

### Project Summaries

*(Contains unedited project summaries, as they were provided by participants, divided by topic and listed by country)*

#### **Security, Law Enforcement and Radicalization**

##### **Home for Everyone, (Proposed), Bulgaria**

*CEGA Foundation (Lyuba Batembegska), Centre for Liberal Strategies (CLS), LIDER Association (Miglana Mihaylova), Roma Lom (Tatyana Tosheva Kirilova) and NGO Links (Teodora Gandova)*

The conflicts in 2015 in Bulgaria unveiled the hidden tension between Roma and majority. There are increasing cases where the local governments, under the pressure of nationalistic politicians or groups and backed up by the public opinion, abolished the only buildings, owned by Roma for housing needs without assuring an alternative shelter for the people who are left homeless.

The joint project of CEGA, IPED, LIDER – Blagoevgrad, Links, Roma-Lom and Youth Club Stolipinovo is set out to showcase policy decisions that may allow protecting effectively the right to housing for Roma. A comparative desk research will juxtapose the different aspects of the problem – human rights, legal and political ones. It will sharply define the legal grounds on demolition of the houses and will propose legislative amendments to solve the issues. The project will advocate for policy alternatives at local level - 3 participatory action plans to set into regulation the illegal Roma ghettos involving the major stakeholders - local governments, Roma communities and the majority. Based on the research and the practical experience at local level the project will bring on the agenda of the Parliament a proposal of amendments to the legislative framework that will guarantee right of housing.

##### **Security or Securitization: Assessment of Policing Policy and Practices (Current), Czech Republic**

*Otevřená Společnost (Marek Hojsík/ Michal Ďord) and Romodrom*

Social exclusion of Roma in the Czech Republic includes exclusion from security and personal safety and often complicated relations with security forces. One of the remaining problems in approaching the issues of Roma is insufficient information about daily practice of police when dealing with cases where Roma are involved, irrespective of their role as of victim, witness, suspect, perpetrator or just a citizen entering into some communication with the police. The project aims at increasing the security of Roma, de-securitization of public discourse on Roma and improvement of interethnic relations through upgrade of policing policies and practices on both national and local level.

The proposed project will contribute to these aims by empirically researching on security forces' policies and practices toward Roma and increasing understanding of relations between Roma on one hand and security forces on the other hand. Based on research's findings, recommendations and models of good practices will be formulated and disseminated among decision-makers, central and local authorities and NGOs and individuals active in Roma communities and cooperating with local governments and security forces.

## Roma Housing – Ensuring Value for Money (Proposed), Czech Republic

*Otevřená Společnost (Marek Hojsík/ Michal Ďord') and Romodrom*

The proposed project focuses on effectiveness and efficiency of public spending on support of housing of Roma (or other vulnerable groups). We assume that the public resources spent on this purpose, particularly the housing benefits, do not ensure the most value available for the spent money. Housing benefits' recipients pay high amounts of money for substandard housing in segregated ghettos or social hostels, while for the same money they could afford decent housing. The reason is that Roma are excluded from access to the available standard housing, which instead remains vacant. This illogical situation is due to direct and indirect discrimination against Roma by private and public housing owners. The proposed project aims at study of this phenomenon and articulation of economic and policy arguments, which could be used to tackle the exclusion from the housing market. The project will also develop and advocate for introduction of measures supporting Roma in access to the standard housing.

## 'Slovakia: A Country for All' A Civil Society Alternative to Securitization, Populism and Increase of Right Wing Extremism (Current), Slovakia

*Center for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK) (Alena Chudžíková) and Roma Advocacy and Research Centre (RARC) (Zuzana Balážová)*

The project utilizes a broad platform to strengthen civil society voice in challenging intolerance and securitization paradigm framing ethno-cultural minorities as various threats to ethnic majority's interests. Our initiative is called "Slovakia: a Country for All", i.e. country that does not privilege one group over other but values each human being equally while respecting multiple sources of individual identities.

The project pays specific attention to the Roma, whose cause has been recently redefined from being an issue of social exclusion to being a concern for neighbourly relations and economic, demographic and security threats. Such constructed state of emergency obstructs adoption of policies helping to alleviate extreme marginalization of a significant share of Slovakia's Roma. Instead, it creates a fertile ground for mainstream politicians to legitimize ethnic hatred via populist proposals such as drastic welfare cuts or free sterilizations indirectly aimed at Romani women.

