

Improving the Situation of Disadvantaged Communities, Including the Roma FROM NATIONAL STRATEGIES TO LOCAL PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

**Chisinau, 23 June 2023
Radisson Blu Leograd Hotel**

CONCEPT NOTE (draft)

BACKGROUND

The Council of Europe is presently implementing the [Strategic Action Plan on Roma and Traveller Inclusion \(2020-2025\)](#), a policy framework for the social and intercultural inclusion of Roma and Travellers in Europe. The three main lines of action of this Plan refer to combating antigypsyism and discrimination and supporting real and effective equality; supporting democratic participation and promoting public trust and accountability; and supporting access to inclusive quality education and training. The Plan is governed by a human rights-based approach, with a central place for the principle of non-discrimination; respect for the rule of law; respect for difference and diversity; effective participation as full members of society; equality between women and men; and participation of Roma and Travellers in all decisions affecting them.

The priority area of this Plan referring to *support of democratic participation and promotion of public trust and accountability* is aimed at increasing participation in public and political life at local, regional and European level, reinforced capacities of national and local authorities to perform their roles and responsibilities in an effective and efficient manner when designing and implementing plans, policies and projects, particularly active inclusion measures that improve the situation of Roma and Travellers, and increased capacity of local authorities to access and use national and international funding, particularly EU funds, to support inclusion strategies. The methodologies of the Joint Council of Europe and European Commission Programmes [ROMACT](#) and [ROMACTED](#) support the implementation of this strategic priority area in the Council of Europe's member states and the advancement of social inclusion efforts of disadvantaged communities, including the Roma, at local level, by ultimately offering capacity-building tools and concrete solutions to the implementation of National Roma Strategies on the ground.

The [2021-2024 Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova](#) addresses also the need for relevant public institutions to enhance their capacities to protect the rights of Roma in line with European standards. Work in this area is based on recommendations from the relevant Council of Europe monitoring bodies and the results of previous co-operation programmes.

The [National Development Strategy "Moldova 2030"](#) sets intervention priorities for vulnerable groups in the country, including for persons of Roma ethnic origin. It acknowledges the need for poverty reduction and development and envisages improved services and better capacities of institutions to respond to citizen's needs. The [2022 – 2025 Programme for the Support of Roma Population in the Republic of Moldova](#) envisages targeted objectives and actions for improving the situation of Roma, through the concerted interventions of various national and local institutions to implement adequate policies and plans addressing real challenges in the field.



Moreover, *the elaboration of relevant Local Action Plans by the local public administration to implement the government approved strategic policy at local level is envisaged with concrete indicators and through approval procedure of Local / Municipal Councils.* The [Agency for Interethnic Relations](#) is the structure of central public administration that is coordinating the implementation of the thematic Action Plan for Roma in the Republic of Moldova and ensures the dialogue between the state institutions, the civil society and the international organisations working to strengthen the interethnic relations in the country.

Mainstreaming the issues of the disadvantaged communities, including the Roma, in national policies and addressing them in a targeted manner in strategic documents and action plans is crucial in ensuring their equal rights and equitable access to development. Notwithstanding, adequate mechanisms and instruments of implementation are needed, as well as capacities and resources ensured for the institutions mandated to put them in practice at national, regional and local level. Furthermore, an optimal implementation in this regard should incorporate community empowerment and participation in all working cycles, to ensure effectiveness, ownership and sustainability of results.

AIMS OF THE MEETING

The event will bring together relevant stakeholders for the implementation of the *2022 – 2025 Programme for the Support of Roma Population in the Republic of Moldova* and will offer a space for exchange and learning about effective instruments and practices for the social inclusion of disadvantaged communities, promoted by the Council of Europe with European Union support. Cross-border cooperation experiences, as well as the interest in the know-how transfer from Romania to the Republic of Moldova will be shared, as requested by the Moldovan partners.

The meeting will:

- Raise awareness and enhance understanding about the role and the approach of the Agency for Interethnic Relations on the practical application of the Roma Programme in the Republic of Moldova, through the development of Local Action Plans and involvement of community mediators as part of local implementing structures;
- Present Council of Europe instruments and opportunities to advance good governance, participation and local development;
- Introduce effective models of capacity-building and cooperation for social inclusion through the ROMACT approach and methodology, for the benefit of municipalities which need support to address the issues of disadvantaged communities, including the Roma;
- Share experiences and transferable good practices implemented by municipalities in other Council of Europe member states and discuss needs for their applicability in the Republic of Moldova;
- Discuss gaps, challenges and bring forward concrete proposals for the local implementation of relevant national policies and particularly of the 2022 – 2025 Roma Programme in Moldova based on the steps and tools proposed by the Council of Europe's ROMACT methodology.

TARGET GROUPS AND PARTICIPANTS

- Local public authorities addressing the issues of disadvantaged communities through community mediators;



- The Inter-ministerial Working Group, responsible for implementation of the [2022 – 2025 Programme for the Support of Roma Population in the Republic of Moldova](#);
- Representatives of central government and members of Parliament with an active mandate on social affairs, human rights and national minorities;
- National and international institutional partners in the field of human rights, minorities and Roma inclusion, EU integration and development cooperation.

The meeting is envisaged for 150 participants in person.

Online participation will be open for the plenary session in the first part of the day.

Romanian, Russian and English simultaneous interpretation will be provided for all participants during the plenary session.

DATES AND VENUE

The meeting will take place on 23 June 2023 from 09:00 to 16:30, in Chisinau / Republic of Moldova, at the Radisson Hotel, and online via Zoom platform.