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Study on the results and impact of the Roma Youth Action Plan (2016-2019)

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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily represent
the official opinion of the Council of Europe.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the activities organised during 2016 and 2019 under the umbrella of the RYAP programme. The main purpose of this study is to compile the achievements and challenges of the programme over the last four years in order to inform future Roma youth programmes which may be assisted or sponsored by the Council of Europe. The section on Methodology includes a detailed account of the priority areas that the Council of Europe requested to be specifically addressed in this report.

The data extracted from activities, interviews and the 2019 seminar have been studied in relation to RYAP programme objectives and expected results in the following areas: participation, training, capacity building, Romani identity, education in human rights, antigypsyism, diversity; and mainstreaming. The information below presents a summary of our findings.

- **Participation of Roma and Roma activists:** There were approximately 1589 RYAP activity participants in the 2016-2019 study period. It was noted that RYAP gave the chance to 'other Roma', i.e. young people and women were included in training and events.
Structural factors continue to hinder the participation of Romani youth in not only in decision-making bodies but also in other areas that are relevant to them. It was noted that there is still a need for the recognition of the specific needs of Roma youth.
- **Training for Roma leaders:** there were 13 training activities organised under the RYAP programme and around 193 young Roma and Roma activists underwent training of trainers and training of facilitators programmes at the Council. Training activities strengthened the knowledge and the skills of participants in several areas including self-organisation, advocacy skills, understanding of the importance of youth participation and networking. These activities provided the participants the opportunity to network at local, national, regional and European levels. Trainers found the involvement of the CoE essential for their training activities to take place. It was noted that young Roma participants need ongoing support so that they will be able to develop follow up activities resulting from their RYAP experience.
- **Capacity for Roma organisations:** it was noted that the RYAP provided very important financial and operational support to Roma organisations. In addition to this support, RYAP created networking platforms providing Roma organisation the possibility to collaborate with other youth organisation and have the chance to meet with authorities. A lack of capacity remains the greatest obstacle Roma youth and their organisations face to implement their

own projects in the future. Discrimination against Roma also continues to be a barrier for Roma organisations.

- **Roma identity and antigypsyism – Remembrance of Roma genocide; antigypsyism and human rights education:** participants developed their competences in the Roma genocide, antigypsyism, hate speech, and human rights. The Remembrance of Roma genocide was the activity that engaged the highest number of participants every year. This activity is widely regarded as a significant tool to strengthen Roma youth identity and also one of the activities with the highest likelihood of being replicated in the future. However, not all countries officially recognise or commemorate the Romani victims. Moreover, many professional sectors including, local authorities, social workers and educators continue to lack basic knowledge about Romani communities. The manual *Right to Remember* as well as the rest of handbooks developed by the Council of Europe and their translations have been regarded as important educational tools which will have a lifetime beyond the RYAP project and will continue being useful. The remembrance work of the RYAP has been found to be an effective tool to combat racism against Romanies and foster Roma identity.
- **Double Mainstreaming:** this continued to be an objective during the 2016-2019 period. Double mainstreaming refers to the integration of Roma youth perspectives to the content of different policies and addressing Roma youth representation in given policy areas and policy making processes. Double mainstreaming is a crosscutting goal that seeks to not only ensure that Roma-specific policy and policy processes include youth but that youth-specific policy and policy processes include Roma, with organisations like CAHROM involved in the activities double mainstreaming of Roma youth issues can also involve wider policy and policy making beyond youth and Roma specific institutions. While there was some progress achieved in this area many challenges remain. Roma youth have structural disadvantages that hinder their chances to organise themselves. Investment is needed to support the capacity of Roma youth, their organisations and informal structures so that they can self-organise to have a wider impact and influence on policy. Notwithstanding these challenges, it was noted that one of the most important impacts of RYAP had been making Roma youth issues visible and bringing them onto the agenda of programmes and policy of European organisations and the Council of Europe member states.

- **Key recommendations include:**
 - A need to continue to try to insure the inclusion of Roma youth in the development of future interventions and actions on all levels, Council of Europe, National, Regional and local.
 - Training needs to have a “bottom up” approach.
 - It was noted that young Roma need support to become more active citizens so that they can participate more meaningfully with local, national and EU level policy.
 - Continued capacity building in identity, history, human rights and other related topics as well as support for young Roma to develop networking skills so that they can create lasting horizontal and vertical networks.
 - The need to create materials that are in appropriate language and terminology for young people.
 - The recommendation that RYAP develop institutional training platforms on Romani communities.
 - The creation of RYAP activity monitoring and evaluative indicators that can be agreed, measured and monitored.
 - The need for development of inter-community and outer-community communication and mediation skills has also been an important recommendation.
 - The need to develop programmes which can increase the capacity of Roma youth and organisations to engage in all aspects of project development, fundraising and project management as a means to address sustainability.
 - Continued efforts for double mainstreaming which has been one of RYAP priorities areas.

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the activities organised between 2016 and 2019 under the umbrella of the Roma Youth Action Plan (RYAP). The plan was established in 2011 as a companion programme to the 2010 Strasbourg Declaration on Roma and it is managed by Council of Europe. The RYAP was designed to support Roma youth who face marginalisation and discrimination; it aims to assist Roma youth to proactively face challenges with regard to their participation in policy and inclusion in decision-making processes and structures.

The main purpose of this study is to gather the achievements and challenges of the RYAP for the last four years in order to inform future Roma youth programmes which may be assisted or sponsored by the Council of Europe.

The information contained in this report originated from several sources: RYAP documentation archive provided by the Youth Department; interviews conducted in the European Youth Centre (Strasbourg); questionnaires completed by several RYAP stakeholders; and compiled reports from the 2019 September seminar *RYAP Roma Youth Participation: What Now?*

This report opens with a brief background about the programme which sets the context in which RYAP activities between 2016 and 2019 took place. This section is followed by an explanation of the purpose and methodology of the study. The ensuing section covers the findings which contains a summary of the activities in numbers and correlates them with RYAP objectives and themes as well as detailing the number and profile of participants. The next section consists of a narrative summary of activities according to the thematic priorities set in the Guidelines for the implementation of RYAP 2016-2020. This includes a brief account of comments made by participants and trainers.

Achievements and challenges are put together in the ensuing section, this portion of the report covers the analysis of the information collected from reports and interviews. The data was studied in relation to RYAP expected results and the 2015 evaluation. The analysis integrated achievements and challenges in areas such as participation; training; capacity building; remembrances of Roma Genocide, antigypsyism, and human rights education; and double mainstreaming. Achievements and Challenges are then followed by a series of recommendations.

Roma Youth Action Plan (RYAP) Background

The RYAP began in 2011 and was established as a companion programme to the 2010 Strasbourg Declaration on Roma¹. RYAP was developed on the foundations and findings of the first Roma Youth Conference which took place in September 2011 which brought together more than 60 Roma youth leaders. The participants were given the opportunity to exchange experiences and to develop common challenges and priorities with consideration of Roma youth, youth work and youth policy.

The RYAP is a project of the Council of Europe (CoE) and is a part of the CoE's response to the challenges faced by Roma young people in Europe. The RYAP is designed to support Roma youth who face marginalisation and discrimination; it aims to assist Roma youth to proactively face challenges with regard to their participation in policy and inclusion in decision-making processes and structures. The RYAP interventions have included activities of the Youth Department, other sectors of the Council of Europe, as well as activities proposed by others including governmental and non-governmental actors.

The RYAP is administered and delivered within the framework of the Council of Europe Youth Department's co-management system, and is delivered in close collaboration with the Roma and Travellers Team of the Council of Europe. The Youth Department co-ordinates the implementation of the RYAP in line with the principles of youth participation and agency of young people in youth policy.

The 2015 evaluation identified the achievements and challenges faced during the 4 years of the plan's implementation and provided recommendations for future action. The results of the evaluators work were presented during the Roma Youth Conference in October 2015.

As a result of the 2015 evaluation and input from the Second Roma Youth Conference as well as consideration of contributions from the Information Contact Group (made up of partners and organisations), the Joint Council on Youth² resolved to continue with the RYAP and link it to the Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers of the Council of Europe.

¹ As requested we have maintained the terminology used by the Council of Europe and referred to all Romani groups as Roma. The terms "Roma and Travellers" are used by the Council of Europe to represent a wide diversity of groups which include among them Roma, Sinti/Manush, Cale, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash,/Rudari, Balkan Egyptians (Eypains and Ashkali), Eastern groups (Dom,Lom, and Abdal). It includes other groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and groups termed "Gens du voyage" as well as individuals/groups who identify themselves as Gypsies.

