- by joining some events or projects organised by Roma NGOs;
- by attending meetings of the staff of the institution;
- by displaying information in places accessible to the staff of the institution you are working with;
- by writing to or by arranging meetings at the other relevant institutions and organisations.

**3. The agreement with the head of the institution can be done best through a direct discussion. This can also be done in a few steps:**

- make an appointment;
- present the requirements (what the agreement should include and what the given elements concerning your job are) and explain that it's part of your job to reach the agreement;
- ask for suggestions and write them down;
- if you disagree, explain why in a positive way, asking how to deal with different constraints and priorities;
- make suggestions of your own but ask for feedback about them;
- make sure that both you and the head of the institution have a copy of the final version of the agreement.

# Handout 7

## Guidelines for initial assessment

You will have accomplished this phase when you have enough information, from a variety of sources, to move on to the participatory planning phase.

### 1. Plan the assessment

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- ▶ What type of information do you need? Where can you get the information? What do you need to access the information? How much time do you need? How do you organise the process – is there a desirable order of accessing sources of information or can you advance in parallel with several sources?

### 2. Collect data

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- ▶ Interact with the different sources to obtain information. The strategy to approach should be adapted (it's one thing to ask for statistical data from an institution; it's another to gather opinions from Roma beneficiaries of the institution). On all occasions ask people you interact with to suggest other people to talk to and indicate other relevant data or sources of data.

### 3. Organise the information

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- ▶ A simple accumulation of data is meaningless and useless if data is not organised. Imagine that you need to present the main elements of the results in a brief presentation, in an accessible language, during a planning meeting. What would be the most important ideas you want to convey? Ask for support in processing and organising data from various people (such as people in NGOs, staff of institution, students, volunteers, etc.) but make sure they do not have access to personal data which should remain confidential.

### Checklist

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- Do you have both objective data (statistics, facts) and subjective data (perceptions, opinions)?
- Do you have data reflecting positions and opinions of community members?
- Do you have data reflecting positions and opinions of the staff of the institution?
- Is there enough data to understand the types of problem and the extension of the problems?
- Are the key results obtained formulated in an understandable way?

## Handout set 8

# Guidelines for participatory planning

The goal of this phase is to produce in a participatory way, in co-operation with both members of Roma community and the staff of the public institution, a plan outlining what will be done to improve the situation.

This can be done during a joint meeting with representatives of Roma and the institution. This meeting can be organised inside the institution or in another place available (such as a meeting room provided by the municipality).

Organise this meeting by taking into account the specific needs of both sides (for example, avoid distributing documents which use sophisticated language if some members of the Roma community may have difficulty understanding them).

Start the meeting by reminding everyone of some basic principles:

- ▶ all opinions are important – everyone has an equal right to speak and ask for clarification;
- ▶ take a constructive approach – avoid personal confrontation and focus on solutions, not on identifying “who is to blame”;
- ▶ decisions should be made by consensus, disagreements should be explained, etc.

Also remind people of the expected outcome of the meeting and insist on the idea of shared responsibility.

One useful method to use in order to obtain an effective plan is the GROW method (initials from Goals, Reality, Obstacles/Options and Way forward). Details about the method are provided in Handout 8.a, below. If appropriate, a simplified version of the method can be used.

In any case, the discussion on what is to be done will start from sharing the results of the assessment, without insisting on who said what, just summarising the main ideas.

Ask what each participant wants to change and what each is ready to contribute. Record all proposals and ideas but insist on the fact that it is preferable to focus on the area of responsibility of those who participate (not make a plan about what others should do but rather a plan about what group members commit themselves to).

Give feedback, rephrasing, if necessary, what participants are saying, in order to make sure everybody understands, and facilitate reaching agreement through consensus and shared commitment. In order to achieve this, your personal example is essential. If you show personal commitment and include in the plan actions which you will carry out, others might get motivated to add issues under their responsibility.

Make all commitments public (communicate the plan which results in an appropriate way for each category of audience).

## Handout 8.a

### Planning with GROW

GROW is a model used to structure planning and is also very useful in the implementation phase. It fits well with the idea of engaging various stakeholders in a participatory planning process for improving the access of Roma to public services.

<b>G</b>	Goal	This is the end point, the situation seen as desirable by all those involved. The goal has to be defined in such a way that it is very clear when it has been achieved.
<b>R</b>	Reality	This shows how far the current situation is from the goal that was set. Maybe some progress has been made in the past, but improvement is still needed if there is a difference between the current situation and when the goal will have been reached.
<b>O</b>	Obstacles	Obstacles prevent the community and the institution from reaching the goal. If there were no obstacles, you would have already reached the goal.
	Options	Once obstacles have been identified you need to find ways of dealing with them in order to make progress. These are the options.
<b>W</b>	Way forward	The options then need to be converted into actions which need to be taken to reach the goal. These are the way forward.

#### Goal

The first step is to establish and agree the goal. This answers the question "What do I want to achieve?" Goals are also known as objectives, key results, targets, performance outcomes, etc. Goals should be SMART:

- ▶ **S**pecific (clear and well-defined);
- ▶ **M**easurable;
- ▶ **A**chievable;
- ▶ **R**elevant; and
- ▶ **T**imely (include time limits, deadline).

#### Examples of goals

Less clear	Clarified (SMART)
To improve education/ employment/ health of Roma	To improve the results in school / access to career counselling / information on family planning of Roma by 30% by 15 June
To establish better communication between the institution and Roma	To have a group of at least 10 members of the Roma community regularly involved in joint quarterly meetings with the staff of the institutions

#### Reality

The next stage is to examine the current reality. If the goal statement tells where you want to go, the reality check describes the starting position. The gap between these two then constitutes the work that is to be done. It is a trap to think that the work is relatively easy, and that you are closer to the goal than you think. It is also a trap to think that it is too far away and out of sight.

The work done during the phase of initial assessment will normally provide you with a clear description of the current situation, including, as appropriate, relationships, attitudes, skills, processes and so on.

On this basis, you can now work with the group of stakeholders to get a shared understanding of the current reality by asking questions like:

- ▶ What is going on right now that illustrates that we have an issue or a problem?
- ▶ What is happening, what is missing from the current situation?
- ▶ What is happening now that is good and should be retained to contribute to achieving the goal?
- ▶ What has been done so far to improve things?
- ▶ What were the results from doing these things?
- ▶ What resources are available?
- ▶ What other resources will be needed?

Record all the answers you get and then check with the rest of the group involved if they agree or if they want to rephrase, add, change, etc.

The final step is to look back to your goal: is it still relevant or has it changed? Make any changes or adjustments, if needed.

## Obstacles

There will almost certainly be obstacles stopping you getting from where you are now to where you want to be. If there were no obstacles you would already have reached your goal. The key is to define your obstacles as factually as possible rather than getting lost in judgments or beliefs about the situation.

It is important to include any obstacles that stand in your way. At this stage, don't consider ways to overcome them. Think of this as an exercise for someone else.

What obstacles or possible barriers are in your way that prevent or hinder you from moving forward?

## Options

When you know where you want to go (goals) and where you are (reality), you can analyse possibilities about ways of getting from one to the other, taking into account the obstacles identified.

A common approach is to look for the "one right way". In reality, there are often many different ways to get to where you want to go, and a creative "options" approach can come up with some very useful ideas.

Options start with strategic big-picture overall approaches and then descend into the tactical and operational detail. Comparing options should start at the high level in order to save time. The few options selected as most appropriate should be considered in greater detail. The time, cost and risks of each option may be compared when choosing the main option to follow. Other options may still be kept on the back burner in case the main option becomes troublesome.

Options are about what you could do, not necessarily about what you will do. So, let your mind run free. Brainstorm all the possibilities of what you might do in relation to this issue or goal. Keep your ideas free from judgment or criticism. Try to think of 10 ideas, even if some of them appear too outrageous or impossible. One of them might spark another thought that gives you a brilliant idea. So, remember you are looking for a first step, not just one idea.

Some of the questions you can ask include:

- ▶ How could we go about doing this?
- ▶ How else could we go about doing it?
- ▶ What could go wrong with that approach? What are the risks in each option?

- ▶ How long would it take?
- ▶ What resources and expenditure would be needed?
- ▶ What criteria will you use to select the main option?

One possibility is to categorise options using the following diagram:

	Low anticipated impact	High anticipated impact
Hard to achieve with existing resources		
Achievable with existing resources		

Of course, you would choose from the options which provide both high anticipated impact and are achievable with resources which are or can be made available.

## Way forward

Finally, now that you have a plan of how to get from reality to goals, the question is how to get everyone involved and motivated.

Questions that can help include:

- ▶ Are you ready for this? Do you find this rewarding from a personal or professional perspective?
- ▶ Is there anything stopping you from committing wholeheartedly to this?
- ▶ Who else do you need to get support from?
- ▶ What rewards for completion would help?
- ▶ How would you proceed to ensure both commitment of group members and effectiveness of your actions towards the goal?

Check if the plan obtained is a balanced one, including your work as a mediator, as well as commitments from members of the Roma community and from the staff of the institution. An unbalanced plan risks reducing motivation for change and will not be effective. Ask group members if they think the plan is fair, balanced and realistic. If not, ask them how it can be improved.

The table below can be used to guide the participatory planning process. It will help make the connections between the different elements of the model and will result in a clear list of tasks and responsibilities taken by those involved.

**Table 1 – Steps of the participatory planning process**

Steps	0. Brainstorming	1. Goals	2. Reality	3. Obstacles	4. Options	5. Way forward	6. Task list			
Description of each step	All participants note their own ideas about the actual situation of Roma in the institution	Based on the brainstorming, all participants contribute their opinion on what concrete changes should be targeted in the next months	All participants share their description of the actual situation regarding the concrete goals	All participants describe what they think is an obstacle to moving from the current reality to the goal	Each participant contributes his/her own idea, how he/she personally could contribute to overcome the obstacles: the ideas are not discussed	The ideas can be discussed and each participant commits him/herself at least for one of the options proposed by him/herself	The task lists contains tasks for each of the participants, which were set in a participatory way and represent the spirit of common responsibility	What?	Who?	By when?
What do we do in this step?	What problems is the Roma community facing?	Find common goals for the participatory planning	Find a common description of the reality	The obstacles show what prevents us from reaching the goals considering the current reality	Stakeholder 1	Which of the ideas are realistically doable by the next meeting and promise to overcome the obstacles?				
		Goal 1		1.						
				2.						
				3.						
		Goal 2								
			1.							
			2.							
			3.							

