

ERGO Network

December 3rd, 2018 14:30- 18:00

Followed by ERGO Network's 10 years anniversary celebration – with dinner reception and music!

Venue: Rue d'Edimbourg 26, 1050 Brussels (Mundo B, Conference Room)

Introduction

Reaching out to vulnerable groups such as Roma and including them in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies at local level is an essential way to improve the quality and effectiveness of policies and programmes targeting them. 80% of Roma are at risk of poverty and have the status of second-class citizens. However, even though there are EU funds and programmes aimed at Roma, they are hardly used in an effective manner that could really improve the living situation of Roma.

Since the first National Roma Integration Strategies have been developed in 2011, almost no progress has been achieved in the integration of Roma in education, employment, health and housing. This is due to persistent antigypsyism and exclusionary patterns that need to be tackled in order to break the cycle of poverty. It is also due to top-down decision-making structures that do not take the realities of Roma communities into account when developing social inclusion measures. One of the main challenges is the fact that Roma people and organisations – those who should know best the needs of Roma communities - are mostly not part of the policy process. Community participation, mobilisation and involvement of the Roma women should be a mandatory component of the entire policy cycle to make the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies at local level a reality.

ERGO Network has been working actively to use bottom-up and partnership-based approaches such as Community Local Led Development as a tool to engage Roma people more actively in shaping the future of their local communities. Involving Roma themselves in the development, implementation and evaluation of programmes creates trust between authorities and Roma, contributes to more effective needs-based approaches and avoids misuse of funds.

At ERGO Network's Public Event, we will present the work of ERGO members on local level, building partnerships with Local Action Groups and other local stakeholders supporting the social inclusion of Roma.

The event will bring together different stakeholders who work at European, national and local level to exchange best practices in order to inspire practitioners and policy makers to invest in cooperation at local level.

The event will contribute to the debate on the design of the Post 2020 EU programming period, in which all programmes should include a beneficiary perspective by including target groups in the policy design, implementation and evaluation. ERGO Network will present recommendations on the design of the next LEADER programme in this regard.



14:30 Registration

15:00 The Grassroots matters

- **Jamen Gabriela Hrabanova** - Executive Director ERGO Network (opening remarks and moderation)
- **Romeo Franz**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance
- **Andor Urmos**- Policy Analyst, Directorate General for Regional Policy, European Commission

15:30 Investing in local partnerships: What work(s)

- **Ruus Dijksterhuis** - ERGO Network (Introduction and moderation)
- **Dijana Pavlovic** - Upre Roma, Italy: Challenges at local level for Roma
- **Andrey Ivanov** - Head of Sector Roma and Migrant Integration, Technical Assistance & Capacity Building, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: "Local engagement for Roma inclusion" ("LERI") project
- **Valeriu Capraru** - President of National Federation of Local Action Groups, Romania
- **Dominique Bé** - DG Employment and Social Affairs & Inclusion: Romact - Cooperation and capacity building at local level
- **Maike Buyst** – Eurocities, Belgium: Roma inclusion in design and implementation of strategies
- **Tobias Mayr** - Roma Alliance Officer of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

16:40 Open floor debate

17:00 Conclusions and recommendations

- **Adriatik Hasantari** - Vice-chair ERGO Network (Introduction and moderation)
- **Szabolcs Schmidt** - Head of Unit Non-discrimination and Roma coordination European Commission, DG Justice
- **Marie-Anne Paraskevas** - Senior Policy Expert, Social Affairs & Inclusion, European Commission, DG Employment

18:30 ERGO Network 10 years anniversary celebration with food, drinks, music and more!