We believe that there is a building momentum to convey the alternative story both in the public discourse as well as through policy research and advocacy. Numerous actors feel that things, in particularly the anti-Roma intolerance and hatred rhetoric and policies went too far, but cannot by themselves identify why and what is the alternative. The project draws on our existing work and aims to mobilize various civil society actors to strengthen and expand the alternative to the securitization paradigm.

Drawing on our existing research and monitoring and with the aid of a broader platform we strive to convey an alternative narrative based on principles of human dignity. We seek to enter into public discourse, among others, through series of public forums and communication with the general public, particularly the youth. Furthermore, the project includes research, development and advocacy for policies that can in the long run translate into practice and promote normative mission of the platform. These include proposals of systemic changes, such as inclusive and human rights education and minority specific policies, including adoption of affirmative action schemes and models of minority participation.

## **Italian Project for the Suspension of Forced Evictions, (Proposed), Italy**

*Associazione 21 Luglio (Fiorello Lebbiati), Fondazione Moressa (Riccardo Varotto), Associazione Sinti Italiani Prato (Luca Bravi), Opera Nomadi Reggio Calabria (Alessandro Petronio)*

The project has the following main goals: to eradicate the unlawful practice of forced evictions carried out by Italian authorities against Roma communities living in informal settlements and to foster the development of inclusive Roma-related policies; to achieve the transposition in the Italian legislation of the international procedural standards on evictions.

The project's specific objectives are: 1. To get a complete map of the presence of informal settlements on the national territory and gain a deep understanding of the phenomenon of forced evictions concerning Roma communities carried out by local administrations. 2. To demonstrate to policy makers that: a) Italian authorities do not follow international procedural standards when they carry out evictions from informal settlements; b) in the development of local and national policies it is more advantageous, in terms of social and economic costs, to replace the practice of forced evictions with housing and employment inclusion pathways. 3. To contribute to a gradual decrease of forced evictions and, consequently, to a gradual increase of housing and employment inclusion paths involving evicted Roma people, at least in the Municipalities of Milan, Rome and Naples. 4. To obtain the commitment of the administrators of at least one of the Municipalities involved (Milan, Rome and/or Naples) to define guidelines to be followed in case of evictions from informal settlements, in line with the international procedural standards. 5. To increase awareness among the majority of the inhabitants of informal settlements about their rights and about how to act in case of forced eviction. 6. To raise awareness among public opinion about forced evictions and to contribute to eradicating negative stereotypes and prejudices against Roma.

## **Integration as a Driving Safety for All: Promoting Good Governance in the Kosovo Security Sector, (Proposed), Kosovo**

*Kosovar Center for Security Studies (KCSS) (Tringa Naka), Kosovo Advocacy Group (KAG) and Democracy for Development (Shpend Emini)*

The purpose of this project is to increase advocacy capacity of representatives of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities, through our partner KAG with various activities, regarding the topic of their integration into central and local security. Respectively, KCSS and KAG aims to conduct for the first time a research report which will elaborate the situation of these communities in Kosovo security institutions. The report aims to serve as advocacy document focusing on the increase of higher participation of members of these communities to the main institutions security institutions in Kosovo - the Kosovo Police and Kosovo's Security Force (KSF). The idea of this project is triggered by the fact that the current numbers show that both these institutions have a very symbolic number of the representation of these communities in comparison to other minority communities such as K-Serbs and K-Bosnians. Indeed, such data shows that there is discrimination towards Roma-Ashkali-Egyptian communities in Kosovo. Whereas, the KCSS and KAG aims to use data which will be collected through the qualitative report to advocate to the Government for better policies and treatment of these three marginalized ethnic groups by requiring concrete actions for their integration into the security sector.

## **Equality in Judiciary, Security in Life, (Proposed), Macedonia**

*Center for Legal Research and Analysis (CLRA) (Nikola Jovanovski) and Roma Lawyers Association (RLA)*

The project aims to achieve a higher level of representation of Roma ethnicity in the Macedonian judiciary and promote equal and fair treatment of Roma population by the justice administrators.