## Handout 8.b

### Checklist for participatory planning

#### Guidelines for participatory planning

When this phase is achieved, you will have:

- ▶ a plan of actions to be done by:
  - yourself, as a mediator;
  - staff and management of the institution;
  - members of the Roma community;
  - possibly, other stakeholders;
- ▶ the plan known by all relevant stakeholders.

The key element is the joint meeting with representatives of Roma and the institution.

Checklist:

- ▶ Is the meeting properly prepared?
  - Do key people know about it and have they confirmed participation?
- Is the meeting location appropriate?
- If special access procedures are needed, have they been arranged?
- Are possible presentation materials available and formulated in a way accessible to both institutional and Roma participants?
- ▶ Are you clear about the procedure to follow?
  - opening;
  - clarify shared goal(s);
  - review reality (based on data collected during assessment phase);
  - identify obstacles and options to overcome them;
  - get input on what to do to improve;
  - assemble the plan;
  - make the plan public.

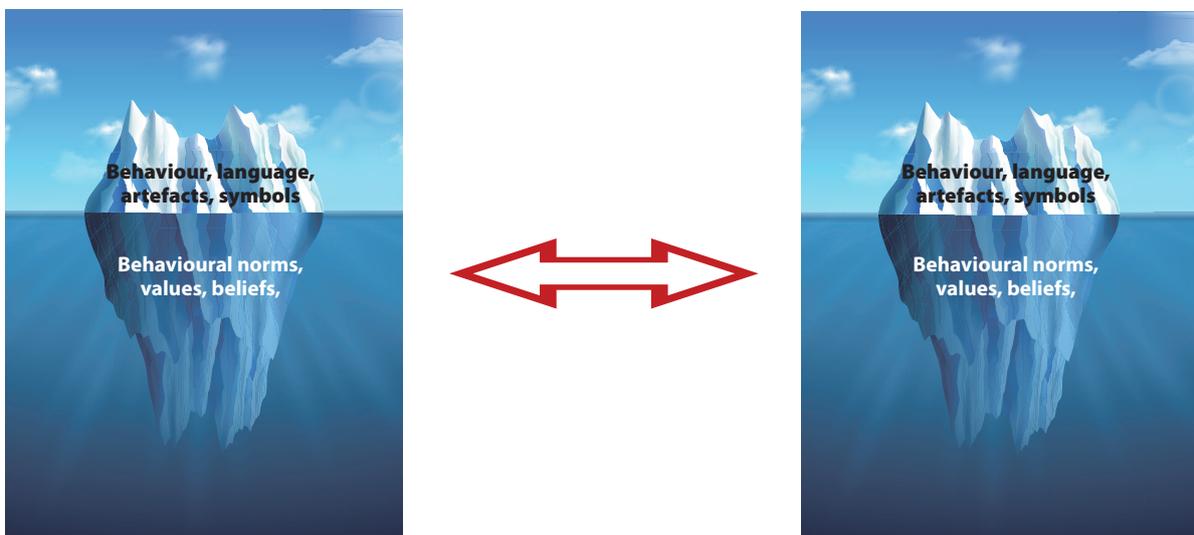
## Handout 9

# Intercultural communication

There are many ways to define culture. Here is one definition: "Culture is a fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, and basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour" (Spencer-Oatey 2000).

Culture can be represented as an iceberg (Figure 7). "Above the sea level" there are visible expressions of culture. "Below water", there is also a much more extended set of hidden elements that influence people but are not explicit. In many cases people are not aware that their behaviour is influenced by these unwritten norms which they learn by living in a community.

**Figure 7 – Visible and hidden expressions of culture**



When two people that do not have the same cultural background communicate, misunderstandings can appear because the deeper elements which influence what they think and how they behave, including the rules on which communication is based, can vary from culture to culture.

Language is extremely important in the communication process not only in its content, but also through its shape and use. How you say something can be just as important as what you say. The way language is used when people with different cultural backgrounds communicate can impact on the reciprocal attitudes, behaviours and relationships. Besides, the largest part of exchanging information is transmitted on the non-verbal level. Some researchers have judged the percentage to be as high as 85%. Body language is generally more honest than verbal language because it is mostly unconscious and harder to control. Non-verbal gestures also follow a cultural code.

For a mediator to help the communication between Roma and the staff of public institutions in an effective way, several qualities are important.

*Open attitude.* When interacting with a person with a different cultural background look at that person as belonging to many different categories (related to age, sex, life and work experiences, skills, etc.). Be open to new information and take into account in your own behaviour the rules and values which are important to "others".

*Empathy.* Empathy is the skill to "put yourself into the shoes" of the "others" and understand how they feel in a specific situation. It is very important to develop this competency, which is in fact an attitude based on respect for the others' views and values.

*Change of perspective/decentralisation.* You need to develop your ability to change perspective. Learning to recognise one's own perspective and that of the communication partner is important to avoid misunderstandings and solutions acceptable to both sides can also be found more easily. This means that you need to develop awareness of your own perspective, as well as of the perspective of the other, while having the ability to see things from the point of view of others.

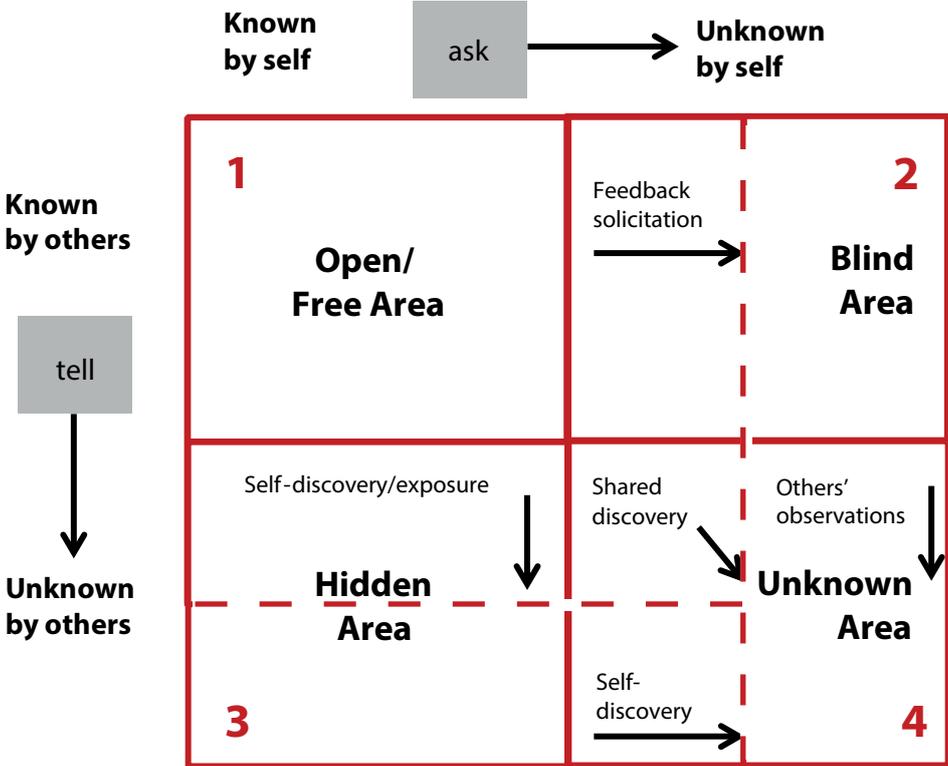
A simple model used in classical psychology, called the “Johari Window” (Figure 8), can help define more precisely what strategies can be used to enhance the effectiveness of intercultural communication. As shown in Figure 8 below, each of us has elements known by us and also displayed to others, elements known by us but not displayed to others, elements that others see about us but of which we are not aware, as well as elements of which we are not aware and which are also not visible to others.

In contrast to the case of a situation of communication where participants share a common cultural background, in an intercultural communication situation

the open/free area is smaller, while the other areas are bigger. A bigger number of elements which we know about ourselves will not be visible or understandable to others, while many things they see about us and interpret with their own cultural references will remain unknown to us.

Therefore, effective intercultural communication means first of all making communication more explicit, making the effort to explain and provide details about issues which appear obvious when speaking to someone from your own culture, as well as making sure that what is being perceived by others is interpreted in an appropriate way.

**Figure 8 – Johari Window**



# Handout 10

## Critical incidents analysis form

A critical incident should be a significant event which has occurred in the work of a mediator and to which the respective mediator reacted in an appropriate/effective or inappropriate/ineffective way. Both successful and unsuccessful experiences can be valuable for reflecting on practice during training. Avoid disclosing personal details but provide enough information for the reader to be able to relate to the incident and explore alternative reactions.

Reported by.....

Country and place .....

Type of mediator involved .....

### a. Antecedents (what led up to the incident)

▶ Provide brief relevant background information and describe circumstances that led to the incident.

### b. Description of the experience itself (action)

▶ When and where did it happen (time of day, location, social and organisational context)?

▶ What actually happened (who said or did what)?

### c. Outcome of the incident (reaction)

▶ How did the mediator react to the situation?

▶ What were the consequences of the reaction?

▶ What were the people involved thinking and feeling at the time and just after the incident?

▶ If available, any feedback provided by mediator or other stakeholders on desirable alternative reactions or on alternative reactions to avoid.

## Handout 11

### Example of field-specific topic: vaccination of Roma children

According to the research *Health and the Roma community, analysis of the situation in Europe*<sup>10</sup> (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain), co-ordinated by the Fundacion Secretariado Gitano, Spain, in other countries in Europe the figures for the vaccination status of Romani children are worrying.

The percentage of minors that failed to adequately follow the child vaccination programme is 28% (see Figure 9), which translates into approximately 300 000 children over all countries studied.

Romania is the country where the largest proportion of minors do not follow the child vaccination programme properly, followed by Greece and Bulgaria.

The reasons parents gave for this, identified in research (see Figure 10), were diverse and, surprisingly, lack of information appeared among those with a high incidence. One of the indirect conclusions is that

parents' level of trust in the health-care system is still low, especially when it comes to the vaccination of children.

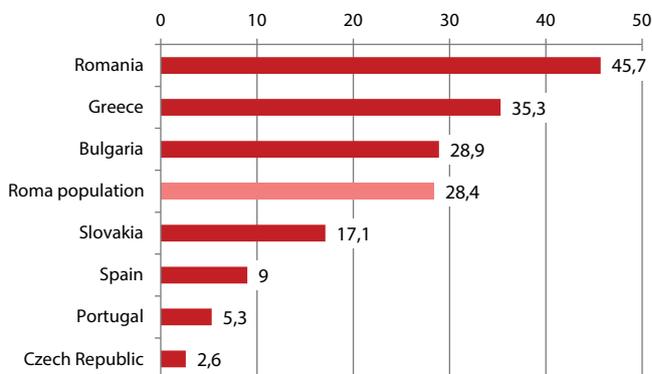
In order to respond to these problems we also need to look at the overall response of the authorities to vaccination and, of course, their capacities and willingness to work with and inform vulnerable groups, including Roma.