² Comprising of governmental and non-governmental representatives, it is a co-decision-making body of the Council of Europe youth sector.

The Guidelines for the Implementation of the RYAP 2016-2020³ covers the period of the Thematic Action Plan for the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019) and the Youth Policy Agenda 2020 of the Council of Europe.

The RYAP seeks to encourage and create:

1. Double Mainstreaming
 - a. The inclusion of youth issues in Roma policies and programmes
 - b. The inclusion Roma youth issues in youth policies and programmes
2. Capacity Building of Roma Youth
 - a. To strengthen competencies of Roma youth leaders and organisations/others who work with young Roma with the aim of supporting self-driven participation of Roma youth and sustainability of Roma youth led projects
3. Roma Youth Participation - from local to European
 - a. To involve Roma young people in all processes that impact their lives through multi-level support for them to engage as active citizens.

One of the many mechanisms used to meet the RYAP plans was the creation of an Informal Contact Group. The group was formed to promote communication and coordination among various partners and stakeholders and to promote engagement with the action plan. The Informal Contact Group which includes the following membership:

- Ternype
- Phiren Amenca
- FERYP
- ERGO
- European Youth Forum
- Ad Hoc Committee of Experts of Roma and Travellers Issues
- European Steering Committee on Youth
- National partners

Also included are representatives from the Committee of Ministers, Joint Council on Youth, CAHROM, Youth Policy Agenda, Roma and the Traveller Action Plan. SALTO Youth Network, OSCE ODIHR, OSF and other European and national partners also took part in the work of the ICG.

³ Guidelines for implementation of the Roma Youth Action Plan 2016-2020, DDCP-YD/ETD (2016) 38; Strasbourg, 30 March 2016

Purpose and Methodology of Study

This study offers an overview of activities carried out by the RYAP programme between 2016 and 2019. The main purpose of the research was to assemble the outputs of the programme and the learning gathered by coordinators, organisers and programme activities. While this study aims to produce recommendations for future Roma youth programmes which may be assisted or sponsored by the Council of Europe, it is not an evaluation of the RYAP programme. Questions regarding the impact or outcomes are beyond the remit of this study. Participants have not been interviewed and changes in the environment have not been studied. Notwithstanding these conditions, this report presents an assessment of findings as comprehensive as the information has permitted.

This two month study was commissioned by the Youth Department⁴. The scope of the study indicated by the Youth Department included the following questions to be addressed in the study areas:

1. To which extent the main objectives of the RYAP project, as stipulated in the Guidelines for the Implementation of the RYAP 2016-2020 have been pursued and achieved?
2. To what extent the RYAP has promoted youth participation and double mainstreaming of Roma youth issues? How has the work on youth participation and double mainstreaming multiplied to other stakeholders, particularly at the European and national level?
3. What kind of changes has the RYAP brought in relation to youth participation, combating antigypsyism and promoting a positive view of Roma identity taking into account issues such as diversity within Roma communities and remembrance of the Roma genocide?
4. What should be the future orientations or actions of the Council of Europe in view of the needs of Roma youth and youth policy?

Questions 1, 2 and 3 are covered in section 'RYAP in numbers' an account of objectives, themes, number and profile of participants is provided. This section includes an assessment of the sustainability of activities.

The section 'Achievements and Challenges of RYAP' includes detailed information and findings about these guiding questions, specifically:

- Question 1: pages 14-15
- Question 2: pages 31-33

⁴ The Youth Department is a part of the Directorate of Democratic Participation within the Directorate General of Democracy ("DGII") of the Council of Europe. The youth programmes of the Council of Europe are an integral part of a wealth of initiatives aimed at the development of a common European cultural identity (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth>)

- Question 3: pages 29-31
- Question 4: on pages 33-34 under the chapter 'Conclusion and Recommendations'.

The information contained in this report originated from several sources: the RYAP documentation archive which included 544 files provided by the Youth Department; interviews conducted in the European Youth Centre (Strasbourg); questionnaires completed by several RYAP stakeholders; and reports compiled at the seminar *RYAP Roma Youth Participation: What Now?* This seminar was organised to review RYAP programme achievements and to identify priority areas for the future in relation to Roma youth participation and antigypsyism. Several stakeholders, Roma leaders and experts came together along with programme participants from Roma youth organisations and networks. Other participants at the seminar included the members of the RYAP Informal Contact Group; governmental and non-governmental organisations linked to RYAP; and other local, national and European representatives.

The consultation to stakeholders and coordinators of RYAP focused on four priority areas: Roma youth participation, double mainstreaming, capacity building and antigypsyism (see questions in Appendix 2). Interviewees were asked a series of close and open questions. While questions were designed to give margin to interviewees to express their opinions and insights, they followed a closed format to facilitate the recompilation of data. Nine interviews were carried out verbally and recorded. Five were submitted in written format as a response to email requests to 47 RYAP stakeholders.

For the purpose of this study, all RYAP activities were reviewed and classified according to the type of activity:

- Capacity-building activities for youth organisations;
- Training courses for Roma youth leaders;
- Sharing of knowledge about the situation of young Roma to a wider public;
- Support for policy makers in order to create policies and measures that respond to the needs of young Roma;
- The development and dissemination of educational resources on antigypsyism, education for remembrance and youth participation.

Activities were classified by the thematic area they were set to contribute to:

- Strengthening Roma youth identity;
- Roma youth participation and building a stronger Roma youth movement;
- Human rights and human rights education;
- Combating structural discrimination and antigypsyism;
- Supporting Roma young people's access to social rights and their transition to autonomy and work life;

- Addressing multiple discrimination and fostering gender equality.

And the objectives that activities covered:

- To support the development of leadership and advocacy competences among Roma youth leaders and Roma youth organisations;
- To support and facilitate advocacy processes, based on the approach of “double mainstreaming” of Roma youth issues in Roma and youth policies at all levels;
- To facilitate the setting up of Roma youth organisations and their access to programmes and funding schemes that will enhance their capacity and sustainability;
- To develop the competences of those working with Roma youth to carry out human rights education through strategic national or regional training activities;
- To steer the experiences of the RYAP partners in developing coherent responses

The number of participants that were trained in the Council of Europe to deliver training and those who participated in the different activities according to gender and ethnic background were also noted.

In addition to objectives, the promoted thematic areas of each activity was also recorded. These themes included Roma identity; antigypsyism; human rights; Roma diversity; and Roma genocide. The purpose of this cross referencing was to record how different types of activity contributed to a wide cross section of priority areas beyond to the theme under which they were organised.

Finally, activities were categorised according to their future proofing. Low, medium and high proofing labels were assigned to activities. Activities with high future proofing categories are those that were mainstreamed and are set to continue after the RYAP programme’s conclusion; medium proofing labels refers to those activities that have been organised repeatedly throughout the life of RYAP and that have the potential to continue but we could find no evidence of commitment to continue thus far. Low future proofing designations designate activities that, while having taken place one or twice during the RYAP, did not have identifiable prospects of continuation without financial and operational support of the Council of Europe.

RYAP Programme in Numbers

Coverage of Themes by Activities

The RYAP programme contributed to the organisation of 35 activities between 2016 and 2019 (see list in Appendix 1). All activities maintained a strong focus on Roma youth participation. These activities were aimed at building capacity, fighting against antigypsyism and advocating for double mainstreaming. They included workshops for youth organisations; training courses for Roma youth leaders; raising awareness seminars; study visits and meetings. Many activities served to develop and disseminate educational resources on antigypsyism, education for human rights, remembrance and youth participation as outlined in the table below:

Coverage of Themes by Activities & Participants		
Theme	Number of Activities	Participants
Strengthening Roma youth identity	5	885
Roma youth participation and building a stronger Roma youth movement	9	199
Human rights and human rights education	6	101
Combating structural discrimination and antigypsyism	4	107
Supporting Roma young people's access to social rights and their transition to autonomy and work life	11	297
	35	1589

Coverage of RYAP Objectives

All activities contributed to fulfilling most of RYAP objectives (see table below). Objective 5, to steer the experiences of the RYAP partners in developing coherent responses, was the objective least achieved although all activities indirectly contributed to raise awareness of needs among Roma youth.