It will assess the state of play of Roma's qualitative and quantitative inclusiveness in the process of exercising their rights in compliance with the Constitution, the international acts and good practices, with a special

focus on the judiciary. It will identify the main reasons for the Roma insecurity in the Macedonian judicial system, taking into consideration key findings of many reports that clearly point out certain level of prejudice and unequal treatment, not only procedurally, but as a matter of practice as well. After identification of the main reasons of insecurity, the Project would create comprehensive policy paper and provide recommendations, which will be distributed to relevant institutions, and advocate for improvement of the status of Roma population in all segments of the judiciary, following the constitutional provisions that promote for equality of all in front of the law and equitable representation of the ethnic communities in the judiciary. The discussions will produce conclusions and recommendations that will be implemented in soft law that will improve the status of Roma in the judiciary in general.

The project will also implement a multi-facet campaign aiming to increase the interest among Roma about their rights and opportunities granted by the Constitution and induce a higher level of interest among them about the legal profession thus creating a higher number of skilled and educated representatives that would actively participate in the justice system.

### **End Abuse Against the Roma (Proposed), Romania**

*ActiveWatch (Adrian Iulius Szelmenczi), Policy Center for Roma and Minorities (PCRM) (Florin Botonogu) Human Catalyst (Laura Marin) and Apador (Cristinel Buzatu)*

The project proposed by ActiveWatch and its partners aims to build trust between local law enforcement entities and the communities with large Roma population in order to prevent abuse and brutality against the latter. The project will tackle two main problems: lack of awareness on human rights issues and procedures in intervening in marginalized communities on the behalf of law enforcement officers and lack of instruments in recognizing, reporting and fighting against abuse and brutality on behalf of the Roma citizens. We concluded that this situation is prevalent mostly due to the lack of trust between the two counterparts and due to the non-intervention of the local and central authorities.

The project will work in two pilot communities with large Roma population and will be focused on 3 main approaches: (1) working with the local law enforcement officers and community members in order to identify the common needs and instruments in building trust; (2) delivering human rights and conflict resolution trainings to law enforcement officers who work in marginalized communities; (3) developing a procedures and intervention manual. AW and its partners will attempt to change the general attitudes towards the Roma of the police and law enforcement officers.

## Economics, Public Budgets and Social Enterprise

### **Entrepreneurship and local policies: identifying and building synergies to address ‘othering’ of Roma (Proposed), Bulgaria**

*Center for the Study of Democracy (CSD) (Liliya Peycheva Dragoeva) and World Without Borders (Georgi Nikolov Georgiev)*

The **objective** of the proposed initiative is to counter negative public perceptions and “othering” of Roma by demonstrating that Roma community entrepreneurship and local public policies and investments to support it, positively impact the levels of social inclusion and result in effective integration of the Roma. Relying on policy research the project will develop a model for Roma integration and economic growth based on community entrepreneurship and growth-conducive public policies and advocate for its replication at local level. The project will provide an opportunity for the identification of good practices in community entrepreneurship and local policy development between two selected municipalities. Subsequently a platform will be established for exchange of good practices and replication of identified successful model of entrepreneurship, supported by local policies across a wider network of municipalities. Advocacy actions will aim to demonstrate the possibility of economic growth and social inclusion of Roma communities, thereby restoring social cohesion and addressing the “othering” of Roma.

Planned **activities** include development of methodology and fieldwork in two Roma communities in Bulgaria; analysis and policy reports; national and local level policy recommendations, local stakeholders meeting on Roma entrepreneurship; roundtable on exchange of good practices for local stakeholders; national seminar; communication and media campaign.

The expected **outcomes** include increased empirical knowledge on two key drivers of Roma integration (entrepreneurship and targeted local policies) and their relationship, increased stakeholder awareness on the possible positive impact on community entrepreneurship on local policy development, increased public awareness on the possibilities of Roma integration and increased public perception of the Roma as agents of change and economic growth.

