

Management Response and Action Plan

Name of Evaluation Report:	Evaluation of the ROMACTED Phase II Programme - “Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level”		
	Implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey		
Date of Evaluation Report:	16 December 2024	Date of Action Plan:	20 March 2025

Overall management response to the evaluation:

Some of recommendations of the evaluation were addressed prior to the end of ROMACTED Programme on 31 December 2024. Given that no continuation of the Programme is foreseen, the recommendations for the financial and technical management in design, monitoring and implementation of the Programme will not be possible to address directly at Programme level. However, the evaluation recommendations will be particularly valuable for the adjustment of the current and design of future actions/projects within the Roma and Travellers Division.

[FOR DECENTRALISED EVALUATIONS] Dissemination plan for the evaluation: *please briefly explain how the report will be shared (internally, other CoE entities, donors, beneficiaries etc.), methods (email, events, website etc.), resources, timeframe and person responsible.*

The report was shared within the Division and with the European Commission counterparts (donor). The findings of the evaluation were also shared with the stakeholders from all 7 beneficiary countries which included high level Ministerial, local and regional level representation; a presentation on the findings and recommendations of the evaluation was made during the ROMACTED Final Conference held in Istanbul / Türkiye in December 2024.

The resources allocated for the management response plan of the evaluation will include human resources within the Roma and Travellers Division. The expected timeframe is, at the latest, until April 2026.

Management Decision ¹	Entity in Charge	Planned Actions ² (determined by Entity)	Justification ³ for non-acceptance	Target Date for Action	Person Responsible for Action
Recommendation 1 - TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Adopt a more ambitious approach in defining the target values of output and outcome indicators in the future. The set values of numerous indicators for the current Programme have been significantly exceeded and a more realistic outlook in quantification of objectives is required.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Roma and Travellers Division	In the design of future actions/projects within the Division, particular attention will be paid to baselines and target setting based on objective and robust means of assessment of outputs and outcomes.	N/A	Until April 2026	Eleni Tsetsekou, Head of Roma and Travellers Division Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division
Recommendation 2 - TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Identify opportunities to utilise the considerable knowledge and experience of the ROMACTED management team, in particular the long-serving CoE Project Officers. They have managed and successfully maintained a breadth of relevant partnerships and contacts both at the national and local levels which represent significant institutional knowledge of the CoE. With their deep understanding of the complexities and challenges at the Beneficiary level, they represent a critical source of information and insight for any future Roma integration initiatives.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Roma and Travellers Division	Efforts have been made and will continue for retaining the staff of the project, either in the Roma and Travellers Division or other projects implemented through the Field Offices of the Council of Europe. The Project Officer from Turkey has been already engaged in other activities of the Division in Turkey and 3 other Project Officers given good recommendations for being employed in projects of other CoE	N/A	Until April 2026	Eleni Tsetsekou, Head of Roma and Travellers Division Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division

¹ The management decision is in relation to the Recommendation (Accepted, Partially accepted, Rejected).

² For implementing accepted recommendations.

³ For recommendations that are partially accepted or rejected.

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		entities in the Field Offices (e.g. Montenegro, Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Our Division recognises their expertise and contribution and will work towards securing new projects in the field.			
<p>Recommendation 3 - TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: Ensure the allocated Programme budget is set up in a way that allows straightforward and accurate monitoring and performance oversight. The immediate and planned expenditure against key Programme activities should be visible and easily accessible, e.g. through monthly financial reporting and reprofiling based on planned and implemented actions. The results-based Programme budgeting with clear costs of specific outcomes will provide cost-benefit evidence for decisions on the ongoing Programme implementation. An overview of budgetary resources at the level of Beneficiaries should also be immediately available to Project Officers so that balance of resources is maintained and any underspent/overspent is immediately flagged and reflected in the ongoing Programme implementation.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Roma and Travellers Division	<p>The ROMACTED Programme had its final closure in December 2024. This recommendation is taken on board for future projects of the Division.</p> <p>Budget monitoring and performance oversight measures have been addressed by DPC and partly by the Central Division of DGII in terms of linking each expenditure with key activity number to allow for tracking the expenditure for a given activity. There are also measures in place regarding setting up projects budgets on a results-based logic as opposed to simple activity costing. The Division will put an emphasis on more regular budget tracking</p>	N/A	From January 2025	<p>Eleni Tsetsekou, Head of Roma and Travellers Division</p> <p>Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division</p> <p>Nedim Vrabac, Programme Manager for Finances and Administration, Roma and Travellers Division</p>