A total of 22 activities contributed to objective 1, to support the development of leadership and advocacy competences among Roma youth leaders and Roma youth organisations, and they were delivered in line with key areas of the RYAP programme, including the building of competences in young Roma leaders and Roma organisations and they had a particular focus in the area of human rights education. Objective 2 was covered by 15 activities and Objective 3, to facilitate the

setting up of Roma youth organisations and their access to programmes and funding schemes that will enhance their capacity and sustainability by 21. A total of 17 activities contributed to Objective 4, to develop the competences of those working with Roma youth to carry out human rights education through strategic national or regional training activities and 13 activities to Objective 5 which aims at steering the experiences of the RYAP partners in developing coherent responses

Coverage of Objectives	
1. to support the development of leadership and advocacy competences among Roma youth leaders and Roma youth organisations	22
2. To support and facilitate advocacy processes, based on the approach of “double mainstreaming” of Roma youth issues in Roma and youth policies at all levels	15
3. To facilitate the setting up of Roma youth organisations and their access to programmes and funding schemes that will enhance their capacity and sustainability	21
4. To develop the competences of those working with Roma youth to carry out human rights education through strategic national or regional training activities	17
5. To steer the experiences of the RYAP partners in developing coherent responses	13

Number and Profile of Participants

Approximately 1589 youth Roma and Roma activists participated in RYAP activities between 2016 and 2019. Participants came from governments, institutions, NGOs, individual Roma/non-Roma young people and other service providers. 193 young Roma and Roma activists underwent facilitation skills training. During these activities, the participants received content and methodological education and training for the different seminars organised under the RYAP umbrella. In line with the goal of achieving a multiplying effect, the coordinators of activities sought to select Roma youth and Roma activists who were already leaders within their communities with the following profiles:

- Youth between 18 and 30 years of age.
- Active within a Roma or youth organisation.
- Able to work in English.
- With experience in leading non-formal educational activities for young people.

- With experience working with Roma youth, Holocaust Remembrance and Human Rights Education.
- Involved in combating discrimination and antigypsyism at local, national or European level.
- Committed to organising or supporting follow-up activities to combat antigypsyism and hate speech.
- Ready to organise follow-up activities in support of Roma youth participation and self-organisation of the communities.
- Be motivated to learn, network and share information and experiences with other participants.

Future Proofing

Most RYAP activities have been assigned medium level in their future proofing classification. They all have the chance to be replicated in the future but there is no plan to do so. The **Memorial and Remembrance of the Roma genocide** seems to be the activity that has more possibilities to continue. It has been the activity that more participants has drawn every year, and has been organised every year since 2016. Moreover, some stakeholders expressed their intention to support its organisation in the future. The education manuals have also been assigned a high level of future proofing. These publications have been translated in several languages and used successfully during the training activities. This classification is supported by several stakeholders who noted that the manuals constituted one of more important long term impacts of the RYAP programme. The Roma Academy has been consigned a low level because the plan to create a pilot of the project was cancelled.

RYAP Programme Activities 2016 - 2019

Summary of Activities According to Theme

Strengthening Roma Youth Identity

Between 2016-2019 core activities organised under the RYAP programme with the objective of strengthening Roma youth identity included yearly seminars to commemorate the **DIKH HE NA BISTER**, Roma Holocaust Memorial Day. This activity was the result of the cooperation of the Council of Europe with other Roma youth organisations. In 2016 from August 2nd to 4th this activity included sessions in Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum. TernYpe, the International Roma Youth Network and the Documentation and Cultural Centre of German Sinti and Roma, were co-

organisers of this seminar which was opened each year to more than 150 young European Roma and non-Roma. The participation of RYAP activities and number of parallel sessions have increased every year since 2016. In 2018 a new full-day programme was organised in Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum with the incorporation of the museum's educational guides. This activity was led by a cohort of Roma leaders who previously had undergone preparatory training to deliver these seminars where they shared their knowledge with the wider public. This activity was considered an important tool in the strengthening of Roma youth identity and has a high potential for multiplying impact.

The DIKH HE NA BISTER has been shared through mainstream media, social media and live-streams in some parts of Europe. This activity represented a good example of partnership between the Council of Europe youth sector and Roma youth organisations which was central to RYAP. A few of the institutions that have been involved include the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights and the Director for Equality and Citizenship of DG Justice, European Commission, as well as OSCE- ODIHR. This collaboration has been deemed to have highly contributed to the wide recognition of the program.

The aims of activities organised under this theme would include:

- Providing Roma youth the opportunity to develop a common sense of history and destiny
- Raising awareness among young Europeans, civil society and decision-makers about the many Romani victims that perished during Nazism
- Creating a space for Roma youth to talk about current challenges of increased antigypsyism and extremism/extreme right as well as the polarisation created by some politicians to increase votes are other topics covered in these seminars.
- Promoting critical reflection and debate about the causes and mechanisms of persecution, about the moral and human rights dimension of the genocide, and about the relevancy of remembrance and Holocaust education for young people
- Sharing and Disseminating CoE educational manuals such as the handbook *Right to Remember Handbook for Education with Young People on the Roma Genocide*. This handbook is intended for youth workers in non-formal educational working settings

Roma Youth Participation and Building a Stronger Roma Youth Movement

These activities sought to build and strengthen capacity and competences among Roma youth in order to support their wider societal participation and the creation of a Roma youth movement. They promoted the creation of links among Roma youth groups inside and outside Roma populations. In addition, the events fostered solidarity among groups from different regions and diverse cultural backgrounds

within Roma communities. This activity encouraged participants to be cognizant of their own voice and provided them with a space where they could assert their position in their own communities and society and assume more active roles.

Since 2016 there have been activities every year to bring together youth from different countries. One such example is a regional activity including Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. This regional training on Roma Youth participation and antigypsyism paid particular attention to education and employment and sought to promote active citizenship among Roma youth. Other training sessions focused on the development of participant's capacity to design implement and evaluate non-formal education and training activities related to Roma young people. These training sessions were supported by youth workers and maintained a strong focus on intercultural processes. Additionally there were a number of study session, regional and national training course, some of the additional aims of these activities included:

- Introducing policies, programmes and initiatives related to Roma youth issues at local, national and European level
- Assisting in the development of strategic actions that aim to enable and promote the participation of Roma young people
- Providing information in relation to youth participation, youth organisation, and rights concerning youth
- Supporting regional cooperation and networking among Roma and youth activists.
- Creating a space for participants to exchange information and form networks of young Roma activists and allies with possibilities to initiate joint activities and projects
- Providing new tools to promote Roma youth participation for new and existing organisations and associations Identified relevant actors and stakeholders in local communities
- Encouraging “newcomers” – particularly young Roma women that had no previous experience in Roma youth groups and advocacy
- Informing participants about the Council of Europe activities, funding possibilities, peer support mechanisms, and need to network to promote sustainability
- Raising awareness about European political context and about the Council of Europe Youth Department

Human Rights Education

These training sessions sought to build human rights awareness, capacity and competences of Roma youth leaders and Roma organisations. In these sessions participants had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the different European, national and local instruments in support of Roma people and their rights. Roma activists were given the necessary skills and knowledge to become educators

and advocates for human rights of Roma people and also to have a multiplying impact in their communities with respect to awareness of human rights issues. In addition to this, RYAP training in human rights education sought to enable Roma young leaders to organise their own seminars to educate non-Roma about the reality of many Roma youth in Europe in terms of Roma community inaccessibility to human rights in many areas of life and the resulting negative consequences for many Roma youth and their future prospects. The training was based on the manual *Mirrors* developed by the Council of Europe to provide teachers, trainers and facilitators with information and tools to address antigypsyism with young people of all ages in non-formal education. The activities contained in this manual are targeted at Roma, non-Roma and mixed groups. *Mirrors* is designed to encourage inclusion and participation of Roma youth and it is an effective educational tool to combat antigypsyism and a resource that can be replicated in different contexts and countries contributing thus to its mainstreaming.

Other aims of these activities were:

- Enhancing confidence among Roma youth by providing information and education about their own rights
- Assisting participants to identify good practices in human rights education
- Promoting the initiation of new projects in support of human rights education
- Encouraging Roma youth involvement in human rights education projects at local and national level
- Informing participants of the CoE work and other organizations in the areas of human rights and how they could get involved,
- Circulating and disseminating RYAP publications, and
- Additional translation, circulating and disseminating the manual *Mirrors* currently available in French, English, Greek, Bulgarian, Russian and Hungarian

Combating Structural Discrimination and Antigypsyism

Antigypsyism training was aimed at developing understanding among Roma and non-Roma participants about this form of racism, it included an examination of its structural nature and its multiple and varied manifestations. In this training participants had the opportunity to explore the role that antigypsyism plays in the disadvantage that Romani people across Europe experience in all areas of life including health, employment, housing, and education. These sessions also introduced participants to online hate speech and offered tools on how to effectively address it.

