

Good Practice: GR GP1

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"Roma Action Plan"

Main features of the GP programme:

Type of programme	Type of organisation	Field of practice for organisation	Programme scope	Programme duration	Programme occurrence/frequency	Type of funding for GP
Non-formal adult education	Non-profit, NGO	Basic adult education and training	Local	175 hours	Continuous (started in 2009) and is provided ad hoc based on interest.	100% funded and supported by local authority funds

Adult Education as a Means to Active Participatory Citizenship (EduMAP) is a Horizon 2020 research project focusing on adult education among young adults at risk of social exclusion. Particular attention is paid to educational policies and practices needed to foster active citizenship among vulnerable young people.

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1. What – Focus (theme, orientation)

The programme primarily aims to include young Roma women's voice, needs and interests into the local action plans. As such, the access to goods and services in the community is made available through introducing the specific needs of the Roma communities into the local development strategies; needs that have been identified in the local action plans developed in a participative manner. On the other hand, the project aims to support the local economy through training and consultancy for local women interested in generating income for their area.

2. For whom – Target group(s)

It is an AE support programme for Roma women aged 18-35 and operates locally. The programme provides basic training and social support to young Roma women. The initiative initially aimed to cover at least 80 young women of the Roma community and to provide them with an integrated and customized service. The main goal of the programme is to ease the access of young Roma to positions in the private business sector that fit their education and qualification.

3. Requirements and access

Roma women 18-35 are only considered. No other requirements are in place. Access is provided as soon as they are roistered to the programme. Many women dropped the programme many times in the past and re-registered.

4. Elements of good practice

The programme offers mentor assistance for mothers and female students. It provides additional activities to ensure the successful passing of the final exams, as well as organises motivational public events, meetings with representatives of business organisations, meetings with representatives of universities, meetings with successful representatives of the Roma community, etc. A significant part of the work educators provide is motivating Roma activists from the community or representatives of NGOs to participate in the process. Usually, the motivation of local Roma activists to participate in such processes is not very great because of a lack of self-confidence, apathy toward local processes etc. An important part of the motivational process is the recognition of personal interests and community interests for participation. It is important to recognize the specifics of the local community and the present issues and to make connections between the issues and their eventual solutions. What works really well though according to both the educators and the participants is the regular visits from Roma women entrepreneurs who are considered successful in their area or business.

Authoritarian attitudes and teacher-centred approaches simply do not work with these women as one of the educators suggests. They want to be paid attention. This is the reason why the educators employ some student-centred interesting teaching

methods to raise the interest of the women in the programme, but also retain them for as long as it lasts. One of these methods is called 'NEVO' (it means 'new' in Romani). The method links the provided activities (particularly training) to real world learning. According to a number of educators, infusing real world experiences into the instructions, make teaching moments fresh and enriches classroom learning. Some VYAs also suggested that relating and demonstrating through real life situations, makes the material easy to understand and easy to learn. The programme organizes field trips instead of classroom courses that are relevant to their training (to hairdressing salons, to local factories that produce and package honey, a small factory that bottles beverages, a shoe-shop, a mani-pedi salon, a wedding dresses salon, etc.), but occasionally educators told us that they just simply take the participants for a walk outside of the classroom to the city or their community, to the Roma Women's Club to listen to the experience of other Roma women who are considered successful in their community, a visit to the local health centre to receive information about pregnancy prevention, etc.

Only Roma women can participate in this programme.

This programme is not formally evaluated or assessed. The educators suggest that some of the activities are assessed ad-hoc verbally but there are no written records of formal assessment. The programme however is closely monitored by a supporting NGO who is credited with the initiative. Improvement is based on educators' good will and devotion to the improvement of the local community as the educators suggest. The lack of data and, consequently, the inadequacy of evaluation and monitoring tools, have been a major obstacle in designing and implementing policies explicitly targeting the marginalised Roma women. The programme operates as an example, but only at a local level.

5. Perceived challenges

Low participation and high numbers of dropouts was a routine in the first years of the programme. Educational problems faced by Roma women are serious. The greatest number of young Roma women that drop out of the programme are because of repentance and absenteeism is just as often met among Roma ethnicity. Among the reasons that determine the apparition of these phenomena the following are referred to: reduced financial possibilities, family problems (work around the house for their children, the caring for younger siblings), deficient relations with the other women from the classroom, a defective affective climate form by the classroom as a result of the existence of social representation from the majority of women and a low level of acceptance and integration. Roma women themselves add that the greatest challenge for them is to create relevance of what they learn to their own lives. Some suggest that they want to change their community to the

better but they occasionally find that their families are not as supportive as they initially expected.

6. Testimonials

"...I am scared that what I have learned will not be appreciated as much because my siblings have not been in school and neither my parents... they all expect me to marry [...] and have children as I am considered old enough [26] and parents say that I put a shame on the family... I need to prove them wrong and this is pressing".

"...as long as I participate in this and other programmes I know that I will receive some recognition and support from my people, and when you have that [support and recognition] you don't need anything more; you are strong enough to continue with the next step, to act as many successful Roma do, to represent your culture and community to others, to teach others through your story....".

7. More Information

EduMAP project's publications:

[Books and articles](#)

Academic publications that address key themes of the EduMAP project

[Deliverables and reports](#)

EduMAP's official deliverables, related reports and publications

[Good practice cases](#)

Key features from 40 'good practice' cases from 20 countries

[Working papers](#)

A selection of findings from desk and field research in 20 European countries

[Other resources](#)

Other types of resources made for the project (illustrations, comics etc.)