



WORKING GROUP INSTRUCTIONS

Participants will be then invited to take part in Working Groups covering the cross-cutting topics of:

- **How to better implement antidiscrimination legislation?**
- **How to enhance participation in public life?**
- **How to approach diversity through inclusive education?**

The objective of the Working Groups is to use the recommendations of the national Roma seminars conducted by DG Enlargement last year as well as the recommendations made by the relevant monitoring bodies of the Council of Europe and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities as a starting point in defining concrete ways of addressing the challenges pertinent to the area of human rights and minorities/vulnerable groups.

Importantly, participants will be asked to highlight specific examples of good practices in their country and/or area, which they consider relevant as concrete solutions. Where good practice does not yet exist, they will be invited to suggest concrete proposals for how to tackle one or more of the recommendations. Briefing Papers for Working Group participants will be recall relevant recommendations.

Each Working Group will be chaired by a moderator who will briefly introduce the topic and objective of the Working Group and will ensure that focus is kept during the discussions on concrete solutions to the challenges that have been identified in the above-mentioned recommendations.

Participants will be divided into Working Groups before the launch event. Translation will be provided into Albanian, Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian and English. The Working Groups will last 3 hours. Rapporteurs will be chosen from the participants and supported by note-takers from the project teams. The rapporteurs with the note-takers will prepare the conclusions to be presented in the plenary sessions in the morning of on 29 June.

WORKING GROUP 1

1) How to better implement anti-discrimination legislation?

Moderator: Goran Basic, Deputy Ombudsman, Republic of Serbia

Keynote commentator: Irma Baraku, Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination, Republic of Albania

Rapporteur: Bashkim Ibishi, Executive Director, Kosovo Agency for Advocacy and Development

Note taker: Aleksandar Lazovski, National Project Officer, BPRI

Since 2004, all jurisdictions within the Western Balkans region adopted antidiscrimination laws¹ which helped to establish new institutions and national standards. Nevertheless, Roma and other marginalized communities still lack sufficient knowledge on what discrimination actually is and how to make use of the existing legislation.

Outreach and information campaigns in this field are necessary, as well as strengthening the capacities of new institutions and mechanisms for combating discrimination. Support should be particularly provided in the areas of data collection, monitoring and outreach. In spite of adoption of anti-discrimination laws, public opinion surveys show that Roma and other marginalized groups remain among the most discriminated populations in the Western Balkans region. Public perception of Roma should be addressed through integration measures (i.e. employment, housing, education, healthcare) and campaigns taking into account the specific situation at local level.

Roma and other marginalized groups should have full access to public services and civil documents. Civil registration systems should be made more efficient through appropriate measures at the national and local levels. Special attention should be given to the registration of children at birth and the naturalization of stateless persons and refugees, in line with international and European standards. If necessary, legislation should be amended to create new mechanisms for subsequent registration and facilitating registration in other ways. Ombudsman's Offices, Ministries of Justice, Interior and Public Administration, as well as the civil society sector should support this process and establish co-ordination to ensure progress is made.

Throughout this process, Roma NGOs should be closely involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of Roma Action Plans and Programmes. Good practices related to Roma inclusion need to be shared and replicated. The role of Roma representatives in the decision-making process should be enhanced, and the position and needs of Roma women and girls should be considered.

Regional programmes can support this process by promoting the exchange of good practices, connecting different stakeholders and strengthening capacities of institutions and civil society working on preventing and monitoring discrimination.

¹ Albania adopted the Anti-discrimination Law in 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination in 2009, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia adopted the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination in 2010, Montenegro adopted the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination in 2010, Serbia passed the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination in 2009 and Kosovo* adopted an Anti-discrimination Law in 2004.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/99 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

WORKING GROUP 2

2) How to enhance participation in public life?

Moderator: Markus Jaeger, Council of Europe

Keynote commentator(s): Prof. Siniša Tatalovi, Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb, Croatia, Advisor to the President of Croatia

Rapporteur: Professor Mitja Žagar, Scientific Councilor, Head of the International Centre for Interethnic Relations and Minorities in South Eastern Europe, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Note taker: Lea Sengers, Consultant, MIN

For members of minority groups participation in public life is not only a right as such, it is also a means to actively stand up in the various political fora for the individual and collective rights of the members of their community and to insist on the fight against discrimination.

Numerous bodies exist in the countries of the region, at state, regional and municipal level, to organise minority participation in public life. Recommendations have been made by international bodies on how to further enhance such participation. Inclusive education can contribute to preparing young citizens for such participation.

Participants in the Working Group were invited to present what they consider good (or bad) examples as well as their ideas for actions to be undertaken to foster the participation of members of minorities in public life in the region.

A list of recommendations made in this respect by international bodies will be made available.

WORKING GROUP 3

3) How to approach diversity through inclusive education?

Moderator: Sarah Keating, Head of Unit for Regional and Bilateral Cooperation – South East Europe, Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Council of Europe

Keynote commentators: 1) Lida Kita, Specialist in Vocational Education and Training and Social Inclusion - Country Manager, European Training Foundation and 2) Predrag Lažeti, Director, Centre for Education Policy

Rapporteur / Note taker: Lana Jurko, Executive Director, Network of Education Policy Centers

The role of education and training in the promotion of social inclusion, tolerance, inter cultural dialogue and non-discrimination in the Western Balkans is only recently being addressed by the countries of the region. Educational underachievement, skills deficiencies and inequitable access to quality education and training are effects, as well as - in the long run – major causes of social exclusion. Education can become a tool for breaking this vicious circle only when offers equal opportunities in access to and participation in learning, i.e. when education systems themselves are inclusive.

While there are different definitions and interpretations of inclusive education, internationally it is increasingly seen as a reform principle that respects and caters for diversity amongst all learners with a specific focus on those who are at higher risk of marginalisation and exclusion. It starts from the belief that education is a basic human right and a foundation for a more just society and aims to eliminate social exclusion which is a consequence of attitudes and responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and gender.

Inclusive education seeks to offer quality education for all while taking into account the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities. Inclusive schools attempt to respond to pupils as individuals - i.e. to their diverse learning needs – by reconsidering and restructuring curricula, teaching methods, teaching aids, assessment and evaluation in line with the needs of everyone, thus reducing exclusion and degradation of students on the basis of disability, ethnicity or anything that could render the school life of some children unnecessarily difficult.

Consideration can be made on how to better respond to the broad spectrum of learning needs. Rather than being a marginal theme on how some learners can be integrated in the mainstream education, inclusive education is an approach that looks into how to transform education systems in order to respond to the diversity of learners. It aims to enable both teachers and learners to feel comfortable with diversity and to see it as a challenge and enrichment in the learning environment, rather than a problem. It is hoped that this workshop will contribute to this discussion and inform the upcoming project on inclusive education.