The health mediation programme has vaccination in the Roma community as one of its priorities, and mobilisation for the vaccinations is one of the responsibilities of the health mediators.

The myths about vaccines are well spread within the Romani communities and elsewhere. Some of the myths about vaccination are:

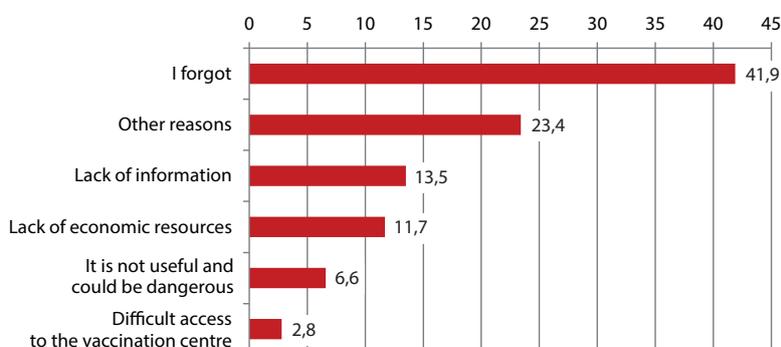
**Myth 1:** Better hygiene and sanitation lead to the disappearance of diseases, so vaccines are not necessary.<sup>11</sup>

**Figure 9 – Percentage of minors who do not properly adhere to the vaccination programme**



Source: EDIS S.A., European Survey on Health and the Roma Community, 2009

**Figure 10 – Percentage of minors who did not properly follow the vaccination programme with explanation**



Source: EDIS S.A., European Survey on Health and the Roma Community, 2009

10. [www.romanicriss.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=86&Itemid=83](http://www.romanicriss.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=86&Itemid=83).

11. "10 Myths about vaccination", INSP Romania under the European Immunisation Week.

*Reality:* If we stop vaccination against some “old” diseases they will reappear. While better hygiene, careful washing of hands and clean water protect you against some diseases such as flu and cholera, most viruses spread despite good hygiene. If people are not vaccinated, some so-called “old diseases” such as measles, may quickly reappear.

**Myth 2:** Most of the people who contract diseases are vaccinated against those diseases.

*Reality:* Most of the people who contract these diseases are not vaccinated. Owing to the complexity of the immune system, none of the vaccines offer 100% protection. However, the fact that we are still confronted with this myth shows the lack of accurate registration for vaccination and the space left for manipulation of figures.

One figure that contradicts the myth is that in 2009 over 90% of measles cases received fewer than the recommended two shots of anti-measles vaccine.

**Myth 3:** The vaccines have more long-term side effects than we know. Vaccination could be fatal.

*Reality:* The vaccines do have side effects but those are not as severe as the diseases themselves. All the medication, including the vaccination, could have side effects. The pain, moderate fever, and rarely more serious side effects, should be compared with the consequences of contracting the disease for which the vaccination is received. In the case of polio, the side effects could include paralysis.

**Myth 4:** The combined vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough, and the polio vaccine, could cause sudden death in new-born babies.

*Reality:* There is no documented direct relation between vaccines and the syndrome of sudden death in new-born babies. The syndrome appears in the same period as the administration of vaccines, therefore the myth. However, these four diseases, if not vaccinated against, could represent a high risk of death, especially in children.

**Myth 5:** Because all diseases that are prevented through vaccination have been almost completely eradicated in western Europe, there is no reason to be vaccinated against them.

*Reality:* The diseases preventable through vaccination still exist throughout Europe. Because the proportion of the vaccinated population is below 95% in some European countries, there is still a risk for these diseases to reappear. As an illustration of this fact, in 2005 epidemics of measles appeared in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Great Britain. In 2008, 82% of measles cases appeared in the western part of Europe.

**Myth 6:** The childhood diseases preventable by vaccination are only unhappy accidents of life.

*Reality:* The childhood diseases are very serious and could end up with severe complications to both children and adults. Diseases such as measles, mumps and rubella are called childhood diseases because they usually affect children. These are not without negative consequences and could lead to serious complications, including the syndrome of congenital rubella and eventually death.

**Myth 7:** Administration of more than one vaccine to children in one shot could increase the risk of negative side effects and change the immunity system of a child.

*Reality:* The immunity system of a child could deal with more than 100 “foreign” bodies every day and could resist more vaccines administered at once. The antibodies are proteins designed to recognise dangerous invasions. The number of antibodies to which children are exposed through vaccinations is insignificant in comparison with the number to which they are exposed every day or when they have flu or even a simple sore throat.

**Myth 8:** The flu is just a minor disease.

*Reality:* The flu is a serious disease which kills hundreds of thousands of people every year throughout the world. The disease is extremely dangerous for small babies, old people with fragile health or for anybody with pulmonary or cardiovascular disease. Moreover, unprotected people could spread the virus to vulnerable groups, such as patients in hospital or in social care settings, and this could lead to deaths.

**Myth 9:** The anti-flu vaccine is not very efficient.

*Reality:* The anti-flu vaccine protects 70% of vaccinated people. Despite the vaccination the flu may still prevent many people from performing their daily routine at school or work and this adds to the belief that the anti-flu vaccine is not efficient. There are series of viruses which produce symptoms similar to flu, but in fact these are not flu. In addition, there are numerous strains of flu virus circulating every season and the vaccine offers immunity only against the three most frequent strains.

**Myth 10:** It is better to be immunised through disease than by vaccine.

*Reality:* The vaccines offer the immune system enough information to fight against a predominant virus and could prevent serious complications and even death. The diseases offer the human body more detailed information than the vaccines but the immune system needs only a limited amount of information in order to recognise the “invasions”. That is why, however, the vaccines can provide immunity for the long term.

It is essential to know the answers to these myths in order to be able to respond to the questions raised by parents.

# Handout 12

## Conflict management

There are various criteria to categorise conflicts:

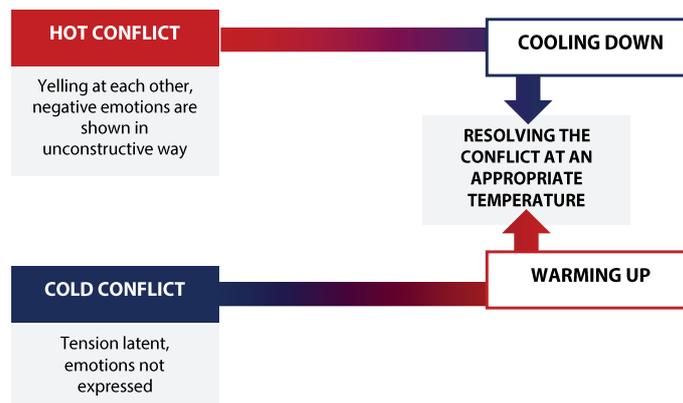
- ▶ by place – where they are located:
  - intra-personal, interpersonal, intra-group, inter-group, between organisations;
- ▶ by source:
  - conflicts of goals, cognitive, affective;
- ▶ by position of parties:
  - symmetric/asymmetric;
- ▶ by stage/shape:
  - latent/manifest.

**Dealing with conflicts is effective only at the “appropriate temperature”**

We can speak about “hot conflicts”, when parties involved are too engaged, where tension is high and sometimes violence can occur (physical, verbal, psychological). In order to address such conflicts you need to wait until they “cool down”.

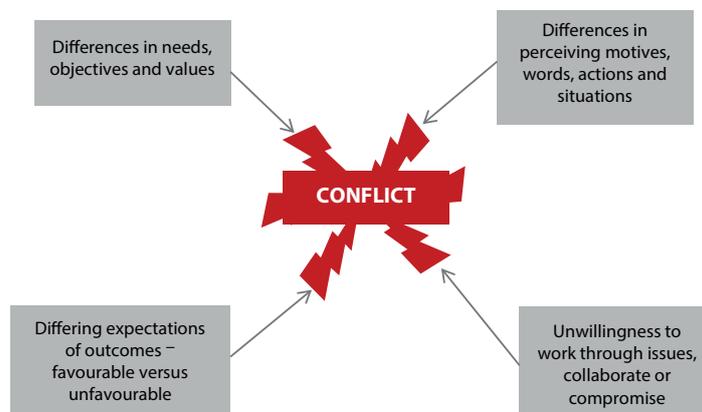
“Cold conflicts” or “frozen conflicts” are those conflicts where tension is latent but parties do not manifest it, avoid making it explicit. There could be denial of conflict from at least one of the sides. Addressing these conflicts is possible only if they are “warmed up” to the appropriate temperature (Figure 11).

**Figure 11 – Resolving conflicts at the appropriate temperature**



Conflicts in teams usually develop for four different reasons, as illustrated in Figure 12, below.

**Figure 12 – Sources of conflict**



There are three approaches:

1. Conflict resolution
2. Constructive conflict management
3. Conflict transformation (through peaceful means)

## 1. Conflict resolution

- ▶ The classical approach.
- ▶ Aims to eliminate conflicts.
- ▶ Conflict = "bad", generated by misunderstanding.
- ▶ The social and organisational environment is "to blame".
- ▶ Conflicts should be avoided and are not desirable.
- ▶ In case of conflict, the most efficient technique should be used to restore original balance.

## 2. Constructive conflict management

- ▶ Accepts conflict as an unavoidable, even desirable fact.
- ▶ Conflict is not generated by the social or organisational environment, but by different interests, goals and personal perceptions.
- ▶ Plurality and divergent interests may have positive and negative (constructive or destructive) effects; they can be seen as a potential source of progress and improvement.
- ▶ On the contrary, lack of conflict generates apathy, immobility and inability to adapt to change, with negative consequences at personal and organisational/social levels.
- ▶ Maintaining an optimal level of conflict is important (above a certain intensity risk of destructive conflict is higher).
- ▶ The goal is to identify those ways to manage the situation which lead to positive outcomes.

## 3. Conflict transformation

This differs from conflict resolution and conflict management approaches in recognising that "contemporary conflicts require more than the reframing of positions and the identification of win-win outcomes. The very structure of parties and relationships may be embedded in a pattern of conflicting relationships that extend beyond the particular site of conflict."