One of the outputs of these sessions was the creation of draft a youth- friendly version of the reference paper on antigypsyism, *We are not your gypsies – Youth*

*speaking up against antigypsyism*⁵. This paper will form the basis of the future educational work on antigypsyism by ERGO Network and ternYpe. In addition, it will be disseminated among Roma civil society, youth organisations and human rights organisations, in the hope that it will support the understanding of antigypsyism among young people. Other activity worth mentioning was the study session organised in 2017 called 'Khetama Kadima'. The purpose of this activity was to raise awareness about online antigypsyism and antisemitism and foster solidarity among Roma and Jewish youth. In this session all participants had the opportunity to learn the historical background of both prejudices. Participants were encouraged to reflect on their own cultural identity, explore human rights issues and build their capacity to organise awareness raising sessions with other youth so as to achieve a multiplying effect. In line with RYAP principles this study session was intended to support intercultural dialogue and it was closely linked to the No Hate Speech Movement Campaign of the Council of Europe.

Other aims of these training sessions in antigypsyism include:

- Strengthening the capacity of Roma youth leaders and their organisations so that they could act as educators and advocates against antigypsyism
- Assisting participants to identify existing measures and projects aiming at combating racial discrimination and hate speech within national and European level contexts.
- Contributing to the emergence of networks of support across the country and facilitating dialogue among Roma youth representatives and national and local stakeholders.
- Enhancing understanding about cultural and social rights and the difficulty that some Roma people experience to access them
- Fostering solidarity and cooperation of Roma and non-Roma and the disappearance of false perceptions as well as the promotion of intercultural dialogue

Supporting Roma young people's access to social rights and their transition to autonomy and work life

Other activities that took place from 2016 to 2019 concentrated on high-level meetings on policy and practices on Roma youth, education and employment policy (RYAP objectives 2 and 5) and advocating for a double mainstreaming result where Roma youth issues would be integrated in Roma and youth policies at all levels. The Council of Europe Dialogue Meetings with Roma and Traveller Civil Society and CAHROM meetings also served to steer the experiences of the RYAP partners in

⁵ *Report of the Study session held by the ERGO Network and TernYpe International Roma Youth Network in cooperation with the European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe: European Youth Centre, Budapest; 7-13 October 2018; DDP-YD/ETD (2019) 52*

developing coherent responses which fulfils RYAP programme objective 5, to steer the experiences of the RYAP partners in developing coherent responses.

The CAHROM was set up in 2011 as an ad hoc committee by a decision of the Committee of Ministers following the 2010 Strasbourg Declaration on Roma. It is the equivalent of a steering committee⁶. CAHROM is the only international inter-governmental committee in Europe dealing specifically with Roma and Traveller Issues. The pan-European committee comprises of 41 experts appointed by Council of Europe member states with Roma and/or Traveller populations. Among the many remits of the committee, it is intended to ensure co-operation and synergies with external partners and it contributes to transversal co-operation with other CoE entities and monitoring mechanisms. The committee appointed five thematic Rapporteurs among its members, the five thematic Rapporteur areas are: Gender Equality, Roma Youth; Roma Children; Anti-Gypsyism/Hate Crime, and the role of local and regional authorities.

The Dialogue with Roma and Traveller Civil Society functions as a forum for Roma and Traveller civil society, the Council of Europe, and other stakeholders to improve their knowledge through exchanging examples of good practice and planning relevant future co-operative activities at national and local level. Other areas of work included the identification of areas where challenges remain; the exploration of synergies between international, European, national and local stakeholders and experts; and the publication of recommendations.

In 2017 the Council of Europe Dialogue with Roma and Traveller Civil Society dedicated its 4th meeting to the issue of Roma Youth Employment and Vocational Education. This topic was selected in line with the Council of Europe Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019) and is also a result of the 2011 survey in 11 EU Member States and the EU MIDIS 2016 FRA Survey which showed the pronounced disadvantage of Roma youth in both areas. The recommendations of the Dialogue was presented by the dialogue ad hoc rapporteur at the 14th CAHROM plenary meeting. Some of their recommendations included the need for more policy and strategic commitments by all relevant stakeholders to implement quality actions to tackle the increasingly high numbers of Roma and Traveller youth who are neither in education, employment or training (NEET). The recommendation was made to place a strong emphasis on the issue of Roma and Traveller youth as well as employment and occupation within National Roma Inclusion Strategies/Action Plans. It was also suggested that the latter recommendation be one of the working priorities of the CAHROM for 2018-2019.

⁶ As opposed to a steering committee, an ad hoc committee means that the Committee's mandate focuses on a particular topic, i.e. Roma and Travellers in the case of CAHROM

Assessment of RYAP Activities by Participants and Trainers

Detailed activity reports were often scarce and poorly compiled. Participant evaluations and trainer assessments of activities were not available for all RYAP actions. Feedback evaluation is provided here through the available collected information in the form of existing reports of meetings, individual trainer evaluation reports or provided partner narratives. Using the existing material, some comments and assessments made by participants were gathered by trainers who included some of their own reflections and opinions in their reports. There were very few participant evaluation forms or questionnaires available for evaluation. While the available information provided some insight it is limited and as it was not gathered coherently, it should be considered anecdotal at best.

Comments made by participants and trainers about participants and their learning

According to some trainers' reports participants felt that their expectations were fulfilled and they expressed their satisfaction with activities. Participants considered their contributions and those of the group in a positive manner and they tended to appreciate the materials used during their RYAP activity, however, there were a number of comments that noted that the materials would need to be updated on an on-going basis to ensure their effectiveness and relevance. In addition, participants had positive comments concerning the combination of formal and non-formal activities in their RYAP activities. Participants also described the environment of RYAP activities as supportive, open-minded and friendly. RYAP trainers were viewed by participants as professional, respectful and friendly. Many participants requested additional support and advice in their feedback.

Moreover, one of the trainers remarked that participants observably gained in confidence as a result of the training activity. This trainer felt that participants over the course of the RYAP activity became increasingly committed to becoming involved in Roma youth work and more willing to lead wider civic engagement. The training, according to the same report, helped to dispel many erroneous beliefs about Roma youth and motivated participants to continue learning and working in the area of fighting antigypsyism.

Trainers provided a number of insights and observations concerning RYAP participant impacts, some of which are presented below.

“In their evaluations almost all the participants expressed that they felt satisfied, motivated and ready to take action against antigypsyism back in their communities”

“Many of the participants expressed their intention to share their learning outcomes through online articles, presentations on their NGOs' webpages and in social networks”.

“Participants expressed in general high satisfaction with training workshop and the training workshop fulfilled their expectations”.

In relation to the participants’ learning one trainer listed the following as the most important learning outcomes identified by the participants:

“[It] raised awareness of the relevance of being informed; raised self-confidence; concrete ideas on how to support the community; awareness of the importance of mutual collaboration and partnership building; support to each other; motivation to stand for your rights and to take the responsibility; communication skills developed; importance of joint decision making; self-organisations; motivation to work on advocacy for the needs of young people; information on Roma Youth action Plan”.

Another trainer remarked:

“This session gave the opportunity to participants to get to know each other more closely, to become interested in each other's activities”.

Participant comments on RYAP activities included:

“I would have liked to go deeper in concepts; the programme was interesting and various; I liked very much the interactivity; It was my first seminar but it was very enriching”.

“The time was not enough; No ice-breaking; More group activities; Necessity to go deeper in concepts; Very good method, very useful to share reflections and experiences”.

“...I hope we can also realize very concrete actions; Yes, it was a very enriching experience on the personal and professional level”.

“More experts; Less ice-breaking; More participants; Examine the concepts more in depth; Timing of sessions; More team-building activities; More facilitation during activities (strongest people took more space); More material for participants; More days”.

“The group; The team of trainers and all the partners; The knowledge that I gained; The Opportunity to listen to experts; Non-Formal Education methodologies” (Answering the question What wouldn't you have changed at this meeting?)

“If we don't stop here, we can really do something very good; If the training seminar would have last more, we may have achieved more objectives; I would like to have other seminars like this one; It was a great experience; Thank you, I hope I can have other experiences like this”.

