



**PartNET Association – Partnership for  
Sustainable Development**

**PartNET**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region  
Vienna, 26 – 27 June 2014**

**Roma Inclusion in the Danube Region: Challenges and Opportunities**

***Multiregional Program for Social Inclusion***

Ph.D., Assoc. Prof. Iolanda Mihalache  
President

PartNET Association – Partnership for Sustainable Development

**PartNET Association – Partnership for  
Sustainable Development**

**PartNET**

PartNET Association - Partnership for Sustainable Development's mission is to contribute to a sustainable economical, social and cultural development at a local, regional, national and international level, in rural and urban environment.

**DEVELOPER OF:**

- ✓ Structural funds projects
- ✓ International strategies and programs
- ✓ Innovating instruments in education and social inclusion
- ✓ Training courses
- ✓ Marketing studies
- ✓ International relationships
- ✓ Technical assistance for regional/national/international institutions

**PartNET Association – Partnership for Sustainable Development**



**THE DEVELOPED PROJECTS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION:**

- “Strategic instruments for occupation in the tourism industry” – Strategic project for unemployed people
- “Integrated services to promote sustainable employment in 5 regions in Romania” – Strategic project
- “SALVA – A chance for an active life!” – ID 140221, Strategic project for reintegration in professional and social life of persons with cancer, AIDS and other diseases
- “Touristic Handicraftsman - Integrating handicraft skills in the local tourism – real alternative to revitalize the countryside” – ID 131192, Strategic project
- 7 Grant Projects for integrating on the label market of young people and other categories on risk
- “WINNER - Women in e-commerce” – UNIFEM/UNDP

**PartNET Association – Partnership for Sustainable Development**



**NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING**

- ✓ PartNET Association represents Romania in Brussels in the ESF Network Career & Age.
- ✓ The organization is a member of the Thematic Consultative Committee for Employment, Social Inclusion and Social Services organized within MLFSPE (Ministry of Labour), and also of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR).
- ✓ PartNET is the representative of Eastern Europe in the DEVNET International Association, which enjoys Consultative Status (Category 1) with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) - [www.devnetinternational.org/devnet-worldwide](http://www.devnetinternational.org/devnet-worldwide).
- ✓ The association is partner of WINNER – Women Into the New Network for Entrepreneurial Reinforcement.

## Roma Inclusion in the Danube Region

- ❖ With 10-12 million members, the Roma population is Europe's largest minority. Their communities vary in terms of culture and religion, legal status, language, settlement models, and periods of migration. But, despite efforts at local, national and European levels, in many countries Roma show high levels of social exclusion from employment, education, health and social services; high rates of illiteracy; and poor school attendance. Many Roma people live in segregated, isolated districts where overcrowding and a lack of basic facilities contribute to poor health. Due to lacking skills, education and entrepreneurship Roma and poor people have only limited access to the formal labor market and to formal economic activities which results in poor quality of life.



## Roma Inclusion in the Danube Region

### Cross border projects - the best solution

- ❖ Various representatives of the **civil society** have expressed views according which the exchange of experiences between our countries and the projects especially designed to transfer know-how and best practices for the integration of minorities into the society and economy are of a critical importance.
- ❖ These should put an emphasis on **the identification of education and training needs** of different economic clusters as well as the options for skill development for joining the labor market and job creation through SME development.
- ❖ The aims to collect the **experiences of the integration** and inclusion of ethnic minorities from regions and municipalities in specific countries, in order **to transfer** them to interested municipalities and regions, need to be adapted and harmonized to the local conditions. It will foster not only the cooperation of the administrators and experts of the involved cities but also of identified entrepreneurs of identified economic clusters and civil society organizations.





## Roma Inclusion in the Danube Region

- ❖ Consequently, such projects will result in the establishment of **cross border teams** of experts from all counterparts who jointly will increase their capacities by sharing knowledge, successful processes and skills which significantly leads to a reduction of the educational gap, resulting in accelerated Roma integration and economic stabilization.
- ❖ **The long-term goal** is to foster economic development for the poor people and Roma community by utilizing successful best practices, experiences and skills from other EU Member States and establish a capacity development program not only for beneficiary counterparts' administrators and experts but also for the Roma and poor people to get jobs in a newly identified labor market available in the newly identified market for cultural and ethnic products or specialized economic niches found in the tradition of the Roma population.