Conflict transformation aims to transform the relationships in society that support the continuation of violent conflict (see Figure 13).

Ways out of conflict:

**Avoidance:** I ignore or refuse to acknowledge the existence of conflict. As a result, "I lose – you lose," because nothing can be done about it.

**Accommodation:** I do what you want in order to satisfy your needs or wants. As a result, "I lose – you win," because I had to give up what I wanted or needed.

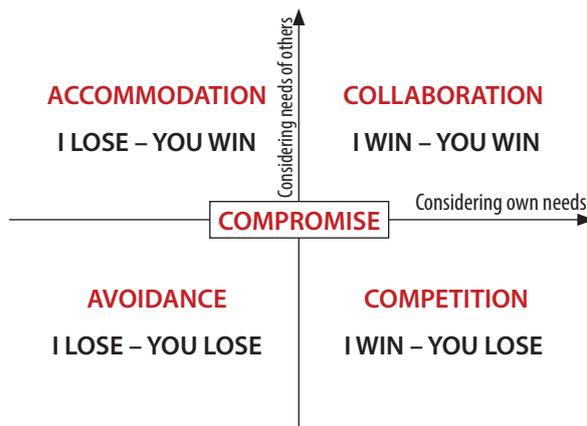
**Competition:** Either you or I will win, but not both of us. This is a form of fighting. As a result, "I win – you lose," because only one can win.

**Compromise:** We both give up part of what we wanted or needed to settle the problem. As a result, "I win some – you win some," because we were both willing to give a little.

**Collaboration:** You and I work together to find an agreeable solution to the problem. As a result, "I win – you win," because we were willing to work together.

Collaboration is the best method for solving all problems!

Figure 13 – Ways out of conflict



## Visible and invisible elements in a conflict

In any conflict, there are visible and invisible elements. They can be represented as an iceberg.

Often only positions are expressed in a visible way, but behind them there are interests and needs.

A key element of the conflict management process is linked to bringing invisible elements to the surface.

Figure 14 – Invisible elements in conflict management



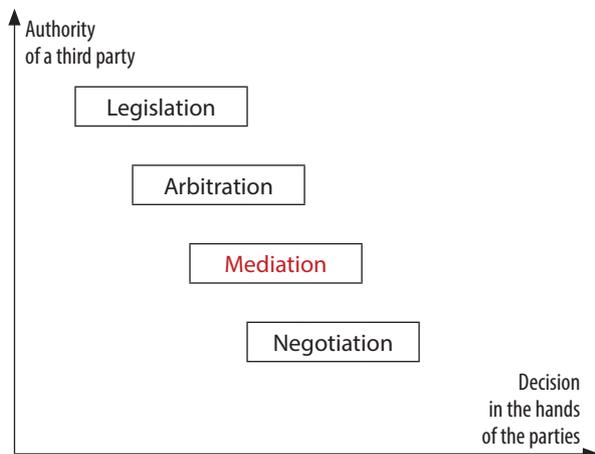
## Mapping conflict

Any conflict can be analysed by describing positions of the parties involved and by making explicit the fears, interests and needs of each side.

## Mediation

- ▶ involves a “neutral third party”;
- ▶ has to be accepted or even requested by both parties.

**Figure 15 – Mediation in the context of conflict management strategies**



The mediator does not decide the solution but helps parties to reach consensus (Figure 15). The mediator will focus on balancing the status of parties during interaction.

## A six-step approach for mediating conflicts

With the support of the mediator, the parties:

1. Identify positions and interests
2. Define the problem
3. Formulate possible solutions
4. Analyse solutions (if needed, go back to 3)
5. Choose a solution
6. Evaluate solution and revise if needed.

## How to achieve win-win solutions

- ▶ Going back to the needs of each party
- ▶ Recognising individual and group differences
- ▶ Showing openness to adapting your own position based on information and attitudes perceived during interaction with the opposed party.

Win-win solutions last longer and generate a positive environment.

## Conflict analysis

Analyse the conflict by using the “conflict map” below.

Party 1	Party 2
Who?	Who?
Position:	Position:
Interests:	Interests:
Fears:	Fears:
Needs:	Needs:

## Handout 13

### Tasks for the six months of practice

During the six months between the two training sessions, your task is to implement in your daily practice as much as possible of the content of this first session.

The minimum requirements are:

A. Implementation of the work cycle approach and of the principle of effective intercultural mediation:

1. to review the agreement with the head of the institution (or reach an agreement, if it did not exist before) and make sure that it contains the items specified in the module on the preparatory phase;
2. to make sure that relevant local stakeholders are informed about the role and the Code of Ethics of the mediator;
3. to make a comprehensive assessment of the situation of the community and of its relations with the public institution, by including both objective data and subjective perceptions and opinions from a variety of perspectives;
4. to organise at least one participatory planning meeting involving representatives of the institution, of the community and, if appropriate, other local stakeholders;

5. to elaborate an action plan based on the conclusions of this meeting and to make this plan known to all relevant local stakeholders;

6. to initiate the implementation of the plan and to monitor progress.

B. To analyse at least one case from personal experience, based on the form used in the module on case management. During this process:

1. to use any other elements discussed during the training or learnt from colleagues during the training;
2. to use the instruments presented (such as the diary, the folder, etc.);
3. to keep a record of the work done and prepare a report to be presented during the second training session, by using the Report Form.

C. To give feedback on the draft Code of Ethics, by answering the following questions:

1. How did you use elements of the code?
2. Is there something very important that you would add to the code?
3. Is there something which you would delete from the code?

## Handout 14

# Report form for the six months of practice

Each mediator will be given time during the first day of the second training session to present the work done during the six months of practice. This document suggests the structure for this presentation. For the reports during the six months of practice to the focal point, existing reporting procedures and forms should be used. If there are no reporting procedures in place, they can be developed by the focal point representative in consultation with the mediators.

Name of mediator:

Location:

A. What has been done (by you in co-operation with other local stakeholders)?

Describe what you did and point out what worked well and the challenges you faced in each step below:

1. the agreement with the head of the institution;

2. information from relevant local stakeholders about the role and the Code of Ethics for Mediators;

3. the assessment of the situation of the community and of its relations with the public institution;

4. the participatory planning meeting(s);

5. the action plan;

6. the implementation of the plan and monitoring progress.

B. Case description (use the same format as in the module on case management).

C. Feedback on the Code of Ethics:

How did you use elements of the code?

## Handout 15

# Guidelines for peer support groups

**Sharing work experiences with your peers on a regular basis has a number of important benefits:**

- ▶ It provides an opportunity to reflect on your work together with other mediators.
- ▶ It helps overcome anxieties and frustrations generated by the work as mediator.
- ▶ It offers a new perspective on cases which you previously found upsetting, annoying or "difficult".
- ▶ It opens minds to other possibilities for dealing with day-to-day challenges.
- ▶ It supports you in improving communication with stakeholders involved in your work.
- ▶ It improves your job satisfaction, the perception of your work and helps to prevent burn-out.

**Get together with 6–12 colleagues once a month or every two months, choose a moderator for each meeting, and discuss for around two hours based on the format below:**

- ▶ The moderator asks "Who has a case?"

- ▶ The presenter who volunteers tells the story of a case (it can be a Roma person or family, or a situation of interaction with staff of a public institution). Describe what happened in simple words, explaining why that case is occupying your mind and what feeling it has generated in you (anger, frustration, irritation, sadness, surprise, etc.).
- ▶ The group discusses the relationship between the mediator and the people involved in the case and tries to understand what is happening that evokes these feelings.
- ▶ Then, if there is time, another mediator in the group can share a case and receive feedback from the others.

**These discussions should be kept confidential and no notes should be taken. The meeting should be reported as a professional activity but without mentioning any details of its content (who presented a case, what was the case about, what were the conclusions, etc.).**

## Handout 16

# Tools for implementing and monitoring the work

You can simplify your work considerably by using a series of tools, including:

▶ a diary:

A dated diary can be used, but an ordinary exercise book is often a better solution. The key is to note the date at the top of each page and then to give a brief but clear description of the activities undertaken (family visits, discussions with the staff of the institutions, meetings and so on). Whenever the situation of a person or specific family is under discussion, write down the number of the corresponding sheet in the beneficiary background folder. Whenever a meeting is held, write down the corresponding number in the report folder.

Regularly updating this kind of diary may initially seem rather an effort, but you will soon get used to the system; it will save time in the medium term, enabling you to locate all the necessary information more easily and to draft the reports requested by your supervisory authority without any difficulty.

▶ a report folder:

If your work is to be effective, it is very important to write up a short report at the end of each meeting. You should include the date, time and participants, the agenda, the main ideas that

emerged during the discussion and the conclusions reached or decisions taken.

Put a copy of each report in this folder, keeping the meeting reports in chronological order. To locate the information more easily, you can use different colours for meetings with the community, meetings with teachers and joint meetings. You can also insert dividers for each term, for example.

▶ a beneficiary background folder:

This tool will help you store relevant information, particularly on struggling individuals and families. The folder will contain a sheet for each person. It is best to keep the sheets in alphabetical order.

Information on the specific circumstances will be listed on each sheet, along with information about family background, which you obtain from visits to the community and discussions with members of the community. Don't forget that this information must be kept confidential, and discussed only with family members or professionals who also have confidentiality among their professional norms (such as social workers, psychologists). It will be invaluable when it comes to analysing the initial situation of the community and evaluating the progress made.

# Handout 17

## Personal action plan

Name:

1. What kind of information will you share after this training and with whom?
2. What will be your concrete steps as mediator regarding:
  - ▶ your work in the institution where you are employed?
  - ▶ in your relations with the Roma community?
  - ▶ other stakeholders?
3. What type of support will you need? From whom?
4. Your calendar of activities and participatory planning:

Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Month 4	Month 5	Month 6

## Handout 18

### Evaluation form at the end of the first session

1. What did you expect from this training course?

2. To what extent have your expectations been met? Explain why.

3. List the three most important things that you have learnt from this course.

4. How satisfied are you with your own contribution to the training course?

(1 = bad; 5 = excellent)

1

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5. How much do you appreciate the co-operation with the other participants during group work?

6. List the three most significant contributions that you have made to the training course.

7. How are you going to use the ideas learnt in this training course?

8. What did you like most in this training course?

9. What did you not like or like less in this training course?

10. How confident do you feel about implementing what you learnt in practice?

1

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3

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11. What specific elements or activities will you implement as a result of your attendance in this training course?

Thank you!

## Handout 19

# Tackling issues of culture and identity in the work of mediators

Mediators often encounter situations in their work where they have to deal in an appropriate way with issues related to the identity and culture of the Roma groups they are working with. The Code of Ethics also mentions some elements about this. Here are some recommendations on this matter.