Comments made by trainers about RYAP activities

In the reflections of RYAP activities that are available, some trainers included the following points of observation and recommendation:

- It is important to have participants both from Roma and non-Roma background
- It is essential to recruit participants connected to an organisation or institution to ensure continuation of work
- The long period from the time of the selection to the time of the activity was too long and it might be the cause of the high drop-out rates
- Lists of participants should be compiled (trainer used the word 'reliable' to qualify participants. Given the content of the trainer's submitted report, we have assumed she meant participants who were relevant to the RYAP target groups with genuine interest and commitment to the activities and work).
- The approach of combining antigypsyism and youth participation was considered a good mechanism to ensure more commitment and follow-up;
- The structure of the programme and the manual *Mirrors* should be occasionally accompanied by other materials
- The training programme should include in the materials recognition of unconscious and structural antigypsyism
- Participants, in particular those that are actively engaged in youth work, antigypsyism and hate speech, should be supported by networks and established structures.
- Participants should be encouraged and mentored to get involved in national and regional training teams on antigypsyism
- The partnership and involvement of the Council of Europe was highly beneficial to the programme preparation and implementation.
- The diversity within the group of participants is considered a positive influence in the fostering openness and in the creating of a space to share different experiences
- The training was organised at a critical point in Italy as Roma youth claim more integration and representation in society and within their own communities.
- There is a need to reach out to new audiences in areas such as media and social media where there are negative Roma youth representations.
- The establishment of a National platform for Roma youth participation, composed by young people could have, according to trainers in Italy, an important impact in the encouragement and mainstreaming of Roma youth voices in Italian policies and it could provide long-term capacity building and gathering of information concerning the evolving needs and aspirations of

young Roma. It could also be used as a mechanism to engage other Roma youth.

- Information, tools, and publications on Roma youth participation should be translated into other languages.
- Participants should be supported to establish new partnerships and to connect with other human rights activists.
- The interest expressed by participants to address intersectionality and gender-based discrimination in their follow-up actions should be further supported in order to address situations of multiple discrimination that Roma youth face at different levels including within their own communities.
- Some training activities are too short and did not offer enough time to accomplish all of the training objectives.

Achievements and Challenges of the Roma Youth Action Plan

This covers the analysis of the information collected from activity reports, interviews, and the September 2019 RYAP seminar reports. In order to collect RYAP programme achievements and challenges the data have been analysed in relation to the stated results which were expected from RYAP programme activities.

The absence of a RYAP outcome plan and the vagueness on the objectives considerably hindered obtaining specific results. The 2015 external evaluation questioned whether RYAP objectives were “SMART enough” (page 39). This comment was in specific reference to the project objectives criteria that usually is followed in project management. The setting of project objectives in this way affords an ability for monitoring and evaluation. According to the SMART model criteria, objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (terminology sometimes varies, though the meaning remains the same). Indeed, RYAP objectives were often vague and ill-defined for measure, some objectives included wording such as ‘support’, ‘facilitate’, ‘steer’ and ‘develop’ which sits uncomfortably with some of the ‘SMART’ model criteria. RYAP objectives are, however, an indication of the rationale of the activities planned and carried out within the programme and they offer insight into expected results. Notwithstanding the RYAP objectives vagueness, in the section below we will refer to them as a guide to assess achievements and challenges of programme activities.

For the same reasons mentioned above, outcomes have been difficult to ascertain due to the lack of an outcome plan and indicators to quantify them at practical programme level. This has resulted in a scarcity of quantifiable information. In some cases activity reports included a specific declaration of participant intent to organise follow up activities but none of these activities have been further documented so it is impossible to ascertain if any of the mentioned activities took place. For this reason, the term ‘achievement’ is used rather than outcomes for the purpose of this study.

While in some cases ‘achievements’ do not amount to outcomes per se, they have the potential to become such. In other cases there were outcomes, such as the number of participants trained, though without baseline information changes in the environment or in the participants could not be assessed.

With the above in mind, we have reviewed the accomplishments of the RYAP programme against the results expected in the following areas: participation; capacity building; Romani identity; education in human rights, antigypsyism, and diversity; and mainstreaming. The information below presents our findings.

Participation of Roma Youth

There were approximately 1589 activity participants in the period 2016 -2019. Of this number around 193 young Roma and Roma activists underwent training programmes at the Council. The total number of participants in this study period compares favourably to the approximate 1400 participants between 2011 and 2015. Youth participation was important not only in terms of making sure that Romani youth participated in RYAP activities but also as a theme in the training programmes. Priority was given to youth who qualified as ‘multipliers’ and were in a position to replicate and extend the benefits of RYAP training and become instrumental in the development of a Roma movement.

Romani participants were reached through a variety of channels. RYAP launched an open call for all activities. According to the RYAP coordinator these open calls were circulated through different channels including former RYAP beneficiaries, ICG members; web and social media, European Roma and non-Roma youth networks; Roma youth organisations, government CDEJ and CAHROM partners and through other CoE programmes targeting Romani populations such as ROMED and ROMACT. NGOs were also contacted as well as partners of other existing projects. RYAP coordinators from 2014 have aimed at establishing links with national and regional organisations and some of the contacts originated from that effort.

Several interviewees pointed out that RYAP provided some young Romanians with the opportunity to travel and participate in activities in the CoE, without the RYAP programme these opportunities would not have existed. One interviewee pointed out that RYAP gave the chance to ‘other Roma’, i.e. young people and women, the opportunity to be included in training and events. In some countries, like Lithuania for example, it was the first time that such activities have taken place and, therefore, the first time Romani youth had the opportunity to participate in events focused on the Romani population/themselves.

The exact number of Romani who participated in RYAP programmes was impossible to ascertain as in most activities ethnicity was not recorded. The lack of records in relation to Romani participants was an issue that was also pointed out in the 2015

evaluation. However, the RYAP coordinator noted that this issue from the 2015 evaluation was not addressed in an effort to assure the adherence to equality and non-discrimination principles. The RYAP coordinator added that application forms included a question “what is your relationship with the Roma Community?”, which often provided information on their ethnicity. This study was unable to consider application form content as application forms were not provided in the review materials, profiles of participants were gathered from trainer and facilitator information. While not all activities recorded attendance, efforts were made to include as many Romani young people as possible in the activities.

According to interviewees, many Romani youth were not able to participate because the legal and residence status in their given country of residence was uncertain. This was specifically referenced as the case in Italy, though it is likely that Romani people might have faced similar difficulties in other countries. However, the RYAP coordinator pointed out that this statement is inaccurate as almost all activities organised under RYAP counted with the participation of Roma youth from camps and with problems of personal documentation. The coordinator added that the attendees legal or residence status was never an impediment to participate in RYAP activities. Furthermore, according to RYAP coordinator, efforts were made to accommodate participants’ social, economic and language needs and as result RYAP decided to focus on national and regional areas. The uncertainty of legal and residency status in which many Roma youth and their families live might have not affected their possibility to enrol in RYAP activities, it nevertheless renders many families ineligible for public services. This ineligibility was mentioned as an important obstacle for progress in the Italian context.

Another noted obstacle for the participation of Roma youth was their living conditions. Many live in the outskirts of society in settlements and areas with no infrastructure. Several people involved in RYAP activities mentioned the difficulty of accessing Romani youth who were living in rural and more isolated areas, one such case can be found in Croatia. In other countries such as Lithuania, many Romani people were simply invisible. The English language, sometimes a requirement to participate in activities, was also viewed as an impediment for many youth. Another factor, mentioned a few times to explain the low participation, was the difficult physical living conditions of some young Romanies which ultimately prevents them from participating in activities. In addition, it was noted on a few occasions that many young Romanies would not be familiar with the technical language of the calls because of what can be perceived as intimidating language. Another issues, according to the RYAP coordinator was that in many cases national governments did not recognise Roma youth as a group with specific needs and they were also not willing to organise activities for Young Romanies.

Another challenge that emerged during the conference from a number of interviews was the perception that the same participants attended activities year after year. To

illustrate this view, according to one interviewee, the RYAP has exacerbated the already existing elitism that characterised many other projects for minority populations. Another stakeholder remarked that much of the learning from CAHROM and other forum confirmed that structural factors continue to hinder the participation of Romani youth in decision-making bodies and other areas that are relevant to them. Several of the interviewees concurred with this view. One interviewee, while recognising the benefits from RYAP, pointed out that the programme has worked from the top to bottom and consequently has left many Romani excluded, particularly those not linked to existing NGOs. Justifiably, according to the Head of Division Education and Training of the Youth Department, the RYAP have intentionally given priority to multipliers in youth and NGO sectors as a means for double mainstreaming, however, in future activities it may be advisable to include some mechanism for participatory involvement of a wider catchment.

