



*Promoting good governance
and Roma empowerment
at local level*

January 2020

ROMACTED at a glance: ALBANIA

The launching meetings with 250 local councillors, international organisations, NGOs and community representatives reinforced the legitimacy of the seven participating municipalities for a significant outreach of the programme at local level.

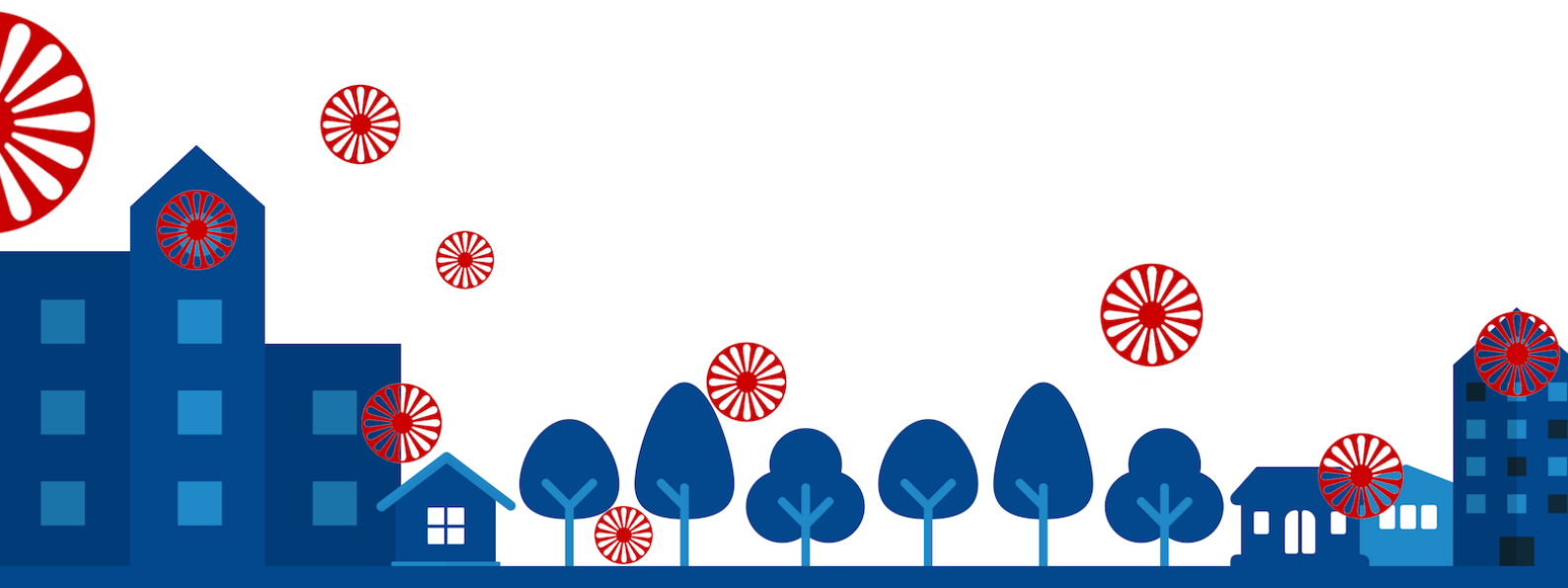
The “Institute of Romani Culture in Albania” from Tirana is the implementing support organisation of the programme in Albania. The action is coordinated and monitored by the Council of Europe Office in Tirana. The local interventions have been carried out by a team of eight facilitators and supported in the field by a group of experts on Roma issues.

The national workshop on participatory local strategic planning was organised on 21 February 2018. The workshop was followed by the launching conference of the programme, which took place on 22 February 2018. A tripartite framework of partnership for the implementation of the ROMACTED Programme was signed among the Council of Europe Office in Tirana, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and each of the municipalities of Elbasan, Pogradec, Korça, Fier, Roskovec, Vlorë and Përmet. The event served as a platform for inter-institutional exchange and coordination on the implementation of the National Action Plan for Integration of Roma and Egyptians in the Republic of Albania.

The second national workshop “Developing Joint Action Plans for Roma Integration at Local Level” was organised on 12 February 2019 in Tirana. It aimed at building the capacity of local authorities and Roma communities to prepare and implement plans and projects for Roma inclusion.

Three Advisory Group meetings took place in Albania up to date: On 13 November 2018, 25 April 2019 and 14 November 2019. The main stakeholders had an opportunity to discuss the progress of the programme’s implementation, the development of the Local Action Plans and Roma responsive budgeting.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the Ministry of Finances and Economy and following the guideline elaborated by Roma Integration/ RCC, ROMACTED in Albania is developing a pilot Roma-responsive budgeting guidelines at local level. In February 2020 a national workshop on this matter will be organised.



Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



Implemented
by the Council of Europe

Step

01

PREPARING THE PROCESS

15 Community Action Groups (CAG), seven Institutional Working Groups (IWG) and 15 Multi Taskforce Groups were officially established, almost simultaneously, in all the seven municipalities in the first six months of 2018. The average number of Roma community members participating in the CAG is ten (3-5 women on average).

The mayors of the seven participating municipalities delegated municipal contact points for the programme's implementation.