### The mediator should not ignore but also not overestimate the importance of cultural differences

There will be many people in public institutions that make statements like: "We treat everybody the same way, regardless of ethnic differences." However, having the same approach to everybody does not necessarily mean ensuring "equal treatment".

In general, public institutions often face challenges associated with the ethno-cultural and religious diversity of the communities they work in, but these challenges are consistently greater and more complex when an important share of the community belongs to a disadvantaged ethnic minority. The superposition of the social dimension with the cultural differences not only makes solutions harder to find and implement, but also provides "good excuses" for the failure to ensure real equality: the failure of socially focused policies is justified with the existence of "too great cultural differences and tendencies to self-isolation", while the absence of policies (or their lack of implementation) that take into account the cultural differences is justified with the fact that "the main cause of problems is of a social nature".

There are generally speaking two options open to public institutions in relation to cultural diversity:

- ▶ ignore cultural specificities, based on the fact that all citizens are equal and that public service needs to be provided to all, regardless of their ethnic, religious, linguistic, etc. backgrounds;
- ▶ explicitly recognise and take into account cultural diversity in their functioning, with the aim of ensuring real equal access to all citizens.

A major problem with the first option is that by not taking into account the actual social and cultural differences and by providing "the same treatment to all" (generally based on the needs of the majority), not only are some citizens *de facto* excluded, but inequalities between the majority and the disadvantaged minorities are reinforced and increased.

A major problem with the second approach is associated with the identification of the members of a disadvantaged ethnic minority. How to ensure adapted policies without forced ethnic labelling and how to make sure that the adapted policies are effective, while guaranteeing the right of each citizen to affirm or not a specific ethnic background?

By taking into account the specific needs and issues that are associated with the situation of disadvantaged ethnic minorities, such as the Roma, in the design and in the implementation of their specific policies, procedures and programmes, public institutions obtain several benefits simultaneously:

- ▶ they become more effective in serving the needs of all citizens;
- ▶ they support the integration policies targeted at disadvantaged groups;
- ▶ they contribute to an increased cohesion and a positive intercultural climate, with positive consequences for general socio-economic development.

However, taking specific actions targeting disadvantaged ethnic minorities might also raise opposition, resistance and claims of reverse discrimination (discrimination against the majority) both at the level of the staff of public administrations and at the level of the general public.

An American social-psychologist, Scott Plous, analysed in a famous article 10 myths about affirmative action. This analysis, focused on the situation of African Americans in the USA, is also valid in Europe, if adapted with reference mainly to the situation of Roma:

**Myth 1:** The only way to create an ethnically blind society is to adopt ethnically blind policies.

*Argument:* Although this statement sounds intuitively plausible, the reality is that ethnically blind policies, meaning policies which ignore ethnic distinctions, often put minorities at a disadvantage. Unless pre-existing inequities are corrected or otherwise taken into account, ethnically blind policies do not correct social injustice – they reinforce it.

**Myth 2:** Affirmative action has not succeeded in increasing female and minority representation.

*Argument:* Several studies have documented important gains in racial and gender equality as a direct result of affirmative action. And this is valid not only in the USA, but also in countries of Europe where such policies have been designed for the Roma.

**Myth 3:** Affirmative action may have been necessary 10 years ago, but the playing field is fairly level today.

*Argument:* Statistics and sociological research, as well as political statements such as the Strasbourg Declaration (October 2010), or more recent official documents, acknowledge that severe inequalities still persist across Europe between Roma and the other groups and that some of these inequalities are unlikely to reduce by themselves over time unless specific action is taken.

**Myth 4:** The public doesn't support affirmative action.

*Argument:* There is no doubt that many would oppose such measures but in most cases they are not adequately informed, either about the present situation or about the positive effects of affirmative action in similar situations.

**Myth 5:** Majority citizens will be disadvantaged if affirmative action is implemented.

*Argument:* There is solid evidence that this is not the case. Specific action targeting Roma will in the end benefit society as a whole. It is not intended to reduce in any way the rights of the majority but to provide additional attention and support for people that are at severe disadvantage.

**Myth 6:** If other minorities can rapidly advance and integrate, Roma should be able to do the same.

*Argument:* There is unfortunately a very special situation for Roma all over Europe, affected by centuries of positioning at the bottom of society and facing prejudice, rejection and discrimination. Moreover, the economic changes which have taken place during the past few decades have made many of them even more vulnerable.

**Myth 7:** You can't cure discrimination with discrimination.

*Argument:* The problem with this myth is that it uses the same word – discrimination – to describe two very different things. Job discrimination is grounded in prejudice and exclusion, whereas affirmative action is an effort to overcome prejudicial treatment through inclusion. The most effective way to cure society of exclusionary practices is to make special efforts at inclusion, which is exactly what affirmative action does. The logic of affirmative action is similar to the logic of treating a nutritional deficiency with vitamin supplements. For a healthy person, high doses of vitamin supplements may be unnecessary or even harmful, but for a person whose system is out of balance, supplements are an efficient way to restore the body's balance.

**Myth 8:** Affirmative action tends to undermine the self-esteem of targeted minorities.

*Argument:* On the contrary, it has been proved that, both in the USA, for African Americans, and in Europe,

for Roma, affirmative action has also contributed to the reinforcement of the movements of public affirmation and thus contributed to a positive sense of affiliation for many members of these groups.

**Myth 9:** Affirmative action is a solution proposed only by left-wing (social-democratic) political parties.

*Argument:* There is clear evidence that, implicitly or explicitly, support for affirmative action overcomes political orientations.

**Myth 10:** Support for affirmative action means support for preferential selection procedures that favour unqualified candidates over qualified candidates.

*Argument:* This remains a major problem with some of the affirmative action measures taken in the USA but the way support for employment has been implemented in Europe with regard to Roma is far from having such consequences.

Of course, it is essential to acknowledge that affirmative action is a temporary measure, needed until the evolution of society provides real equal opportunities for all groups. It should not be seen as the solution to all of the problems of the Roma and should be carefully designed and implemented, as well as accompanied by actions aimed at raising the awareness of the staff of the institutions and of the general public of its benefits.

### Roma are those who identify as such

Affirming affiliation to a certain ethnicity is a personal decision that must be respected. There is a great diversity among the Roma communities, from the point of view of language, religious beliefs, attitude towards traditions, etc. Some families prefer to identify with a subgroup and some have lost the memory of belonging to a traditional community. Some families declare a certain ethnicity inside their community, but a different one when they interact with institutions, including educational institutions. This is justified by psychological, historical and social elements. There are also mixed families, consisting of people with different ethnic backgrounds. International migration might also influence the attitude to ethnic affiliation.

Mediators should respect the decision (be it implicit or explicit) of those concerned and should refrain from labelling people, even when they know very well that they belong to a Roma community. Nevertheless, they should do their best to create an environment in which individuals and families feel at ease and free to express their ethnic belonging.

### Support all those who need support

Affirming being a Roma should not be a condition for a person to receive support from the mediator. The mediator should keep an open attitude and never

force a person to declare that he/she is a Roma, or look for any kind of external proof, such as knowledge of Romani language, etc.

### **Take into account the differences between Roma groups**

Even among those that identify themselves as Roma, this does not mean that they have identical or similar cultural characteristics. A great variety of situations can be encountered at local level including:

- ▶ situations more specific to the urban area, where in the same neighbourhood there can be Roma for whom traditions have a different influence in daily life, with different socio-economic status, etc., but also influenced in different ways by experiences of migration;
- ▶ situations in which, in one community, there are, among other ethnic groups, distinct subgroups of Roma with different cultural and socio-economic characteristics.

Speaking about “Roma” in general, in this kind of situation, using references learnt from books can be, of course, a big mistake. Intra-community tensions can arise, frustrations can be generated, and they may have a negative impact.

### **Not all practices considered as “culturally specific” are acceptable**

As specified in the Code of Ethics, the mediator respects the traditions and culture of the communities they work with, provided that they are compatible with the key principles of human rights and democracy. When certain traditions and practices which community members consider as part of their culture are against the fundamental principles of human rights and equality of rights for all, they should not be accepted, even if some families consider them part of the cultural specificity.

One example is related to the way in which some communities treat boys and girls differently. Thus, if boys are encouraged from an early age to have initiative and autonomy, girls are imposed restrictions and are told that they should have an inferior social role, characterised by submission and serving the men in the family. Sometimes, in these communities, if the families have low income, they can decide that only the boys will go to school.

Clearly affirming the principles of democracy, equality and rule of law does not always mean rejecting some

traditional practices which may appear inadequate but which in fact sometimes can have a positive role. Such is the case of community-based traditional justice processes, which can sometimes be accepted as alternative ways to solve internal disputes among community members, as long as they respect basic human rights and are accepted by those concerned (they can function as community arbitration).

When explaining this, a paternalistic and superior attitude should be avoided. It can be mentioned, for example, that many such contested practices used to be acceptable within the majority society only a few decades ago but that now things have changed and so they need to change in the case of the Roma communities. For example, in many parts of Europe, women started to have equal rights to vote only after the Second World War or even later.

### **Romani language as a tool for building self-esteem and ensuring recognition**

When the Romani language is used in the community, its use by the mediator when communicating with members of the Roma community, as well as its use in public communications by the institutions, has both instrumental and symbolic effects.

On the one side, on a practical level, it can facilitate understanding. On the other side, on a symbolic level, it shows recognition, respect and attention, which boosts the self-esteem of the Roma and their confidence that the institution is really interested in their needs.

The mediator has, of course, an important role in helping the institution to adapt its communication procedures by using the Romani language. Special attention should be given to the dialect spoken in the community, to avoid situations when Roma people do not understand what is being communicated. It is of particular importance not to assume that all Roma speak Romani.

### **The mediator as role model**

The behaviour of the mediator regarding attitudes towards the community members, their traditions and culture, as well as towards the public institution, will be closely followed by community members and can have a significant impact on the way Roma will interact with the public institution. This is a big responsibility, but it will also be very rewarding to be taken as a reference and to become a role model inside the community.

## Handout 20

# Tackling sensitive issues in relations of institutions with Roma community

### Responding to discrimination complaints and building confidence through participation

#### A tool for analysing reactions of institutions to threats concerning their public image: Benoit's Image Repair Strategies

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The table below illustrates the different types of reaction an institution can have to a situation in which its public image is being threatened.