### **Monitoring of Public resources allocated for Roma inclusion (Proposed), Bulgaria**

*Integro Association (Liliya Savkova Makaveeva), Access to Information Programme Foundation (Alexander Emilov Kachamov) Equal Opportunities Initiative Association (Daniela Mihaylova Mihaylova), AIP and Marginalia*

In order to tackle a widely shared public statement that Roma are privileged and public spending is primarily associated with them, the present project proposal seeks to address a critical issue associated with transparency and accountability of national (local) and EU public spending on Roma inclusion in Bulgaria. While struggling to advocate for an increase of investment in Roma inclusion measures, transparency and accountability on investment were left out of scope. Perhaps reasoning is hidden behind the higher level of corruption, low level of good governance and lack of transparency among national and local authorities. But also due to limited capacity, access to knowledge and support, among civil society sector, only a few organizations have been attempting to resolve this issue and speak out loud regarding access to public information on spending associated with Roma inclusion. Roma and non Roma led NGOs participation in decision making processes regarding public spending is scarce. Decisions often are centralized and not public, without open discussions and restricted involvement. This, however have ultimately led to exaggeration of public tension regarding Roma inclusion and the false perception that the bulk of public resources are allocated to resolving the long standing challenges faced by the Roma communities in the country.

## **Business as Usual? Assessing Market Entry Costs for Roma Entrepreneurs in Hungary (Proposed), Hungary**

*Budapest Institute (Petra Reszkető), Khetanipe Association (Szilvia Lakatos) and György Lukács*

The policy goal to reduce administrative burden and promoting the competitiveness of European firms is one of the strategic objectives of the European Union (*cf.* EU H2020 strategy). The issue is also of strategic importance in Hungary where both self-employment rate and start-ups rate are far below the EU and even below the regional averages.

Promotion of entrepreneurship was one of the top priorities on the Hungarian public policy agenda as long as there were several government initiatives launched by the Hungarian government back in 2010 after the national elections. The political commitment has however evaporated and the effectiveness of the corresponding public interventions is rather questionable.

Entrepreneurs create job and add considerable growth potential to a given country. Promoting entrepreneurship is however a challenging goal, since the decision on turning to be a self-employed and starting a business is a complex and multi-dimensional decision. It is crucial what share of people in a country decides to find his / her own way of living by starting their own business and whether this decision is made by necessity or by the aim to realize ideas with a productive edge. Making Hungary more business-friendly and helping people, especially people from vulnerable groups, to start a business by removing the barriers and by providing effective incentives and good examples is a common interest for both public and private actors.

## **Empowering Roma in Kosovo for direct and dynamic engagement in policy and economic development (Proposed), Kosovo**

*Institute for Development Policy (InDEP) (Learta Hollaj), GAIA and Balkan Sunflowers Kosova (Muhamet Arifi)*

Initiatives to ensure Roma integration in Kosovo have been many for years now, however, what has been lacking is vividly a structural approach and a coordinated inter stakeholder cooperation aimed to ensure end tangible results in this area. This is where this project steps in. The project at hand offers a three dimensional approach to safeguarding economic prosperity for Roma minority. The action offers an 1) opportunity for capacity building of Roma led organizations to stand for their rights and ensure the safeguarding of their rights as guaranteed by the Constitutions and the National Strategies, 2) a chance for enhancing employability skills and identifying funding opportunities to enhance entrepreneurship undertakings of the community, and 3) a Roma network focused in clustering relevant information and channeling community requests to all the relevant stakeholders. Different from other projects, this project offers particularly a structural and an inter stakeholder approach to the problem of Roma marginalized participation in relevant development projects in the country. The combination of research and advocacy skills of INDEP (partner 1) and the community knowledge and the field experience of GAIA (partner 2), create the optimal combination to ensure the smooth flow of activities and the effective meeting of set objectives.

## **Entrepreneurship policies in Macedonia for overcoming Roma othering (Current), Macedonia**

*Center for Economic Analyses (CEA) (Deniz Selman) and Roma Resource Center*

The project aims to contribute to an improved socio-economic inclusion policies of Roma in R. Macedonia through removing entrepreneurship development obstacles. By implementation of the joint activities of CEA think tank and its expertise, the credibility and experience of RRC, and the fellow research we have the objectives to: assess the entrepreneurship policies of R. Macedonia and its obstacles of: potential discrimination, access to support and the markets. In addition, the assessment of the Roma level of awareness and level of usage of funds related to entrepreneurship policies will consequently provide specific

policy recommendations and increase awareness of the impediments. The ultimate goal is to provide recommendation for (national and/or local) policy changes which will be specific and in support of development of entrepreneurship in its real sense and stimulate economic development.

