

*Promoting good governance  
and Roma empowerment  
at local level*

**January 2020**

## ROMACTED at a glance: SERBIA

ROMACTED is the first programme dedicated to Roma that is coordinated and monitored by the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade. The support organisation for the implementation of the programme is the "Association of Coordinators for Roma Issues" and local interventions have been carried out by a team of 14 facilitators and several experts.

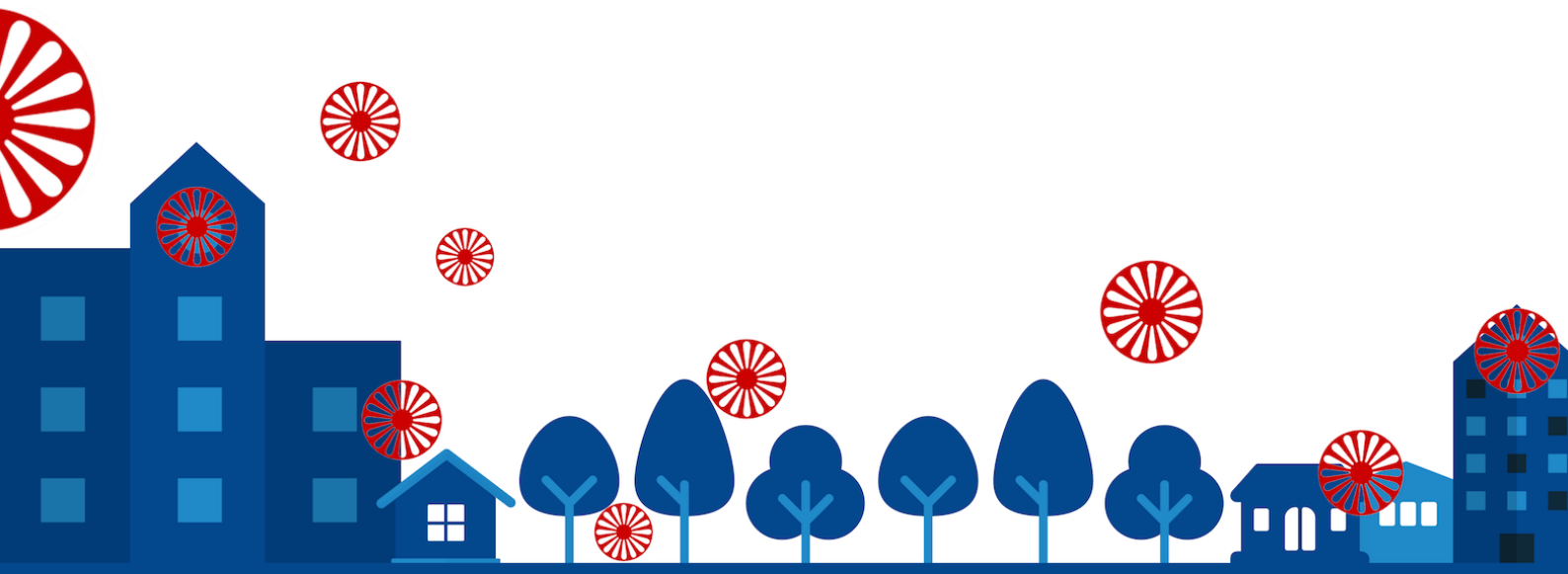
The official launch of the ROMACTED Programme took place on 29 May 2018. A tripartite framework of partnership for the implementation of the programme was signed by the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade, the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure and representatives of the local authorities from the 11 target municipalities: Kostolac, Kragujevac, Niš, Odžaci, Prokuplje, Smederevo, Subotica, Vranje, Vrnjačka Banja, Zaječar and Zvezdara.

The launch conference was immediately followed by a national training session on participatory local strategic planning (30 May 2018). The training focused on the ROMACTED methodological steps that are being implemented through participatory planning processes in the 11 municipalities.

The First Advisory Group in Serbia was held on 30 May 2019, in close cooperation with the Coordination Body of Republic of Serbia for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Strategy of Social Integration of Roma. The next meeting is planned for May 2020.

Youth participation has been particularly relevant in the context of the implementation of ROMACTED in Serbia: a national youth participation workshop was organised in September 2019 and a group of youngsters from the participating municipalities took an active part in the activities of the Novi Sad, European Youth Capital, event.

Due to the upcoming legislative elections to be held in April-May 2020, the intensity of interventions will decrease and will be at a more discreet pace. The focus will be mainly placed on the implementation of the small grants in 11 municipalities across the country; nevertheless, a series of national training workshops will be held on topics such as the sustainability of community participation, applying for IPA Funds, etc.



Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

## Step

# 01

### PREPARING THE PROCESS

The mayors of all participating municipalities delegated municipal contact points for the programme's implementation. The Community Action Groups (CAGs) were officially set up in all localities during April and May 2018, whilst the Institutional Working Groups (IWGs) were established in the autumn of 2018.

In total, there are 20 CAGs active within the 11 municipalities: one in Kostolac; two in Kragujevac (including one for youth); two in Niš (in settlement Crvena Zvezda and in settlements Stočni Trg and Beograd Mala); three in Odžaci (villages Ratkovo, Bogojevo and Deronje); one in Prokuplje; one in Smederevo; three in Subotica (settlements Peščara, Čantaš and a group of Roma musicians); one in Vranje; one in Vrnjačka Banja; three in Zaječar (one youth CAG and other two in villages Grljan and Avramica) and two in Zvezdara (including one for youth). The average number of Roma community members participating in the CAG is ten, a third of whom are women.