## Roma Inclusion in the Danube Region

- ❖ **Increased number of jobs** for the minority and poor through enhanced cooperation between companies in our countries not only for the production and marketing of such niche products, will help to improve the situation of the minorities while putting the focus on continued know-how exchange and the joint development of coherent strategies and concepts, based on experiences from reality.
- ❖ The projects will need to identify ways and improve community cohesion and engagement as well as offer **employment and education possibilities** in newly identified economic activities or established SMEs. These projects will be interlinked with community development plans of the cities and program planning on regional and national level.



## MULTIREGIONAL PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

### PROPOSAL

- Design under a Logical Framework Approach an EU multiregional program (i.e. transnational cooperation) for social inclusion of Roma People and Rehabilitation Counseling.
- First: a multi-study impact of different Roma communities (taking into account that Roma people have different customs: Spain, Hungary, Italy, ex-Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, France). The set of problems, Roma's norms and values are not the same in EU.

## ACTION PLAN

### 1. PROGRAM ON TRAINERS EDUCATION FOR COUNSELORS

Main goal: to have a group of counselors for:

- Medical and psychosocial information
- Community engagement against delinquency
- Employment and occupational choice

### 2. PROGRAMS ON EDUCATION

- Specific programs for the integration of Roma children in school, mostly from rural areas
- Special program: schools type Waldorf for Roma children
- After school programs
- Minority Student Recruitment, Retention and Career Transition Practices



### 2.1. Inclusion of Roma in the education system and provision of continuity in education.

For this goal to be realised, it is necessary to:

- create systemic conditions for the inclusion of Roma in the education system and keeping them in the system as long as possible;
- develop a special enrolment policy for Roma pupils;
- prepare educational institutions for the reception of Roma pupils and
- prepare Roma children for inclusion in school.



### 2.2. Provision of high-quality education for Roma.

For this goal to be realised, it is necessary to:

- create systemic conditions for quality assurance and control of education of Roma pupils;
- provide education curricula that follow the needs of Roma children and youth;
- provide teaching staff specially trained for work with Roma children;
- return the Roma children enrolled in special schools without grounds to regular schools;
- systematically motivate Roma children to attend school and education and
- motivate Roma parents to support their children's education.



## PROJECTS OUTPUTS:

1. **Coordinating exchange:** Partners (civil society, stakeholder groups, businesses, cities and other public administrations) are identified and brought together to share good practices and lessons learned on the topic of Roma inclusion and job creation.
2. **Cooperation's across borders** for the analysis and identification of best practices are established and solutions to major integration challenges are identified.
3. **Best practices and exchange** of experts who provides assistance to communities for the planning are established for the development of magmatic solutions which integrate economic social and environmental dimensions.
4. **Improvement and project strategies** as well as clusters of cooperation between cities and entrepreneurs are established
5. **Information and outputs** are disseminated through websites, publications and the media

- ❖ The partners will work together in projects to share and capitalize on the experience made in other regions and cities.
- ❖ A project management team comprising of experts from all counterparts will be established to take responsibilities for the implementation of the outlined projects.
- ❖ Specific focuses on thematic issues will be elaborated in thematic and planning workshops with participation of experts and the target groups. Next steps will be developed with an assessment of the required and available immediate support. Representatives of relevant municipalities and regions from other EU Member States will be invited to actively participate.
- ❖ The projects aim to establish close working relationships among cities and regions with their relevant departments for the inclusion of Roma as well as to entrepreneurs for the planning and development of value chains (business plans).
- ❖ The active participants will identify and foster Best Practices Reports and will further conduct know how exchange seminars and workshops and major conferences.



**Ph.D., Assoc. Prof. Iolanda Mihalache**

E-mail: [office@partnet.ro](mailto:office@partnet.ro)  
Telefon : 0040 31.425.64.26  
Fax : 0040 31.425.64.25