#### Strategy/Tactic

#### Key characteristic

##### Denial

- ▶ Simple denial
- ▶ Shifting blame

Act did not occur; I did not carry out act; act is harmless

Another carried out the act

##### Evade responsibility

- ▶ Provocation
- ▶ Defeasibility
- ▶ Accident
- ▶ Good intentions

Act responded to prior offence from victim

Can't control situation

Unforeseen consequence

Meant well in carrying out act

##### Reduce offensiveness

- ▶ Bolster
- ▶ Minimise
- ▶ Differentiate
- ▶ Transcend
- ▶ Attack accuser
- ▶ Compensate

Stress own good points

Act is less offensive than it appears

Act is less offensive than similar acts

More important issue

Reduce credibility of attacker or claim that victim deserved it

Offer money, goods or services

##### Corrective action

Repair damage; prevent recurrence

##### Mortification

Apologise; ask for forgiveness

## Applying this model to reactions of a public institution to complaints of mistreatment and discrimination against Roma, made by a local NGO active in the field of non-discrimination.

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### Denial

- ▶ Simple denial "None of the facts mentioned in the complaint is true; some elements may be true but they are exaggerated and taken out of context."
- ▶ Shifting blame "It is their fault. Nothing can be done until the Roma change their behaviour and their attitudes."

### Evade responsibility

- ▶ Provocation "We know from previous experience the way they react to such situations, so we had to do all we could to avoid risks to our staff."
- ▶ Defeasibility "Our initial review has confirmed your report that some of the staff in our institution do sometimes display inappropriate behaviour. We appreciate your bringing this to our attention."
- ▶ Accident "In any institution you may find unfortunate incidents from time to time, but this is really an exceptional case for our work."
- ▶ Good intentions "We have to take into account the priorities. We want to make sure that Roma are treated well and get quality services, but, of course, we cannot satisfy everyone completely."

### Reduce offensiveness

- ▶ Bolster "The quality of the services provided by our staff is excellent; we have obtained high scores in all the evaluations in recent years."
- ▶ Minimise "This is something that can happen anywhere but it's insignificant compared to the efforts we are making to improve our services. In fact, if it wasn't for your organisation, those concerned would have quickly forgotten this incident."
- ▶ Differentiate "The point here is that one cannot measure the capability of staff and the quality of the work of an institution just by looking at the number of claims of discrimination; there are also other elements that need to be taken into account."
- ▶ Transcend "What we are trying to achieve with a great deal of effort is to improve the general quality of services for all beneficiaries."
- ▶ Attack accuser "You use the money that you get from our government/the EU/these foreign agencies to ruin the image of our public institutions and you harm all our attempts to build a better situation under these difficult circumstances, instead of using it for a good purpose, to really benefit the disadvantaged families or to make them become more responsible."
- ▶ Compensate "Within our institution, we have a number of procedures in place to examine the circumstances when this type of situation occurs, checking whether or not the standards were met. If the abuse is confirmed we will take the appropriate measures to compensate the person concerned."

### Corrective action

"We have initiated action to correct this situation. In addition, I have requested that the national/regional/local authorities analyse the possibility of modifying current policies in order to prevent such situations from being repeated in the future."

### Mortification

"On behalf of our director and of all our staff I am authorised to express our deep regret for the situation that occurred. We have no excuses for letting this happen; it is our error, we apologise and we express our sympathy to the family concerned."

Which of the strategies described above should be used by institutions to react to discrimination complaints?

**Think about the institution(s) you are working with**

Have there been complaints of discrimination during the past few years? If yes, how did the institution react? How should it have reacted? If there were no complaints, why is this? (Is it because there was no discrimination? Because people were not aware of being discriminated against? Because they did not know what to do or whom to address to complain? Etc.)

Imagine that an act of discrimination occurred recently in the institution you are working with and that the person(s) affected contacted an NGO and filed an official complaint against the institution.

What can you do as a mediator in such a situation?

Now, think how such situations can be prevented.

What generates a positive image of an institution among the members of the Roma community? Who can play a role in building a positive image of the institution among the Roma community members?

What can you do to support the institution to build a positive image in the Roma community, while complying with the Code of Ethics? Who can give you suggestions about this and how to proceed to obtain them?

### **Building a positive climate: prevention and effectiveness through participation**

Ensuring a sustainable positive climate of confidence and co-operation between the institution and the Roma community can be achieved through participation. A relationship based on participation will help prevent frustrations and conflicts and will also increase the effectiveness of the work of the institution with the Roma.

The presence of a mediator is already an indication of concern for adaptation to the needs of the Roma, but unless there is a clear commitment for real participation, the work of the mediator cannot have a sustainable positive impact.

The ladder of participation presents different types of relationship an institution can have with the citizens who benefit from its services. They are useful to identify how real participation is differentiated from other forms of interaction of an institution with its beneficiaries.

Analyse the way the institutions you are working with interact with members of the Roma community. What option(s) in the table describe best the reality? What can you do to support the institution(s) to move up the ladder of participation?

## Handout 21

### The ladder of participation

Participation	Citizens and/or their legitimate representatives participate in the decision-making process regarding how the institution relates with the beneficiaries. They are consulted on the way the institution informs beneficiaries, and on the way the institution requests feedback. Their suggestions are discussed and taken into account when possible. When they cannot be accepted, this is explained and alternative options are negotiated.
Consultation	An open consultation process is organised and citizens or their legitimate representatives are asked about how they would like the institution to change. The decision on whether or not to take these suggestions into account is made by the leadership of the institution.
Feedback request	The institution has a system for collecting feedback from citizens about the way the institution functions (through the mediator, through questionnaires, feedback forms, etc.) but there is no indication that the opinions of citizens are taken into account.
False representation	One or several members of the community are appointed as representatives and invited to consultative meetings. They have no real power to influence the decision-making process, do not consult with other members of the community, and serve as a cover for the institution to show there is consultation with citizens.
Information	Information is transmitted to citizens (in various ways, including through the mediator) to make sure they know about their rights, responsibilities and the services provided by the institution. However, the communication is only one-way, from the institution towards the citizens, with no interest in citizens' perspectives.
Manipulation	Meetings with community members are organised, but their real aims are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ to show there is openness towards citizens' views, without taking them into account;</li><li>▶ to provide a framework where citizens can express their frustrations (but without any practical consequence);</li><li>▶ to persuade citizens to adapt to the way the institution functions.</li></ul>
Closed institution	The institution functions based on clearly established rules (usually decided from outside), without room for flexibility and without any concern for transparency or accountability.  Citizens are expected to get the information on how it works and to comply with its rules if they want to benefit from its services.

## Handout 22

# Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator

After months of work it is time to stop and look back at what has been done and at what has been achieved, as well as to look at the current situation. This is the evaluation. It is like pushing the rewind button to review the film of what happened and also like looking in a mirror to see how you (as a group of stakeholders) look now.

Evaluation is the last phase in the work cycle of the mediator, after the preparatory phase, the planning, and the implementation and monitoring. It also makes it possible to start a new cycle, as it offers information to be used for a new plan.

The mediator is accountable to:

- ▶ the employer;
- ▶ the local Roma community; and
- ▶ possibly to other institutions or organisations.

So, the evaluation will be done for them, but also with the aim of self-improvement and of improving future work.

The purpose of evaluation *is not*:

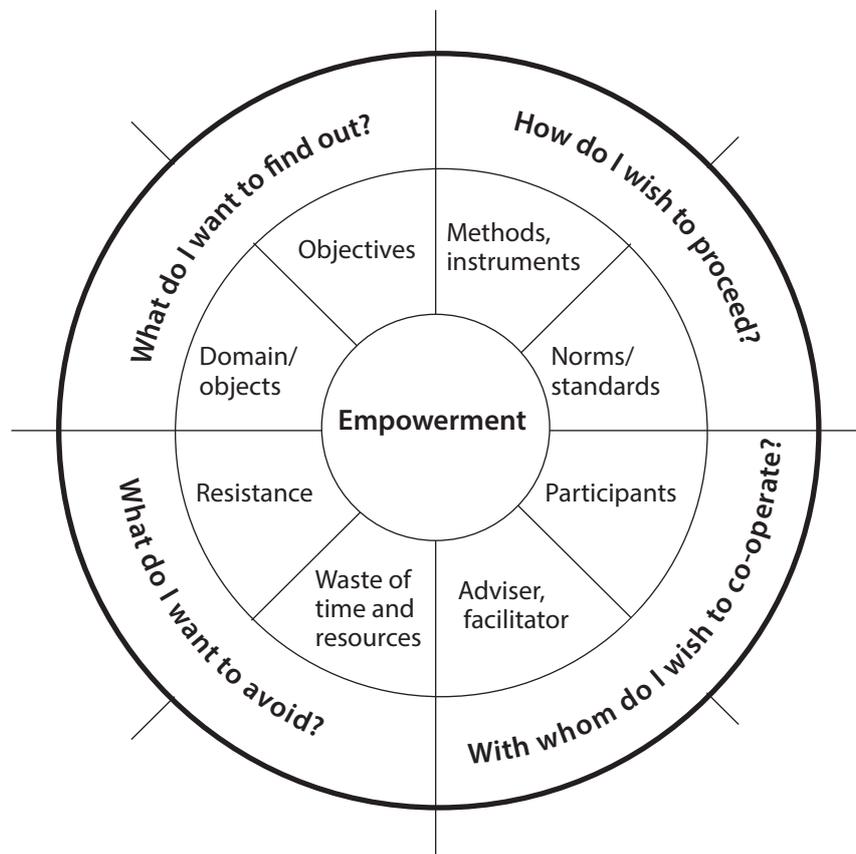
- ▶ to find out who has done a good job and who has not;
- ▶ to identify who is responsible for not achieving the results expected;
- ▶ to prove that everything is perfect and that you did a great job.

The purpose of evaluation *is*:

- ▶ to review activities and identify what worked well and what did not work well;
- ▶ to reflect on what has been done and learn from successes and failures;
- ▶ to measure the effects of the work and set the basis for the planning of the next cycle of activity.

Evaluation is a process that needs to be planned and prepared. Its goals are best achieved if it is a participatory process in which various relevant stakeholders are actively involved.

The diagram below can help to structure the planning of evaluation. It also shows how this process can lead to empowerment of the mediator and of the community members involved.



You should not do the planning of evaluation alone, by yourself. You should convene a meeting with several key stakeholders, from both the institution and the community, people who know the situation, the work done and who have been involved in the planning process. Together, you should find answers to the following questions.