## Step

# 02

### ASSESSING NEEDS AND PRIORITISING

The initial assessment of the situation in the communities and the municipalities was carried out during the inception phase through the collection of data for the baseline survey in the 11 localities.

The Community Needs Assessments were carried out and completed in 2018. Eleven lists of community needs were drafted, including 58 short-term and 63 long-term priorities identified.

## Step

# 03

### ADOPTING A JOINT ACTION PLAN

All 11 municipalities expressed the need for a Local Action Plan for Social Inclusion of Roma. Joint Action Plans have subsequently been drafted based on the needs and priorities and sent to 11 local authorities for adoption.

Concrete actions were prepared for the celebration of International Roma Day (2019) in close cooperation with all 11 municipalities. Coordinated activities included the flying of the Roma flag on municipal buildings and during press conferences to show the results of the ROMACTED implementation process to date.

## Step

# 04

### FINANCING AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

By the end of 2018, the Municipalities of Zvezdara, Vrnjačka Banja, Kragujevac, Zaječar and Odžaci announced amounts totalling 25,000 EUR for financing the Joint Action Plans, which were jointly drafted by the Institutional Working Groups (IWGs) and Community Action Groups (CAGs).

The authorities of the City of Niš allocated 5 million RSD (42,000 EUR) for the purpose of the LAP implementation in the year 2019.

ROMACTED supported the preparation of six project proposals relevant to Roma communities in Niš, Smederevo, Subotica, Zvezdara and Odžaci, following the calls for projects for improvement of the situation of the Roma under the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities and OSCE Mission to Serbia, generating 286,786.78 EUR.

All 11 municipalities submitted proposals and are implementing projects under the ROMACTED small grants scheme.

# SYNERGIES AND COOPERATION

■ Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SKGO) is implementing the Programme “EU Support to Roma Inclusion - Strengthening local communities towards Roma inclusion” where all the municipalities from the ROMACTED Programme are included;

■ The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) is implementing the programme “Inclusion of Roma and other marginalised groups in Serbia” with the aim of supporting the Serbian government in implementing the National Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma in the Republic of Serbia. The programme’s objective is to improve the structures as well as the corresponding mechanisms and social attitudes. The Municipalities of Vranje, Kragujevc, Subotica, Kostolac and Zvezdara are included in the scope of programme;

■ Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SKGO) and ROMACTED organised a two-day training session for Municipal Contact Points, members of the Institutional Working Groups, and Facilitators on Human Rights and Local Strategic Planning between 23-24 May 2019. The aim was to build their capacity to meet the needs of the Roma community in developing Joint Action Plans;

■ In cooperation with the international organisation CIVICUS and NGO Civic Initiatives from Serbia, six young Roma, members of Community Action Groups, represented the ROMACTED Programme at International Civil Society Week held from 6-12 April 2019 in the context of the event Novi Sad, European Youth Capital 2019;

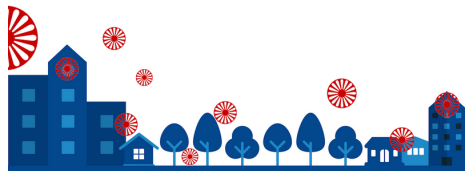
■ In celebration of International Roma Day, ROMACTED established cooperation with the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, organising a public lecture on “Strengthening Communities through Production of Knowledge on Roma History and Culture”. In addition, the open discussion on “Fostering diversity in Roma communities - Roma LGBT” was organised in cooperation with the Centre for Women’s Studies of the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade;

■ The ROMACTED Summer School for Roma Youth was implemented in cooperation with the Coalition of Roma Youth of Serbia. The event took place in Novi Sad, the European Capital of Youth for 2019. From 19-22 September, 27 young Roma men and women participated in the event. The activity emphasised the need for a special focus on the participation of Roma youth in the ROMACTED Community Action Groups;

■ The mayor of Odžaci received the ‘Most Roma-friendly mayor’ prize in 2018 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.

■ ROMACTED was part of the consultation workshop to discuss the planned activities and priorities under the “Strengthening national and local systems for effective socio-economic reintegration of vulnerable (Roma) returnees in the Western Balkans” technical assistance regional activity, which was organised by the European Commission, World Bank and UNDP.

## Small grants for municipalities



### ODŽACI

"Preserving the **cultural identity of Roma** in Odzaci"

### SUBOTICA

"Social inclusion of Roma men and women in Subotica" through **contribution to education, leisure and quality time for the ROMA children and youth**, as well as **promotion of Roma culture**

### ZVEZDARA

"Support to Roma families and children in Zvezdara" through **support of Roma pupils and housing conditions** in Roma settlements

### KRAGUJEVAC

"Supporting the implementation of an active local policy for Roma Social Inclusion" which will be focused on **education, culture and social protection**

### VRNJAČKA BANJA

"Local intervention for social inclusion of Roma", through **improvement housing and education**

### PROKUPLJE

"Infrastructural improvements in Roma settlement in Prokuplje", through the **construction of a sewage system** in settlement Cerkez mala

### NIŠ

"Local intervention for social inclusion of Roma" dedicated to **implementation of ROMACTED Joint Action Plan** in the City of Nis, in the field of **housing and education**

### SMEDEREVO

"Roma Community Initiative in Smederevo" focused on **(self)employment and inclusion of Roma youth through vocational trainings**

### KOSTOLAC

"Steps to Inclusion" will ensure conditions for **active participation of young people** in society and **supporting education of Roma children**

### ZAJEČAR

"Local intervention for social inclusion of Roma in the City of Zajecar" through **establishment of the Creative Corporate and training camp** for Community Action Group members and support of children in education

### VRANJE

"Arrangement of the **Bakija Bakic square** in settlement Gornja Carsija"