Training For Roma Youth Leaders

During the period 2016 to 2019 there were 35 activities organised. A number equal to the number of activities reported in the 2015 evaluation.

The training activities organised under the RYAP programme were related to objectives one and three. These activities were intended to support the development of leadership and advocacy competences among Roma youth leaders and Roma youth organisations; as well as strengthen the capacity of those working with Romani youth. The idea was to train young Roma and non-Roma who could then train others and achieve a multiplying effect.

Training activities strengthened the knowledge and the skills of participants in several areas including self-organisation, advocacy skills, the importance of youth participation and networking.

These activities provided the participants the opportunity to network at local, national, regional and European levels and created a space to share many of their experiences and activities in their countries.

Other capacities potentially developed or were reinforced among participants. These included communication and debating skills; teamwork; public speaking and problem solving. Participation in RYAP activities also encouraged critical thinking, dealing with difficult conversations and handling disagreements in constructive ways.

Trainers expressed a general satisfaction with the training, both its content and proposed methods. Moreover, they remarked how the involvement of the CoE was a fundamental element for the organisation of their training activities and activity implementation.

In order to achieve a multiplying effect of RYAP activities effort was made by organisers to recruit participants that had experience and had a particular profile (see section *Number and Profile of Participants*). However, there is no record of the profile of the activity participants. While RYAP focused on those participants that had more potential in achieving a multiplying effect in terms of activism and leadership one of the trainers commented that her participants did not have experience working with Romani people or other minorities. Another trainer mentioned in her report that it was important to recruit participants connected to organisations that would likely be able to ensure continuation of work and added that her participants did not comply with such profile. One of the trainers of *Mirrors* (Human Rights education) found a low level of participation and wrote the following comment:

“It is important to highlight that many of the selected participants cancelled their participation in the last moment, which resulted in having just 18 participants present instead of 25. Participants were not all in the expected profile in terms of experience, but they did bring a broad spectrum of Roma in Europe, including representatives from countries that we do not meet often in European Roma youth work (e.g. young travellers from the United Kingdom).”

While participants seemed to have been motivated and expressed their willingness to replicate their learning according to trainers reports it is not clear if this was ultimately the case post-RYAP activity. Some of the reports did gather future aspirations and ideas that youth developed during activities. For example, in Italy at the end of a 2017 training, participants drafted a plan to develop 11 different projects that they wanted to see implemented at local and national levels. Some projects included a national training programme on Romani rights for students and teachers, organised by Romani trainers and peer educators; the creation of a database of Roma associations; education workshops and the creation of an info-centre. However, no mechanism was envisioned to monitor whether these activities actually came to fruition or a plan was designed to further develop them.

It is worth noting that external evaluators reviewing RYAP programme from 2011 to 2015 mentioned the need for “[t]racking and measuring multiplication effects and changes in the situation of young Roma as a result of activities” (page 9) in their final submission.

Capacity For Roma Youth Organisations

According to RYAP coordinator the Youth Department has sought to include Roma youth at every level through the co-management approach. As a consequence the RYAP has continuously worked with the European Youth Roma Network in developing the project activities and general direction.

In relation to RYAP financial and operational support, one interviewee pointed out that the support provided by RYAP was fundamental for his organisation and other organisations to organise activities. This individual also mentioned that without the Council of Europe's support this work would have been too demanding for national partners and Roma youth NGOs. Another stakeholder added that the support of RYAP combined with other support contributed to the emergence of three European Roma youth organisations. According to the RYAP coordinator the Youth Department has made an effort to provide Roma youth organisations financial and operative support, while at the same time encouraging them to plan and implement their own ideas.

Capacity of Roma youth and Roma organisations continues to be a significant challenge. All stakeholders consulted mentioned lack of capacity as the greatest obstacle Roma youth and their organisations face to implement their own projects in their future. Knowledge and skills to undertake financial and project management, and tasks such as drawing actions plans, or completing funding proposals as well as other operational functions were deemed very challenging for some Romani youth. Lack of financial and human resources also was mentioned several times. In addition to this, the co-funding to partake in EU projects has been and will continue to be a serious impediment for Roma youth autonomy. One of the interviewees insisted that Roma youth should be included from the early stages of project and programme development; stating that they should be consulted to discover what skills they feel they need. This individual felt that often projects assume what the target groups need without consultation with the people concerned. Furthermore, in this interviewee's opinion, the RYAP had created a nice experience for some Roma youth but it did not go far enough to achieve a sustainable impact. The individual explained, that he felt that the training experience was too far removed from the day to day realities of many young Romani ie. issues of access to programmes, additional transport costs and other related expenses to participate as well as post-training barriers to implement what they have gained from their experiences in the RYAP activities. In addition this individual noted that the enormous diversity within Romani populations was neglected.

Discrimination against Roma organisations was mentioned as continuing future obstacle. According to one RYAP stakeholder, discrimination and structural barriers impede the social and political participation of Roma youth and their organisations; saying that this fundamental challenge is the reason why the outcomes of projects targeting Romani youth are short-lived and with little impact.

Another interviewee added that often many Romani people usually do not benefit from the skills and knowledge of educated Romanies because their career are not diversified enough, saying that educated Romanies' careers develop away from their communities and therefore they become removed from them. This according to this

individual is one reality that should be taking into consideration in future projects addressing the needs of Roma youth.

Community leaders were also mentioned as barriers to Roma organisations. Some interviewees mentioned that in some cases community leaders might act as gatekeepers not interested in either youth or wider community participation. In this aspect, RYAP was considered to have had a good impact because the programme provided young Roma the chance to go beyond community leaders to access opportunities.

All agreed that Roma youth face more obstacles than other mainstreamed youth. The marginalisation and exclusion in which some young Roma live has contributed significantly to a lack of participation, capacity and self-organisation. For several interviewees this is the reason why Roma youth will be negatively impacted by the reduction of financial resources addressing human rights after 2020. Some interviewees considered that Romani organisations will face the same situation in the future as they had before RYAP and return to what was the previous status quo.

Roma Identity and Antigypsyism – Remembrance of Roma Genocide; Antigypsyism and Human Rights Education

Participants also developed their competences in the Roma genocide, antigypsyism, hate speech, and human rights. In addition, they became familiar with the manuals developed and translated under the RYAP programme and CoE including:

Mirrors available in French, English, Greek, Hungarian and Bulgarian

Education for Remembrance: the Roma Genocide is available in English, French and Lithuanian

Barabaripen available in English

The completion and translations of these manuals have significantly promoted the engagement of Roma youth. In addition, they have contributed to the support of Roma identity, human rights education, self-organisation, and the fight against discrimination. These manuals offer an opportunity to mainstream educational tools and their translation provide NGOs with funding opportunities to run accompanying activities. For example RYAP coordinator mentioned that in Hungary, a project was created to deliver workshops on antigypsyism and Human Rights Education across the country and added that in Bulgarian the copy-right holders of *Mirrors* have organised around 20 two days events on Human Rights and antigypsyism.

The memorial of Roma genocide, the initiative DIKH HE NA BISTAR, has been the activity that has engaged the highest number of participants every year. It has a page in Facebook with more than 3,000 followers. This particular activity is widely

regarded as a significant tool to strengthen Roman youth identity and one of the activities with the highest likelihood of being replicated in the future. Several interviewees mentioned the manuals and their translations as important education tools which will continue being useful beyond the RYAP project. Other projects will be able to use them even though interviewees warned the manuals should be updated regularly to ensure the information provided remains current.

A governmental stakeholder mentioned that the manual *Right to Remember* will be shared with teachers and social workers in her country (Lithuania). In addition, she made the commitment to continue to organise the memorial after the support of CoE comes to an end.

However, many challenges remain in this area. Not all countries officially recognise or commemorate the Romani victims. This lack of recognition is compounded by the lack of acknowledgement that many Romanies face in some locations. This lack of recognition exacerbates a sense among Roma youth that their cultural and linguistic identity is denied. Many professional sectors including local authorities, social workers and educators continue to lack basic knowledge about the Romani clients/communities.