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		and monitoring to allow for efficient mitigation measures and reallocation of funds in cases of under and over-expenditure.			
Recommendation 4 - TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: To counteract the common risk of failed / discarded small grants' projects, invest more efforts into contracting of the allocated budget to ensure maximum expenditure of the funding available. Subsequently, monitor the ongoing projects' implementation closely so that the unspent resources are promptly allocated to other grantees or a new call for proposals is published.					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Roma and Travellers Division	<p>The ROMACTED Programme had its final closure in December 2024. This recommendation is taken on board for future projects of the Division.</p> <p>In case of future projects including small grants, a better assessment and more precise budgets will be set, accompanied with capacity building activities (training and coaching) for the grantees to ensure full absorption capacity. In case where savings or underspending will be noted, mitigation measures will be applied to readjust the budgets and ensure needed amendments. However, allocating resources to other grantees or issuing new calls for proposal might not be suitable/possible with already existing grantees due to procurement regulations. Issuing</p>	N/A	From January 2025	<p>Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division</p> <p>Nedim Vrabac, Programme Manager for Finances and Administration, Roma and Travellers Division</p>

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		new calls for proposals or identifying new grantees could be considered only if feasible and allowed by the rules of the donor contractual agreements.			
<p>Recommendation 5 - TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: Ensure the data reporting is accurate and systematic, and inconsistencies are avoided. For instance, achieved values of output/outcome indicators in the Programme Logframe should align with those reported in any other Programme documentation. Similarly, the tracking system should be conducive to consistency in relation to outputs and outcomes without any language variations.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected	Roma and Travellers Division	<p>Efforts will be made in the Division to improve the monitoring systems of new projects and to ensure consistency in terms of reporting on output and outcome indicators. This will be done through harmonising the data type collected in different countries and ensuring that disaggregated data is collected in a systematic manner. Data will be centralised and used as a harmonized reference for various project and reporting documents to ensure coherence.</p>		From January 2025	Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division
<p>Recommendation 6 – TO THE COE: Given the critical role of the local facilitators in the Programme, allocate substantially more budgetary resources to their work and related activities. The originally allocated budget of one day’s field work per month is significantly undersized and does not reflect their scope of work which often requires repeated efforts in initial mobilisation of the community as well as in maintaining the continuum during any leadership and personnel changes in municipal administration. While the implementation at the local level is instrumental, it is sensitive to any political changes either at the local or national level directly affecting the extent of local facilitators’ work; The assigned budgetary resources should reflect this.</p>					

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<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected		<p>The ROMACTED Programme had its final closure in December 2024. This recommendation is taken on board for future projects of the Division which will include field facilitators and similar positions. Future similar actions / projects of the Division will consider proper assessment of type of tasks, daily fees and frequency of work of field facilitators etc. This will be based on examination of local context, specific needs of the beneficiaries and adequate budgetary planning.</p>		From January 2025	Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division
<p>Recommendation 7 – TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: To maintain a long-lasting impact of the numerous models of good practice that have been produced and published within the Programme, their active promotion and broad dissemination are equally important. Identify systematic and ongoing mechanisms of their promotion to ensure their outreach and utilisation across the Beneficiaries.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected		<p>ROMACTED Programme website was already updated with the existing materials, including good practices. Actions such as sharing the Programme results and practices on social media have been made and will continue. The approach and results of ROMACTED will continue to be shared in presentations to different stakeholders and in relevant communication documents and channels of the Council of Europe. These will be also shared through</p>		From January 2025	Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division