### **‘Employ me!’ – Skills and tools for strengthening Roma employability (Proposed), Macedonia**

*Finance Think (Despina Tumanoska), Public Association for Research, Communications and Development (Aleksandra Iloska), Roma S.O.S. (Nesime Salioska)*

The objective of the proposed project is to economically empower Roma in Macedonia, through raising their employability. In particular, the project aims to increase employability of Roma, by embedding skills, motivation and entrepreneurial spirit; increase Roma registration with the employment agency as active job seekers; match Roma with prospect employers to reduce corporate stigmatization and discrimination; and to raise awareness and advocate for Roma empowerment. To achieve these objectives, project's activities are arranged around four clusters: capacity building and know-how transfer; activities to match with companies; awareness raising campaign; and advocacy activities for policy impact. By having achieved these objectives, the proposed project will deliver a **positive societal change for Roma**: increased employability; increased employment over the medium haul; increased access to and availability of information and raised awareness; strengthened spirit to erect own business; and higher capacity for economic issues with a local Roma NGO.

### **Transparency and Accountability for Roma Socio-Economic Inclusion (Proposed), Macedonia**

*Center for Economic Analyses (CEA) (Deniz Selmani) and Roma Community Center Drom (Ahmet Jasharovski)*

The project Transparency and accountability for Roma socio-economic inclusion for overcoming Roma othering aims to contribute to an improved socio-economic inclusion policies of Roma in R. Macedonia through empowering the Roma participation in the monitoring of the public expenditures. By implementation of the joint activities of CEA think tank and its expertise, the credibility and experience of DROM, and the fellow research we have the objectives to: increase the transparency of public budgets on national level concerning Roma population in the country; to strengthen the accountability of the government policies and projects for improving the socio-economic position of Roma population, to increase the awareness and changing perceptions of “othering” in the allocation and realization of the national budget.... In addition, the assessment of the Roma level of awareness and level of usage of funds related to socioeconomic policies for Roma and the usage of national funds for Roma population will consequently provide specific policy recommendations and increase awareness of the impediments. The ultimate goal is to provide recommendation for national policy changes which will be specific and in support of overcoming the obstacles for Roma social inclusion, and providing support in empowering the Roma participation in the monitoring of the public expenditures.

### **Social Economy and Roma inclusion: state of play and prospects for development (Current), Romania**

*Romanian Center for European Policies (Alexandra Toderita) and Romano Butiq*

Although there have been an increasing number of initiatives supporting social economy and Roma inclusion in Romania, a number of gaps still persist and affect the overall framework of fighting against poverty and social exclusion, mainly the divergent policies and initiatives that failed to provide a comprehensive view in this field.

Tackling this problem requires a wide ranging project that would essentially create an ‘umbrella’ platform that would link the social economy enterprises dedicated to or including Roma beneficiaries with an entire array of financiers that would provide the instruments to maximize their impact. At this point, there is no

user friendly up-to-date database that would enable these funds to be spent in a more synergy-conducive manner, nor providing bridges between the enterprises and the financiers.

Hence, the project will not only 'map' the social enterprises, but also assess their sustainability and prospects to produce welfare. Putting together all the secondary data available on Roma social economy projects and enterprises set up since 2007 and then conducting field research on a relevant sample to determine their sustainability and prospects for creating welfare for their communities will provide a first clear look on what has been done on Roma economic empowerment in Romania, thus providing the opportunity to replicate best practice and transfer of knowledge while improving the non-satisfactory outcomes.

### **Roma entrepreneurship in Romania (Current), Romania**

*CRPE (Alexandra Toderita) and Policy Centre for Roma and Minorities (Florin Botonogu)*

The social and economic exclusion of the Roma implies huge economic costs for Romania. A study made by the World Bank in 2010 estimated that, in Romania, the exclusion of the Roma generates losses at the level of annual economic productivity of minimum EUR 887 million, and fiscal loss to the State and social insurance budget of at least EUR 81 202 million. The vulnerability of most Roma people has been approached as a priority issue by public policies during the period after the fall of the Communist regime, with a number of legislative initiatives, strategies, programs being prepared over the years, and the development of certain institutions meant to contribute to the social inclusion of this ethnic group. However, the measures taken up to now and the projects implemented within Roma communities have been rather inefficient, a fact reported both by the beneficiaries and their leaders, and also admitted by the institutions involved in their implementation.