The remembrance work of the RYAP has been also an effective tool to combat racism against Romanies. Under the RYAP there has also been training in human rights education and antigypsyism. Some of activities combined antigypsyism with youth participation training which was deemed by trainers very useful. According to some of the activity reports, engaging them to become more actively participatory in their lives has helped to motivate participants and encouraged them to share the training back in the communities, organisations and other areas.

Training in antigypsyism has been also accompanied by training in hate speech. Participants also learned about and got involved with the CoE's *No Hate Speech Campaign*.

The training activities in human rights educations had a double effect. They informed participants of their own rights and also provided them with tools to become advocates and trainers. However, there is no evidence that they have used the tools or become human rights advocates and trainers. One of the areas where more awareness exist due to activities is the lack of basic rights in the area of formal education. Stakeholders found that low levels of formal education to be a significant barrier for Roma youth. Several interviewees lamented that the prejudice against Romanies still remains widely accepted by society and they saw a real need to combat this prejudice in schools.

During the conference and in the activities reports antigypsyism, and its consequences were often discussed. Discrimination was considered by the majority

of interviewees as an important obstacle to Romani young leaders and their organisations and the overwhelming opinion was that they will continue to face this in the future. Indeed, the seminar rapporteur wrote that “Roma youth are not always welcome to participate and collaborate with activists and political actors. The harm [caused by this] must not be underestimated. Many young Romanies hide their identity and actively seek cultural invisibility to avoid discrimination. Prejudice is a reality that Roma youth live on an everyday basis. There continues to be a need to value culture and language as a tool to strengthen their identity and to combat discrimination. Nowadays it is particularly needed as Romani youth currently live in the midst of hate rhetoric used by politicians that as common agitators seek to divide groups between ‘us’ and ‘them’ as their search for easy votes.

Participants to RYAP activities and the September seminar spoke extensively about discrimination against Romani youth, the intersection of racism against Romanies with other forms of prejudice was not debated even though the presentation *Multiple Discrimination and Intersectionality: Young Roma LGBT Activism* was part of the September seminar. While the activity reports mentioned the effort made by coordinators to have equal number of women in activities there was no record of how many of those women were Romani.

The 2015 evaluation reported four different activities organised to raise awareness about multiple discrimination affecting young Romanies due to their sexual orientation or disability. In addition to this, during this early period the CoE published *Barbaripen* a manual that contains the stories of many young people suffering from multiple discrimination. However, between 2016 and 2019 no activity was organised to celebrate the diversity of Romani voices and train participants about the realities of multiple discrimination faced by many youth in their communities.

Double Mainstreaming

One of objectives of RYAP programme was to double mainstream Roma youth matters in Youth policy and in Roma policy both 2015 evaluators found that RYAP had made concrete progress covering this objective as a special rapporteur on youth was appointed in CAHROM. Other progress reported in 2015 included the organisation of a CDEJ Summer University and a variety of Thematic Study Visits by CAHROM in Slovenia and the Roma youth meeting organised in Ukraine. In addition, a youth dimension was anticipated to be developed in the ROMED programme.

Since 2016 RYAP has continued to emphasise the importance of mainstreaming the needs and concerns of Roma youth in policy agendas related to Roma as well as youth issues. Several activities carried out by CAHROM were reported and they included dialogue and study visits covering subjects such as integration/social inclusion, dialogue meetings with Roma and Traveller organisational representatives,

Roma civil society, remembrance activities, meetings with institutional representatives and access to employment among others. While doubling mainstreaming continued to be an objective during the period 2016 to 2019 less than expected progress was achieved in this area.

During 2016 the concept of the Roma Academy (RYA) was developed and a draft of the concept was finalised in November 2016. While the RYA could have been an important outcome of RYAP in terms of mainstreaming Roma youth issues, due to lack of funding plans to create a pilot did not progress. The Roma Academy was developed to be a long-term educational activity. It was to be driven by the Youth Department with the foundational purpose of enhancing Roma youth skills in democratic leadership, enhance skills in community self-organisation and to develop capacity for economic autonomy. The RYA was first developed for, and as a part of, the Council of Europe's Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers⁷. The RYA specifically addressed the Thematic Action Plan's objective of strengthening the self-organisation of young Roma and Travellers and their participation in society. The RYA aimed to implement comprehensive training programmes that included group training, individual coaching/mentoring and the creation of networking opportunities. It wanted to establish itself as a resource for Roma youth and youth organisations where experience, information and support could be found and offered to other activities of the RYAP and partners.

Whilst Mainstreaming is considered necessary to strengthen Roma youth voices and support their social, cultural, economic and political rights there is also an awareness that mainstreaming Roma issues might have a negative effect as Roma needs might get lost in policies. Many voiced an opinion that they believed, instead, that Roma communities need a special focus.

However, there remain considerable challenges to achieve double mainstreaming. According to the RYAP coordinator, the specific needs of Roma youth have not been recognised enough thus neglecting the right of Roma to be young. Moreover, many governments lack understanding of what double mainstreaming is.

According to several stakeholders, Roma youth must overcome many structural disadvantages. As indicated by one interviewee for Roma youth it's more difficult to find spaces to organise themselves. Many live in settlements and don't have the money for basic needs such as public transport. Other Roma people might be in better economic situation but still find it difficult to pay for national youth organisations membership fees. In support of these realities for some, several

⁷ The Thematic Action plan provides the political, logical and budgetary framework for the Council of Europe action between 2016-2019. Particular efforts taken within the Thematic plan included: enhancement of the level of focus and concentration of project activities to increase visibility and impact; to offer targeted support to member States on relevant inclusion policies; and to implement result-oriented projects with a concrete impact.

stakeholders pointed out the need of Roma youth participation in decision making and coordinative structures so as they are able to express their needs and aspirations. Many mentioned that investment is needed to support the capacity of Roma youth, organisations and informal structures to self-organise. It was also noted that there was a need to create a body that could monitor mainstreaming to guarantee the participation of Roma youth.

Notwithstanding these challenges, as a consequence of the RYAP programme, an Italian stakeholder stated that Italy was planning to introduce a chapter dedicated to Roma youth in their Roma National Strategy. Indeed several stakeholders noted repeatedly that one of the most important impacts of RYAP had been making Roma youth issues visible and bringing them onto the agenda of programmes and policy of European organisations and the Council of Europe member states. Now the CoE, EC, OSCE and other programmes have incorporated Roma youth issues as part of their working priorities. Several stakeholders noted that RYAP had supported the creation of a national network and that it has fostered the cooperation between government and NGOs. Particularly significant for future mainstreaming has been the contribution that the RYAP has made to support the emergence of many youth organisations alongside the strengthening of new and existing youth organisations through their capacity training.

While it is difficult to ascertain the future repercussion of this increased visibility and new focus on Roma youth achieved by the RYAP once the programme concludes, it certainly has the potential to become one of the project's most important results.

Conclusion

Results obtained by the RYAP programme in the period 2016 and 2019 included:

- 35 activities organised
- 1589 (approximately) activity participants
- 193 young Roma and Roma activists trained to become trainers and advocates
- Roma women participated in CoE activities
- Developed knowledge and skills among participants in self-organisation, advocacy skills, and networking
- Enhanced existing network and created networks with other activists at local, national and European levels
- Enhanced cooperation between statutory and non-statutory organisations
- Strengthened capacity of Roma organisations
- Assisted in the emergence of Roma organisations
- Financial and operative support provided to organisation to coordinate activities

- Built competencies around the Roma genocide, antigypsyism, hate speech and human rights education
- Developed specific thematic manuals that support Roma identity, self-organisation and then the translation of CoE education manuals in several languages
- Selection of a rapporteur in CAHROM
- Increased visibility of Roma youth issues

Challenges that should be considered for future programmes include:

- The barriers to participation that some Roma youth face due to uncertain legal and residence status which continues to prevent the participation and access to services for Roma youth across Europe
- Difficulties in reaching out to Roma youth who live in rural and isolated areas. Many Roma youth continue to be invisible in many areas
- Structural poverty and disadvantages in education and employment continue to hinder the participation and inclusion of Roma youth in programmes
- English language and technical language (typical of European programmes) are barriers to participation for many Roma youth
- Roma youth specific needs are often not recognised by statutory and non-statutory organisations
- Existence of an interior group among Roma favoured in activities and events
- Supports needed for young Roma in the form of follow up activities and to achieve a multiplying effect
- Lack of financial and operative capacity among Roma organisations
- No official recognition of the Roma genocide
- The persistence of hate speech against Roma people in social media and in the rhetoric of politicians across Europe
- Not enough attention paid to situations of multiple discrimination
- Discrimination against Roma continues to exacerbate young Roma exclusion and marginalisation

Recommendations

A number of recurring themes emerged over the study period of 2016-2019. While some recommendations were national context specific, many were cross cutting and shared regardless of national political or social circumstances.