### **What is going to be evaluated?**

There will be two elements to look at: the activities in the plan and the impact of these activities on the situation of Roma and on their relations with the institution. More precisely, what is going to be evaluated depends on the institutions you are working with. For example, if you work with a school, you might want to look at attendance of Roma children in school and extracurricular activities, attendance of parents in school activities, school results of Roma children, relations and attitudes at school between Roma and non-Roma, etc.

### **What are the objectives of the evaluation?**

Here you should define more precisely what you want from the evaluation, based on the general statements on the purpose of evaluation mentioned above.

### **What methods and instruments will be used to collect information?**

You will need to collect facts (what has been done), figures (numbers, percentages, etc.) and opinions/perceptions/attitudes from various stakeholders in the community and institution(s). Where do you get this information from? How? Who can contribute? Of course, your reports are a valuable source of information but you might need additional and complementary information. You might have someone from the institution prepare statistics; you might decide to define a few questions which you can ask people in the community and/or institution and make an overview or summary of their answers, etc.

### **What norms and standards need to be taken into account?**

There are some elements that you need to take into account when you plan this process: for example, legal requirements, administrative procedures of the institution, limitations of access to some data, etc. In some cases, for example, in order to ask children questions, you need the agreement of the parents. The Code of Ethics is also an important reference and you should check if the plans you make are compatible with the code.

### **Who is going to be involved in the evaluation process?**

A very important decision is about whom you are going to invite to take part in the evaluation. For sure, they should be both people from the community and

staff of the institution(s). It is important not to involve too many people, but to have a group representing the main categories of stakeholders.

### **Who is going to be the facilitator of the process?**

The evaluation meeting needs someone to act as facilitator, to make sure that everybody gets to speak, that no one is monopolising the discussion, that the attitude is positive and constructive, that the interventions are not deviating from the subject, etc. This can be you, the mediator, but it can also be someone else you trust, possibly someone from an NGO you are working with or one of the members of the team that is working with you in the planning of the evaluation.

### **What resources and how much time will be necessary and how can we increase efficiency?**

List what you need for collecting the information and for the evaluation meeting (meeting room, etc.). Estimate how much time will be needed to prepare the meeting (collect and organise the information) and how long the meeting should be.

### **What types of resistance might be expected and can these be overcome?**

Knowing the people you invite and the topic of the discussion, think about what can go wrong, what opposition you might get in the group and how you can counter this.

Once the plan is ready, you need to make sure that it will be implemented and that within a reasonable time you will have the information collected and organised and that everything is prepared for the evaluation meeting.

When information is ready, you convene the evaluation meeting according to the plan defined during the evaluation planning meeting. The participants will be the people who participated in the planning of the evaluation but also others.

The facilitator of the meeting will start by specifying the object and objectives of the evaluation, that all the discussions in the group will remain confidential, that they are expected to produce a better understanding and a constructive analysis of the work done and of the current situation, and that each person should focus on his/her own area of responsibility and not on blaming others. All opinions will be listened to and will be considered important if they comply with the principles of non-violent communication.

Then the information gathered is reviewed and discussed by the group, taking into account both facts and opinions.

Conclusions will then be formulated, pointing out what has improved, what worked well, what did not work well and what the priority topics are on which to focus in the future.

The group will then also decide what information from the discussions will be communicated to others outside the group. Once this is decided, the group will identify the best ways to communicate the results to those that might be concerned.

By using such an approach you, as mediator, will:

- ▶ get a clearer picture of the results of the work done;
- ▶ build additional support both within the community and within the institution;
- ▶ have more legitimate conclusions to present to the local stakeholders.

To summarise, the whole process of evaluation will consist in:

- ▶ gathering a team including people from the community and from the institution(s), and also, possibly, other key stakeholders;
- ▶ organising an evaluation planning meeting;
- ▶ collecting the information, based on what has been agreed during the planning meeting;
- ▶ organising a participatory evaluation meeting;
- ▶ writing the report and presenting its key findings to various relevant stakeholders.

## Handout 23

# Thinking about the future

Considering your previous experience, your experience after the first training, as well as what you have learnt from other colleagues here and in order to start a new cycle of work, based on the principles of effective intercultural mediation and on the work cycle approach:

1. What would improve the process? How can you get what you need?

2. With whom will you co-operate and how?

3. What will you try to avoid?

4. What will you insist on?

5. What key recommendation would you make to other colleagues?

## Handout 24

# Final evaluation form

1. What did you expect from this training course?

2. To what extent have your expectations been met? Explain why.

3. List the three most important things that you have learnt from this course.

4. How satisfied are you with your own contribution to the training course?  
(1 = bad; 5 = excellent)

1

2

3

4

5

5. How much do you appreciate the co-operation with the other participants during group work?

6. How much do you appreciate the co-operation with the public institutions with whom you were working (please refer to the co-operation during the last six months and the co-operation related to this training)?

7. How are you going to use the ideas learnt in this training course?

8. What did you like most in this training course?

9. What did you not like or like less in this training course?

10. How much do you appreciate your co-operation with the National Focal Point? Please explain.

11. Any other comments?

Thank you!

# References

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# Appendix I – Summary of modules, handouts and resources

Module	Handout	Resources
<b>Training session 1</b>		
1 – Opening session	Programme of the training Programme leaflet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Post-its of two colours, the programme on a flipchart sheet (optional)</li> <li>– Slides presentation: Opening session*</li> </ul>
2 – Challenges in the interaction of Roma with public institutions (school, employment office, health-care service)	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A4 paper sheets, markers</li> <li>– Place to display results preferably until the end of the training session</li> </ul>
3 – Role and tasks of mediators. What is effective intercultural mediation?	Handout 1 – Effective intercultural mediation Handout 10 – Critical incidents analysis form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Flipchart and markers</li> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slides presentation and handouts*</li> </ul>
4 – Consequences of racism, discrimination and marginalisation	Handout 2 – Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slides presentation and handouts*</li> <li>– Role cards (in case Plan A is used)</li> <li>– An area big enough for the group to move or to have chairs organised in a circle</li> <li>– A short video or photos in electronic format to illustrate the concept of stereotype</li> </ul>
5 – Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights	Handout set 3 – Cultural differences, equal access to public services and human rights Handout 3.a – Case studies: critical incidents from the work of mediators Handout 3.b – Case analysis form Handout 3.c – Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Handouts</li> <li>– Flipchart and markers</li> </ul>

<b>Module</b>	<b>Handout</b>	<b>Resources</b>
6 – The work cycle of a mediator	Handout set 4 – Participatory work cycle management Handout 4.a – From day-to-day work to participatory planning Handout 4.b – Phase 0: Preparation Handout 4.c – Phase 1: Assessment of situation Handout 4.d – Phase 2: Participatory planning Handout 4.e – Phase 3: Implementation Handout 4.f – Phase 4: Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slides presentation and handouts*</li> </ul>
7 – Strategies for building trust and consensus	Handout set 5 – Building confidence and consensus Handout 5.a – Skills for effective communication Handout 5.b – 8 tips for effective communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slides presentation and handouts*</li> </ul>
8 – Preparatory phase and initial assessment in the work of a mediator	Handout 6 – Guidelines for preparation Handout 7 – Guidelines for initial assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Slides presentation and handouts*</li> <li>– Work cycle on a flipchart sheet</li> </ul>
9 – Participatory, transparent and empowering planning	Handout set 8 – Guidelines for participatory planning Handout 8.a – Planning with GROW Handout 8.b – Checklist for participatory planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slide presentation and hand-out depending on the option chosen*</li> <li>– Work cycle on a flipchart sheet</li> </ul>
10 – Interaction with members of the Roma communities and facilitation of intercultural communication	Handout 9 – Intercultural communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slide presentation and handout*</li> </ul>
11 – Interaction with public institutions. Case management	Handout 10 – Critical incidents analysis form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Flipchart paper, markers</li> <li>– Place to display results</li> <li>– Handout</li> </ul>
12 – Topic adapted to the needs of the group, for example, field-specific training	Handout 11 – Example of field-specific topic: vaccination of Roma children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Computer with video projector</li> <li>– Slide presentation and handout*</li> <li>– Flipcharts and markers</li> </ul>
13 – Management of conflicts through mediation	Handout 12 – Conflict Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Flipchart paper, markers</li> <li>– Place to display results</li> <li>– Laptop and video projector</li> <li>– Slides presentation and handout*</li> </ul>

<b>Module</b>	<b>Handout</b>	<b>Resources</b>
14 – Tasks for the six months of practice. Expectations of mediators from institutions and local support structures. Local peer help structures	Handout 13 – Tasks for the six months of practice Handout 14 – Report form for the six months of practice Handout 15 – Guidelines for peer support groups	– Flipchart and markers (optional, computer with video projector)
15 – Information for local stakeholders	Handout 1 – Effective intercultural mediation Handout 4.a – From day-to-day work to participatory planning (containing work cycle)	– Computer with video projector – Flipchart paper, markers
16 – Mediator in action: implementation, monitoring and involving key stakeholders	Handout 16 – Tools for implementing and monitoring the work	– Computer with video projector – Flipchart paper, markers
17 – Planning local implementation. Overcoming challenges	Handout 17 – Personal action plan	– Flipchart and markers
18 – Closing and evaluation	Handout 18 – Evaluation form at the end of the first session	N/A
<b>Training session 2</b>		
19 – Review of practical activities	N/A	– Computer with video projector – Flipchart paper, markers
20 – Human rights as basis for the work of mediators	Handout 3.c – Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (optional)	– Computer with video projector – Flipchart paper, markers
21 – Tackling issues of culture and identity in the work of mediators	Handout 19 – Tackling issues of culture and identity in the work of mediators	– Flipchart, paper, markers – Computer with video projector – Slides presentation and handouts*
22 – Tackling sensitive issues in the relationship between of public institutions and the Roma community. Responding to discrimination complaints and building confidence through participation	Handout 20 – Tackling sensitive issues in relations of institutions with Roma community Handout 21 – The ladder of participation	– Computer with video projector – Slides – ladder of participation*
23 – Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator	Handout 22 – Evaluation phase in the work of the mediator	– Computer with video projector – Flipchart paper, markers
24 – Resources and approaches for improving the work of mediators	N/A	N/A
25 – Ensuring effective and sustainable impact	Handout 23 – Thinking about the future	– Computer with video projector – Flipchart paper, markers
26 – Conclusions and evaluation	Handout 24 – Final evaluation form	– Flipchart paper, markers

\* Slide presentations are available online under the “Resources” section of the ROMED website (<http://coe-romed.org>).