As such, it is high time to address the vicious circle of under-development also through the market paradigm. An ever increasing focus has been placed in recent years on complementing state and private interventions in the field of education, health, employment with economic models of development: several social economy projects have been funded, which gave birth to rather successful enterprises engaging the Roma. Apart from these, in Romania there are also Roma entrepreneurs in the more classical sense of the term. The number of Roma entrepreneurs in Romania reaches approximately 18000 persons, according to the latest estimates. This project aims at assessing the situation of small Roma entrepreneurs and Roma social economy enterprises in Romania from the point of view of their financing necessities and to advocate for the creation of a financial instrument to streamline their access to adequate financing sources – microcredits.

### **Citizens' budget for Romanian NRIS - real budget for Roma social inclusion (Proposed), Romania**

*Resource Center for Roma Communities (RCRC) (Florin Moisa) and Association Center for Public Innovation (CPI) (Daniela Tarnovschi)*

The issue the project is going to address is the lack of funding for the Romanian NRIS (National Roma Inclusion Strategy), as well as the lack of an open and transparent budget, consequently making the monitoring of NRIS' implementation by all public institutions involved very difficult if not impossible.

Increasing the transparency of budgeting and carrying out consultation with the participation of relevant civil society representatives and beneficiaries in the budget programming will allow budget monitoring and consequently will lead to increased chances that the financial allocation for NRIS to be enforced effectively and not to remain only a written intention formulated in NRIS text.

The project will support on one hand the empowerment of the Roma communities to stand for their rights and, on the other hand, will support the civil servants from public local administration in assuming their responsibility and getting more involved in budgeting process for the implementation of NRIS. Also, the



learning process of drafting citizens' budget will make public servants more aware about the need for consultation, but also the need of social inclusion of Roma communities.

### **Roma Entrepreneurship: Challenges and Perspectives (Current), Serbia**

*Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER) (Jasna Žarković) and Yurom*

Overall objective of the project is to contribute to the improvement of Roma inclusion in the SME sector. On the other hand, specific objective is to identify problems of Roma entrepreneurs in Serbia and to determine mechanisms and instruments that need to be set up in order to overcome obstacles. In specific, the project will develop a Research Report with public policy proposal with a goal to create a more favourable business environment for Roma entrepreneurs. Results of the research will be publicly presented and discussed with relevant national and local stakeholders. In order to achieve these outcomes, the project will perform the following activities: desk and empirical research, writing the Research Report, and dissemination and advocacy activities.

### **Breaking the Dependency Trap (Proposed), Slovakia**

*Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK) (Alena Chudžíková) and Roma Research and Advocacy Center (Zuzana Balážová)*

Breaking the Dependency Trap project addresses yet unexplored state sponsored practice of setting up segregated vocational schools (or their branches) in proximity to Romani settlements. This increasingly spreading practice, arguably motivated by questionable financial incentives, is one of the salient factors that prevents marginalized Romani youth from accessing good quality training, future higher studies and ultimately regular employment. The project will engage in first larger in-depth qualitative research focusing on practices of recruitment, quality of studies and afterschool careers. While criticizing the existence of such vocational schools, we will prepare policy proposals that would support inclusion of Romani youth into regular schools. We will furthermore show how our proposed measures such as stipends for travel and lodging or mentoring programs could promote integration of marginalized Romani youth into regular secondary schools with better employment prospects in a specific locality in Slovakia. Recognizing that the Ministry of Education and the concerned schools will strongly oppose our criticism, our advocacy strategy will be based on building allies first among recognized experts on education and employment, Romani and pro-Romani NGOs and state control and inspection bodies. Our communication strategy will rely on the case of such schools to show that dependency on welfare is not a result of individual life choices, but of structural state sponsored barriers experienced by Roma.

## Migration and Inclusion

### **The Faces of Roma Migration to the EU (Current), Bulgaria**

*Centre for Liberal Studies (Anna Ganeva), NGO Links (Teodora Asenova Gandova) and CEGA Foundation (Lyuba Batembergska)*

Steady and growing fears and prejudices towards migrants in EU countries and Roma in particular shape the public and the political debate. The negative image of Roma results in hate speech, shaped in nationalistic movements and constraints the governments from investing in inclusion policies. The joint project of the Centre for Liberal Strategies, NGO Links and CEGA Foundation will highlight the successful stories of Roma migrants. The research will unveil the economic, social and financial effects of the labor migration of Bulgarian Roma to Spain and the Czech Republic. It will set a special focus on the levels of labor market integration and will develop a comparative analysis of the push/pull success factors through data study and case studies aimed to gather life stories of successful migrants in 6 places. The proposed project sets out to juxtapose statistical data and data from public opinion research outlining the stereotypes, attitudes and perceptions of the Roma with actual positive examples and facts about well-integrated Roma families derived from the personal life stories collected in the three project countries.