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		the CoE – Roma and Travellers Division and Field Offices’ projects and staff to different stakeholders in the member states, depending on the context and opportunity.			
<p>Recommendation 8 – TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: The Programme has achieved manifold positive outcomes in terms of Roma empowerment at the local level. Promote them diligently among a wide range of stakeholders as they have potential to serve as a strong motivational and learning tool. A case study form might be appropriate for this. Even though the Programme implementation is due to finish at the end of 2024, systematically promote the results it has achieved in the involved municipalities to further enhance the visibility and importance of Roma empowerment and inclusion.</p>					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected		Efforts to address this already took place, including at the final conference of the Programme with the participation of the wide range of stakeholders. Further efforts will be made within the Division and through the CoE Field Offices to promote the achievements of the Programme, as specified in Recommendation 7.		Until April 2026	Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division
<p>Recommendation 9 – TO THE EC / COE: Look for opportunities to align the funding to promote Roma empowerment and inclusion with direct infrastructure investments to help address the complex issues the Roma population in the Beneficiaries face. The critical state of the infrastructure of Roma neighbourhoods might limit the positive outcomes of initiatives targeting capacity building, good governance and multi-institutional co-operation.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Rejected		This recommendation would be suitable for the donors, state authorities and other stakeholders in the Beneficiaries. This is because the Council of Europe does not implement directly infrastructure		Until April 2026	Ana Oprisan, Cooperation Programmes Manager, Roma and Travellers Division

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		<p>projects. However, the Council of Europe can and will advocate for such measures with the EU and other relevant entities whenever the opportunity will arise. In its work on other Joint Programmes, like the Roma Integration III, the Roma and Travellers Division will ensure channelling this message to state authorities and donors attending relevant activities in the field.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 10 – TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: While the field visits identified numerous positive examples of multi-institutional co-operation and successful outcomes for local Roma communities that are likely to continue/be sustained albeit in a reduced format, it cannot be expected that all municipalities involved in the Programme have achieved the same level of progress and success. Therefore, an assessment exercise should be undertaken by the respective Project Officers in close collaboration with SOs to determine which municipalities require follow-up activities, for example by providing support in upscaling of successful projects or practical proposal writing etc. This audit of municipalities’ end results and progress achieved will be helpful for targeting any future actions more effectively and efficiently.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rejected		<p>The ROMACTED Programme had its final closure in December 2024. Except one former ROMACTED Project Officer engaged in another project of the Roma and Travellers Division, none of the ROMACTED Project Officers continue to work with the Division in the Field Offices.</p> <p>The Programme sought consolidation of the commitment of the authorities during the final</p>	<p>Due to the Programme’s closure, the ROMACTED Project Officers are no longer employed with the Roma and Travellers Division and the Division does not have presently</p>		

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		months of implementation, including ad hoc and targeted support, and during the Final Conference. The Programme methodology fosters sustainability and empowerment, combined with the know-how and capacity developed the municipalities can become autonomous in ensuring the process is continued. Audit of municipalities' end results and progress achieved might not be feasible given that the Programme ended.	resources to commit for a further assessment / audit of results in all concerned municipalities of the Programme.		
<p>Recommendation 11 – TO THE COE PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT TEAM: Further to the point above, the auditing exercise could include a snapshot overview of the present status of the political will and commitment of the municipalities and their local institutional partners to continue in Roma integration and empowerment measures in a participatory way without the external impetus of the Programme. The thorough knowledge of local facilitators might be instrumental in this regard. The understanding of the current sense of ownership might be again helpful for planning and implementation of any similar initiatives in the future.</p>					
<input type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Partially accepted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rejected		As mentioned above, the methodology developed by the Programme supports ownership and sustainability of the Action at local level that is dependent on the commitment and political will of the municipality. Given that the Programme has ended, there are no resources to carry out an audit of political will and commitment at this stage. Such auditing exercise can however be implemented in	The Roma and Traveller Division does not have presently the necessary resources to commit for a further assessment / snapshot overview of the political will and		

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		the future, should the plans of the Division will include work at municipal level in the same Beneficiaries and the funding would be identified for it.	commitment of the municipal authorities in the former municipalities of the Programme closed in December 2024.		