

# REGIONAL REPORT ON ANTI- DISCRIMINATION AND PARTICIPATION OF ROMA IN LOCAL DECISION-MAKING

Eben Friedman  
May 2013

Funded by the EU

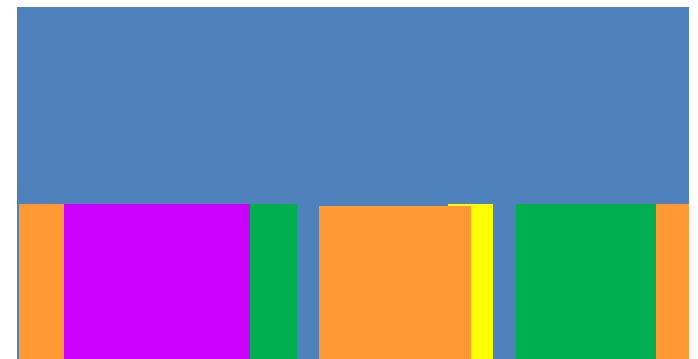


Supported by OSCE participating States

Implemented by



**BEST PRACTICES**  
for  
**ROMA INTEGRATION**  
in the Western Balkans



# Approach

**“INCLUSION HAPPENS AT LOCAL LEVEL.”**

## **Identifying good practice**

- Explicit (but not necessarily exclusive) focus on Roma
- Direct focus on anti-discrimination and/or participation of Roma in decision-making
- Expected contribution to integration
- Attention to issues of gender
- Co-ordination and coherence with other policies while taking into account the needs of the local Roma community
- Addressing multiple aspects of a given issue in a holistic approach
- Participation of Roma in programme design and implementation
- Institutional and financial sustainability
- High likelihood of producing multiplier effects

# Findings: Anti-discrimination

## **General observations**

- Attention to anti-discrimination:
  - Constitutions
  - Legislation and strategic documents on minorities, gender equality, Roma
- Greater variety among local than central initiatives

## **Examples of good practice (14)**

- Local-level outreach by central human rights institutions (7)
- Children and youth (4)
- Roma women (3)

# Good practice example: Anti-discrimination

**Name of practice:** Child protection Units (Albania)

**Initiated by:** NGO Terre des Hommes, Switzerland

**Implemented by:**

- NGO coalition (25 domestic and international NGOs)
- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
- Local self-government units

**Description**

- 33 Child Protection Units (CPUs) established within offices of local self-government units, which finance CPUs
- CPUs refer at-risk children to support services
- Majority of beneficiaries are Roma and Egyptian children

# Findings: Participation in decision-making

## General observations

- Attention to equitable participation in decision-making:
  - Constitutions
  - Legislation on elections, minorities, gender equality
  - Strategies and national action plans for Roma
- Greater variety among local than central initiatives
- More good practices and more local-level variation than in the area of anti-discrimination

## Examples of good practice (17)

- Linking participation with support for improving communities' situation in co-operation with local authorities (5)
- Local and regional plans for Roma (5)
- Employing Roma in local administration (3)
- Representation of Roma in official institutions (2)

## Good practice example: Participation in decision-making

**Name of practice:** Local and regional Roma Minority Councils  
(Croatia)

**Initiated by:** Government of the Republic of Croatia

**Implemented by:** Counties, cities and municipalities

### **Description**

- Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities (2010) regulates formation of National Minority Councils
- Councils' operations funded by units of self-government, which are obligated to consult Councils
- Councils may request central-level oversight of implementation of relevant measures

# Recommendations: Anti-discrimination

1. Derive local policy and practice from central government anti-discrimination policies.
2. Raise awareness about discrimination as a problem and about the means for combating it.
3. Prioritize local outreach by centralized anti-discrimination institutions over the establishment of new, local institutions.
4. Streamline procedures and access to remedies for discrimination so that they take into account the often difficult and complex legal situation of Roma.
5. Address the multiple types of discrimination faced by Roma women and girls.



## Recommendations: Participation in decision-making

1. Build Roma participation into initiatives that affect Roma directly.
2. Plan policies to address local community needs while taking into account priorities set at higher levels.
3. Secure funding for implementation.
4. Promote growth in the pool of capable interlocutors through targeted training programmes and long-term investment in education.
5. Ensure the sustained and active presence of Roma women in decision-making.





**Thank you  
for your attention!**

**[www.bpri-odihr.org](http://www.bpri-odihr.org)**