An online platform “The Faces of Roma Migration” with visual life stories and useful information for the migrants will be used as an advocacy tool aimed at changing popular perceptions and policy decisions. Based on the research outcomes a focused advocacy effort will be made to bring together Roma migrants and decision-makers on local, national and European level to ensure that the deficiencies of the current employment policy for the Roma unveiled by the comparative analysis are addressed. The advocacy campaign aims to support the achievement of the project strategic goal, namely, to advocate for the establishment of evidence-based labor market integration policies for the Roma. The media campaign strategy is a combination of attractive awareness-raising activities amongst a broad audience through social media, print and online publications, and expert public discussions. The key recommendations in the final policy paper will aim to address the deficits, identified in the research, and will be addressed to stakeholders on different levels: national and European public institutions, local authorities, NGOs and business.

### **The (Im)Mobility Catch: Mobile People versus Static Institutions (Current), Bulgaria**

*CLS (Anna Ganaeva) and RiskMonitor*

The original vision of a united Europe emphasizes mobility as a norm rather than an exception. Yet, national and Union level policies lag behind in the creation of public institutions for mobile citizens and remain focused mainly on settled populations. This holds true both for sending countries like Bulgaria which have no capacity to meet the needs of their own mobile people, as well as for receiving countries whose institutions lag behind in equally incorporating mobile workers and citizens. The main focus of our project are low-skilled, low-qualified workers who have fewer material and symbolic resources to cope with the ruptures that mobility triggers to their families, especially in regard to children.

The low-skilled mobile Roma workers are often engaged in short-term, unstable, irregular work under precarious conditions, and lack permanent settlement. These conditions make their lives highly unstable and further create more unstable environments for those dependent on them, especially their children, by further limiting their access to nation-state institutions and policies. Roma children in mobile families of low-skilled workers are doubly marginalized. In addition to experiencing limited access to social services and education due to ethnic discrimination, poverty and low social and economic position, they also share all the disadvantages, and the risks, of children living in conditions of mobility. This includes both children left-behind, and mobile children alternating between two or more states along their parents.

## **Social Labyrinth – Social dilemmas in connection with Roma integration (Current), Hungary**

*Budapest Institute (Petra Reszkető)*

The Social Labyrinth is a collaborative project with the mission of tackling the 'fear, the security mindset, and „othering” of Roma' within the non-Roma population of Hungary, centered around an online interactive adventure game. The socio-economic deprivation and lack of full social integration of many Roma Hungarians has been the focus of a lot of scholarly articles and books. One way to tackling the issue is targeting stereotypes and misperceptions of the non-Roma population.

Our main objective is to present research evidence on the set of possible, alternative individual choices of Roma versus non-Roma people in Hungary in politically-unbiased, easy-to-understand, interactive way to shape and influence majority attitudes on Roma integration.

## **Countering the othering of the Western Balkans Roma through visa free travel (Proposed), Macedonia**

*European Policy Institute (Elena Ancheva) and Kham (Zekir Abdulov)*

The proposed project aims at contributing to the understanding and changing the policy and discourse on the Western Balkans Roma asylum seekers in Germany and their reintegration upon return in the case of Macedonia. Building upon the findings of the project *Combating barriers for exit*, this project proposes *zooming in* on how the Roma have been affected specifically through German policies and practices on WB asylum seekers since the visa liberalization, including through their (in)voluntary repatriation. These two aspects have been identified in our work so far as the missing aspects for rounding up the analysis of the Roma migration from the WB in the aftermath of the visa liberalization. Hence, the proposed project will analyze two segments to provide complementary findings to our current work: first, the way that the Roma have been directly targeted through German policies and debates on WB asylum seekers. Second, the project will look into the problems of reintegration of Roma asylum seekers upon their return, focusing on the case of Macedonia. The findings of the two analyses will be used for proposing remedies for practices and policies that have largely contributed to the further othering of Roma, after the visa free regime with the region was introduced. The change that the project wants to achieve is to contribute to breaking the discursive link between the Roma and abusing the visa free or asylum regime of the EU.