# Appendix II – Code of Ethics for Mediators

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The mediator:

1. **respects the human rights and the dignity of all persons and acts with honesty and integrity in performing his/her duties**

By showing clearly this human rights perspective and respect for human dignity, the mediator will have the trust of both Roma community and public institution, and will be respected as a professional with specific tasks. The mediator will thus be also a role model for members of Roma community and for the staff of the institution interacting with Roma.

2. **works to ensure equal access to rights while respecting legal requirements and administrative procedures**

The main mission of the mediator is to ensure that members of the Roma communities enjoy full access to their rights and are supported in overcoming the possible barriers which can hinder real equality in rights. This means sometimes that special measures need to be taken in order to take into account the specific needs and possibilities of the Roma. However, these measures should not be individual exceptions from complying with administrative requirements. When it is necessary, the mediator should indicate to the institutions concerned that a change in a specific procedure is needed. This approach is the only one compatible with the principles of democracy and rule of law.

3. **is responsible to help those concerned find mutually satisfactory solutions but does not have the responsibility to provide solutions to all problems raised by beneficiaries or by the staff of the institution**

The mediator will listen to the needs of the members of the Roma community and of the staff of the institution and will help them understand each other. The mediator does not have look for “who is to blame”, to decide what is the best solution, nor to tell to the Roma or to the staff of the institutions what to do. His/her role is to ask those concerned how they want the situation to change, what they can do for this and what support will be needed from the mediator. This makes the mediator impartial, but not uninvolved, and careful to address in a balanced way the needs of Roma and of the staff of the public institution. This also prevents abusive requests and unjustified pressure from both parties.

4. **is proactive, has prompt reactions and develops sound prevention activities**

In many cases, Roma people do not know the rights they have and how to enjoy them. Thus, the mediator will be proactive, will not just wait for a problem to appear but analyse permanently the situation and raise awareness of all stakeholders on the issues identified. Prompt responses are given to all cases and situations signalled by community members or staff of the institutions. The analysis of the various challenges and solutions found leads to ideas for well-planned prevention activities, avoiding repetition or extension of problematic situations.

5. **keeps confidentiality of the information obtained in the course of professional activities**

All information obtained in the process of work will be kept confidential, will not be disclosed to other persons or institutions, unless there is an explicit agreement of the person who provided the information, and with the only exception of situations when the safety of a person is threatened. Those who speak to the mediator should be informed about the commitment to confidentiality. No person, even the head of the institution employing the mediator, is allowed to ask the mediator to break confidentiality. Information obtained which is of general interest can be communicated in a way to preserve the anonymity of the source, with the agreement of the source.

6. **does not use his/her role and power to manipulate or to harm others**

The role of the mediator provides access to information and a series of contacts within the community and the institutions. The mediator should not use the power generated by this information or the prerogatives connected to the role of mediator to manipulate or harm other people.

7. **respects the traditions and culture of the communities, provided that they are compatible with the key principles of human rights and democracy**

Some communities have specific traditions, ways of life and cultural norms, different from those of the majority society. The mediator will get to know these traditions and norms, respect them, and support outsiders to understand and respect them as well. The only exception is when some community norms or customs are not compatible with the principles of human rights and democracy.

**8. will treat all community members with equal respect and disclose publicly situations of conflict of interests**

Regardless of their gender, age, status in the community, etc., the mediator will show equal respect to all beneficiaries and deal with their requests in a transparent and fair way. When somebody is given a priority on a matter, the reason has to be clear for all and justified. When relatives of the mediator or other persons close to the mediator are involved in a conflict, the situation should be indicated and external support for mediation should be requested.

**9. makes a clear distinction between professional and private activities**

It is necessary for the mediator to make explicit the boundaries between professional activities and private

life. Having a strong commitment for the problems of the community does not mean being available at all times for requests of community members. Community members should be informed about the work schedule of the mediator and about the ways to contact the mediator.

**10. collaborates with other mediators and with other professionals**

The mediator is a professional which needs to maintain strong collaboration with other professionals (health professionals, social workers, teachers, etc.) in order to accomplish his/her tasks. Mediators will support each other in their work. All mediators will use opportunities available to them for exchanging experiences and for sharing successful solutions and useful information.

# Appendix III – Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)9

## **Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)9 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on mediation as an effective tool for promoting respect for human rights and social inclusion of Roma<sup>12</sup>**

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 September 2012 at the 1149th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members, and that this aim may be pursued, in particular, through common action in the field of human rights and social cohesion, which form core values and objectives of the Council of Europe;

Recognising that Roma have faced, for more than five centuries, widespread and enduring discrimination, rejection and marginalisation across Europe and in all areas of life;

Aware that discrimination and social exclusion can be overcome most effectively by comprehensive, coherent and proactive policies targeting both the Roma and the majority, which ensure integration and participation of Roma in the societies in which they live and respect for their identity, and recognising that mediation can be a useful tool for improving Roma inclusion;

Considering that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated and that economic and social rights are human rights, and should be supported by concrete community and governmental efforts to ensure they are equally accessible to members of the most deprived and disadvantaged groups and communities;

Recalling its previous recommendations<sup>13</sup> which advocated the use of Roma mediators to improve communication and relations between Roma and

public institutions, which in turn can help overcome barriers to social inclusion and effective access of human rights, as well as improve access of Roma to public services;

Bearing in mind the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma, adopted at the High-Level Meeting of Council of Europe member States on 20 October 2010, which refers to mediation in the context of education, employment and health care and expresses the agreement of member States to set up a European Training Programme for Roma Mediators;

Noting that recourse by municipalities and regions to Roma mediators is among the measures called for in Resolution 333 (2011) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on “The situation of Roma in Europe: a challenge for local and regional authorities”, and in the Final Declaration of the Summit of Mayors on Roma, organised by the Congress on 22 September 2011;

Drawing on the positive experience of the ROMED programme “Intercultural mediation for Roma communities”, implemented from 2011 as a joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Union, which provides important lessons on how to achieve effective intercultural mediation between Roma communities and public institutions;

Welcoming the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union in promoting effective mediation with Roma communities and encouraged by the fact that such mediation, even if different names are used,<sup>14</sup> is practised more and more widely in member States and increasingly explicitly supported in national strategies and action plans for Roma inclusion;

Convinced of the important benefits resulting from employment of persons with a Roma background to act as mediators between Roma communities and public institutions, notably in terms of improved school attendance and access to quality education, improved access to health care and other public services, along with better communication between members of Roma communities and public institutions;

12. The term “Roma” used at the Council of Europe refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.

13. See Recommendations CM/Rec(2009)4 on the education of Roma and Travellers in Europe, CM/Rec(2008)5 on policies for Roma and/or Travellers in Europe, Rec(2006)10 on better access to health care for Roma and Travellers in Europe and Rec(2000)4 on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe.

14. The terminology used for people carrying out mediation (whether as their sole task or as one task among others) varies from one country to another: mediators, facilitators, assistants, social workers, community facilitators, community mediators, pedagogical assistants, etc.

Stressing the importance of respecting gender equality when having recourse to mediators and noting that the gender of mediators may be relevant to the effectiveness of their work in some situations;

Noting that experience has shown the importance of ensuring that mediation produces the desired results without unwanted negative side effects;

Considering, therefore, that it is useful and timely, given the growing recourse by member States to mediation with Roma communities and based on the experience gained with it, to promote a common understanding of some basic principles that can help make such mediation effective and maximise its impact,

Recommends that the governments of member States, with due regard for their constitutional systems and, where appropriate, to their respective national, regional and local circumstances:

1. develop and maintain an effective system of quality mediation with Roma communities based on the following principles:

a. *human rights*: the full enjoyment of human rights of members of Roma communities without any form of discrimination is an essential principle underpinning and governing such mediation; this implies that mediation should aim at empowerment of Roma to exercise their rights and increased capacity of public institutions to guarantee these rights in practice, not at rendering or keeping Roma or public institutions dependent on mediation;

b. *systematic consultation, participatory planning and evaluation* allowing the members of Roma communities to express their needs and concerns, and to be actively involved in finding the most appropriate solutions to the problems facing their local community in co-operation with representatives of the public institutions;

c. *intercultural sensitivity, non-violent communication and conflict mediation*, based on good knowledge of the "cultural codes" of the community and of the relevant institutions;

d. *impartiality*: the mediator should work, and be able to work, in a balanced way with both the public institution and members of Roma communities to help overcome cultural and status differences and focus on improving communication and co-operation and on stimulating both parties to take responsibilities and engage with each other; legitimate interests of both parties should be recognised;

2. recognise the importance of professional self-regulation by mediators themselves such as the European Code of Ethics for Mediators<sup>15</sup> published by the Council of Europe and the European Union, for setting out a clear understanding of the mediators' role and responsibilities and encourage public authorities at all levels to respect them, including in employment contracts for mediators, in particular by refraining from interfering with the responsibilities of mediators or requesting them to undertake actions that are not within their responsibilities;

3. ensure or, in situations where the state has no direct responsibility, encourage that:

▶ official recognition to the professional status of mediators is given, taking measures, where necessary, to render the employment of mediators more stable, and ensure fair remuneration and adequate working conditions;

▶ certification or accreditation of initial and in-service training programmes for Roma mediators is provided on the basis of the principles set out in paragraph 1 of this recommendation;

▶ the professional expertise gained by mediators is recognised so as to enhance their career perspectives;

▶ opportunities for networking and regular peer support among Roma mediators are provided and that the participation of various professionals working with them (trainers, supervisors, etc.) is stimulated;

4. promote a favourable environment at local level for the work of mediators, notably by increasing the capacity of local and regional authorities to develop and implement effective policies for Roma integration, where appropriate, in close co-operation with other member States, the Council of Europe, and other international organisations active in this field, including the European Union and the OSCE.

15. [http://coe-romed.org/sites/default/files/leaflets/code%20ethicEN\\_0.pdf](http://coe-romed.org/sites/default/files/leaflets/code%20ethicEN_0.pdf)

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The general aim of ROMED1 is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the work of school, health, employment and community mediators, with a view to supporting better communication and co-operation between Roma and public institutions (school, health-care providers, employment offices, local authorities, etc.)

The ROMED1 trainer's handbook was developed over five years of implementation of the ROMED1 programme, and is generally intended for trainers who followed a course of training for trainers in the framework of the programme. However, it can also be used by organisations – governmental or non-governmental – as a basis for new or adapted curricula for those working in a mediation context with or within Roma communities. It contains the key information trainers need to give a training course based on the ROMED1 methodology and on the human rights-based approach. The content of the materials should be adapted to the specific context of each country and to the profile of the mediators.

[www.coe-romed.org/](http://www.coe-romed.org/)

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