One emergent theme is the need to insure the inclusion of Roma youth in the development of future interventions and actions; that the participatory process inherent in much of the training must also be practiced in the development of future RYAP initiatives. This reflects the observations from many over the years that skills and training need to meet participants “where they are” rather than have training and

interventions designed by well intentioned “top down” methods; this approach ensures that the widest catchment of the target group can also be included in not only the design of interventions but also through retained and continued participation networks for activities.

Alongside participation in design of programmes meant to serve and support Roma youth, mentioned a number of times, was the need to support young people to become more active citizens so that they can participate more meaningfully with local, national and EU level policy makers so that they can achieve real, lasting political participation. Continued capacity building in identity, history, human rights and other related topics are among relevant recommendations to create a fuller participation. These proposals dovetailed with the recommendation to assist youth in networking skills so that they can create lasting horizontal and vertical networks.

Another recommendation is the need to create materials that are in appropriate language, i.e. using terms that are accessible to the target group and also having materials translated to other languages. This recommendation mirrors the comments recorded earlier that there is a concern that in some ways the programme has been unable to reach the most marginalised. Specific reference has been made to the inaccessibility of language (both terms and national language) used in calls for participants as well as in training materials in both interviews and the material reviews. The recommendation to adjust language in materials to be more youth friendly and to be translated meets the concerns raised regarding inaccessibility to materials.

While direct work with institutions is beyond the remit of the youth department the recommendation that the RYAP develop institutional training platforms (to include police, education and institutions) on Romani communities was another recurring theme. The Youth Department may be able to act on this recommendation through joint action, assistance and methodological approaches in cooperation with other CoE initiatives, two of which may be the ROMACT and INSCHOOL programmes. While a few have been aware of the ROMACT programme, many seem unaware of the CoE programmes purpose to support and coordinate actions to assist the Roma Community, the joint initiative of the CoE and EC assists mayors and municipal authorities to work together with Roma communities to develop policies and public services that are inclusive to all. A part of this programme includes training for local authorities, elected representatives, civil servants and institutions. While ROMACT is not a Roma youth or youth specific initiative, there is perhaps a space for creating collaborative opportunities ahead to meet the recommendation of creating institutional training on Romani issues. In addition, the INSCHOOL “Inclusive Schools: Making a Difference for Roma children” programme is a joint project by the EU and CoE and focuses on inclusive education for Roma children and young people, this may also represent an opportunity for some form of collaboration between the RYAP intentions and the INSCHOOL practice model.

From the RYAP Evaluation of the Roma Youth Action Plan (2016) onwards the recommendation that RYAP activity evaluative indicators be agreed, measured and monitored has been a constant proposition. Throughout the study period the need to identify, agree and implement realistic indicators has been a constant theme.

Another consistent proposal for future action has been the idea of developing inter-community and outer-community communication and mediation skills. There may be cooperative and collaborative opportunities to develop materials specific to RYAP Roma youth support using existing CoE initiatives, programmes such as the CoE ROMED Mediator training programme. While ROMED is not a youth specific mediation training and support programme, they do work with Roma communities to develop their skills in community mediation and in wider mediation with institutions and other relevant stakeholders.

A further important recommendation is the need to develop programmes which can increase the capacity of Roma youth and organisations to engage in all aspects of project development, fundraising and project management as a means to address sustainability.

In all, the recommendation of the continued need to address double mainstreaming of Roma youth in youth policies and Roma youth in Roma policies was evident. This recommendation was punctuated by many comments that promote the creation of policies is not necessarily enough, a number of times the need to support, monitor and assist practical implementation of policies was raised.

Continued work and strengthening of Roma youth identity is also a key area for future programme activity; building on the success of Dik He Na Bister is identified as an area for growth. The continued creation of resources which address remembrance, Roma resistance, and other Roma related histories may want to be considered as a means to achieve both an increased sense of individual Roma identity; addressing racism and discrimination; and mainstreaming aims of the RYAP.

The recommendations, in the main, seek to build on the successes of RYAP programme activities. A few of the recommendations seek to address areas which need attention and were not fully implemented or explored; one in particular not mentioned as a main theme throughout the study period is the need to encompass and serve the diversity which exists in the community (gender and sexuality for example). While this area was mentioned, it was not a consistent and ever-present theme in activity. Perhaps this is because there were not many activities that could be identified as addressing this intersectionality.

Additionally, it should be noted that many of the recommendations around interventions concerning capacity building of Roma youth, were the intended purpose of the Roma Youth Academy. Perhaps these findings offer a platform for the continued argument of the Roma Youth Academy as a valid and needed initiative.

It is also worth note that the suggestions summarized and outlined above offer mechanisms which are true to the intentions of the RYAP programme which are to focus on: double mainstreaming; capacity building of Roma youth; and youth participation from local to European levels.

The recommendations offered clearly provide a foundation to create a road map for further activities as a means to continue to support Roma youth in the years to come.

Appendix 1

Activities 2016 - 2019

- RGRi ternYpe
- NTC in Ukraine
- RTC in Ukraine
- ICC RYAP Meeting
- CEU Study Visit
- Mirrors Regional Training Greece
- Mirrors National Training course on combatting Antgypsyism through human rights education
- Roma youth political participation seminar
- CM on the Roma Youth Academy
- 11th CAHROM Meeting Bulgaria
- 12th CAHROM Meeting Strasbourg
- Translation into Bulgarian of Mirrors Training Course
- TernYpe - 73 Anniversary of Roma Holocaust Memorial Day
- Mirrors Training Course - Combating AG through RY participation
- 4th Dialogue with R&T CS: From Education to Employment
- Khetane Kadima 2.0 - Combating online hate speech
- 13th CAHROM Meeting
- 14th CAHROM Meeting
- Regional Training course on RY participating and AG
- Training seminar on AG and online hate speech
- Training workshop in RY participation and self-organisation
- RGRi Events of TernYpe
- RTC on RYP and AG in Lithuanian - titled in documents as Workshop on education with young people in Lithuania about the Roma genocide
- NTC on Human Rights Education with Young People (Mirrors & Compass)
- TS pm AG and online HS in Italy
- EU Roma week meeting
- 12-14 June CAHROM thematic visit
- ERGO and TernYpe KNOWLEDGE IS POWER
- Seminar on the role of Roma youth in policy and decision-making bodies and structures
- Belgium training seminar on RYP
- Meeting of Roma Youth Networks
- Mirrors Hungarian version
- Right to Remember Lithuanian Version
- TernYpe involvement with EU Roma Week 2019, Meetings & Seminars
- RYAP Seminar: *What Now?*

2016: 10 activities; 2017: 9 activities; 2018: 12 Activities; 2019: 4 activities

Note: CAHROM and Dialogue are not part of the RYAP programme. Both structures belong to the Council of Europe Roma and Travellers Division. They are included here because they were part of the documentation supplied by the Youth Department for consideration in this study.

Appendix 2

Consultation

In what capacity are you involved with RYAP programme

1. In your opinion, has the RYAP programme made tangible improvements for Roma youth and Roma youth organisations?

YES

NO

Please give three reasons to explain your answer

1

2

3

2. Do you think that the RYAP programme has been effective in promoting the participation of Roma youth?

YES

NO

Please name three obstacles that remain to achieve full participation of Roma youth

1

2

3

3. Considering the future, what challenges do you think Roma youth organisations will face in the implementation of projects ahead?
Please name three

1

2

3

4. In your opinion has the RYAP programme been successful in the inclusion of Roma youth in policies aimed at Roma and Youth?

YES

NO

Please name 3 aspects that in your view are needed to achieve mainstreaming.

1

2

3

5. In relation to the short and long term impacts of RYAP? Please name two of each

Short term

1

2

Long term

1

2

Appendix 3

Table for analysis of activities

Ref	Activity	Act- Type	Theme	Obj- P01	Obj- P02	Obj- P03	Obj- P04	Participants	#oma	#oma Women	#non-oma	Part- TT	Part- T	Pro-ID	Pro-AG	Pro-DV	Pro-GC	Future proofing	Comment
1																			
2																			
3																			
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