Step

02

ASSESSING NEEDS AND PRIORITISING

The initial assessment of the situation in the Roma communities and the municipalities was carried out during the inception phase through the collection of data for the baseline survey in the 7 target localities.

The Community Needs Assessments were carried out and completed in 2018.

Step

03

ADOPTING A JOINT ACTION PLAN

The seven Local Action Plans for Roma Integration 2019-2022 have been budgeted as per the budget heads and medium-term budget heads of the municipalities.

By December 2019, municipality of Roskovec approved the Local Social Plan 2019 - 2022, the municipality of Fier approved the Joint Action Plan for Roma Integration at Local Level 2019-2022, and municipality of Përmet approved the Local Action Plan for the Integration of the Egyptian Minority. It is aimed that the four remaining municipalities approve the budgeted Local Action Plans in their municipal councils in the first quarter of 2020.

Step

04

FINANCING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

As per its competitive call for grants for 2019, the Ministry of Finance and Economy allocated 720 million Albanian Lek for the 61 Albanian municipalities. The ROMACTED facilitators encouraged partner municipalities to include Roma and Egyptian families in their project proposals as beneficiaries. Four projects were submitted by the municipalities of Pogradec, Korça, Fier and Vlora. 61 Roma families and 97 Egyptian families are currently benefiting from the projects on improving the housing conditions of vulnerable communities in these four municipalities

All seven participating municipalities in Albania submitted proposals and are implementing projects under the ROMACTED small grant scheme.

Synergies and Cooperation

■ The programme provided international expertise in the design of bylaws of Law No. 22/2018 'On Social Housing' within the Ministry of Finance and Economy. The Directorate of Housing held consultations on secondary legislation for social housing in Albania on preventing forced eviction of vulnerable groups and introducing 5% quota for Roma beneficiaries per all the six housing programmes prescribed. This process is substantially supported by ROMACTED Programme and the 'Leave No One Behind'- Joint Programme of the United Nations in Albania;

■ The ROMACTED facilitator awarded as a winner of the 'Unknown Heroes' EU Award for Roma Integration 2019 in the Western Balkans and Turkey;

■ Local authorities in Roskovec provided support to the infrastructural priorities of the Roma community living in Kurjan and setting the power transformer for the village. Open courses were provided for Roma citizens to gain reading and writing skills. A Roma mediator was employed in the multi-functional community centre;

■ Two meetings were organised with Civil Society Organisations in Korca and Fier in terms of supporting the design of the Local Action Plans for Integration of Roma and Egyptian Minorities 2019-2022;

■ As the second call of applications for civil society organisations was opened by the Regional Local Democracy Programme (ReLOaD), ROMACTED facilitators organised information sessions with the Roma and Egyptian CSOs in Elbasan, Korça, Përmet and Roskovec, which are both ROMACTED and ReLOaD Programme municipalities;

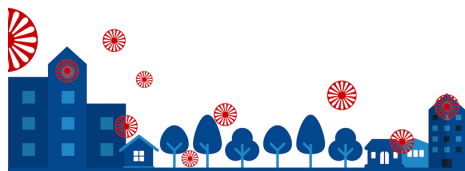
■ The "Municipalities for Europe" Programme, which targets 61 municipalities in Albania, provided all data sets collected during the consecutive years of 2017 and 2018 for the purpose of the design of the Local Action Plans for Roma Integration;

■ The current sub-granting call in the framework of the project 'Youth Standing Up for Human Rights in Albania' implemented by World Vision Albania and South East European Youth Network with financial assistance from the European Commission – European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Roma civil society organisation in partnership with the municipalities of Korça, Vlora, Elbasan and Fier were supported to apply in the Second Call of Proposal, to enable the implementation of a second project foreseen in the Local Action Plans for Roma Integration 2019-2022, in addition to the ROMACTED small grant scheme funding;

■ Joint activities with the Commissioner for the Protection against Discrimination in December 2019 in Korça, Pogradec and Vlora;

■ The mayor of Roskovec received the 'Most Roma-friendly mayor' prize in 2019 for Roma Integration in the framework of the project 'Joint initiative to empower Roma civil society in the Western Balkans and Turkey', implemented by ERGO Network and Roma Active Albania. The ROMACTED support team has been actively involved in encouraging the local actors to apply for the prize.

Small grants for municipalities



FIER

Improvement of facilities at **Trifon Prifti elementary school**

VLORA

Empowerment of Roma community by **increasing access to labour market, training programmes and promotion of professional skills**

ROSKOVEC

Reconstruction of Kurjan lake road (400 m long) **to improve accessibility of Roma community residents** to the centre of Roskovec

ELBASAN

Improve and expand the commitment, capacities, skills and knowledge of community centre staff to provide **quality and effective teaching to Roma children, rehabilitation of the bridge leading to the community centre**

POGRADEEC

Reconstruction and rehabilitation of **Kabashi Street Bridge**

KORCA

Reinforce the role of the **local network on child protection (CP)** through an inclusive approach with the Roma CAG and building municipal Child Protection units at local level

PERMET

"In the Steps of the Great Masters" with the aim of promoting and passing down to generations the **tradition and culture of Egyptian community**