## **Combating barriers for exit: Macedonian Roma at the borders: Roma at the Borders (Current), Macedonia**

*European Policy Institute (Elena Anchevska) and Kham (Zekir Abdulov)*

The project is based on the premise that the EU and national response to the rise in asylum seekers from Macedonia since the lifting of the Schengen visa requirement in 2009 has resulted in discriminatory practices and discourses against the Roma community in the country. Such examples include profiling and return from borders and a public discourse portraying the Roma as a threat to the visa free travel. In response, the proposed project aims at contributing to the change of the public discourse depicting the Roma as a threat to the visa free travel in Macedonia. For this purpose it combines a set of research, policy and advocacy activities. First, the project will systematically provide a baseline research on this policy issue, provide an analysis of media discourses and a study of current court cases in Macedonia involving Roma plaintiffs who claim discrimination in this context. On the basis of this research, we will devise proposals for changing of practices and policies and undertake extensive advocacy activities among all stakeholders at the national and EU level. The project will combine the know how in research and policy analysis from EPI as the lead think tank and the access to the Roma communities and grassroots experience of the NGO KHAM.

## Political Participation, Hate Speech and Elections

### **Inclusion Revisited. Practical Solutions for Addressing ‘Othering’ of Roma (Current), Bulgaria**

*CSD (Liliya Peycheva Dragoeva)*

Throughout Bulgaria’s transition to democracy and market economy, political parties left and right have been using ‘othering’ and scapegoating of Roma to provide explanation for the lack of improvement of living standards of the majority population. Stereotypes of Roma criminality, laziness and reliance on welfare benefits have been used by political actors to divert attention and explain lack of progress in key priority areas such as decreasing poverty rates, tackling conventional crime, etc. At the same time, the lack of visible results of programmes and policy actions aiming to integrate the Roma stretch even further the thin lines of social cohesion and re-affirm the majority’s perceptions that the ‘otherness’ of Roma is the reason and cause of their dire social and economic situation and that integration is impossible. For the Roma, the lack of effects of political promises for integration gives rise for scepticism that the political class and democratic regime as a whole can solve their problems and economic hardships.

While lack of political commitment, insufficient public funding and lack of or poorly designed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are some of the main causes of the poor impact of policy documents, evidence exists that there are cases of Roma integration measures at local level, which have impacted the communities in terms of education, employment, housing, health, victimization rates. A more detailed evaluation showing direct measurable results could be used to provide evidence on the results and impact on transparent public investments on the local communities. An independent analysis of results based on representative data and real life stories can be used to communicate the possibilities of inclusion to majorities, as well as minorities, to decision makers as well as society at large. The analysis will thus challenge perceptions of “otherness” based on stereotypes and beliefs of majorities that Roma cannot be integrated and Roma are “to blame”. Such analysis should be supported by economic extrapolations on the expected impact and return on investment from successful integration measures on majority as well as minority populations to portray the benefits of inclusion beyond ethnic lines.

### **Roma Women Campaigning (Proposed), Czech Republic**

*Independent Social Ecological Movement, Slovo 21, Nesehnuta (Lucie Čechovska) and Prospect (Margita Rácová)*

The project aims at issues of multiple discrimination of Roma women in Czech Republic. Through survey, participative planning of the campaign with involvement of the Roma women from local groups Manushe and Association of parents for fair schooling the project wants to develop public campaign implemented on the local level by Roma women’s groups and on national level through the partnership of organizations. The main aim of the campaign is to bring Roma women into the public space and enable them to participate on local public affairs as well as bring the agenda of ‘MDRW’ into the strategic documents and promote creation of working group aimed at the multiple discrimination of Roma women in the Office of the Government of the CZ. The report will present 1) the participative approach used in the project to tackling the issues of multiple discrimination of Roma women by Roma women themselves as possible tool of successful cooperation on the integration and gender equality issues; 2) outcomes and concrete agenda opened during the implementation period of campaign among local Roma women groups; 3) recommendations for work of promoted working group focused on the multiple discrimination of Roma women in the Government Office for Gender Equality.

## **Mind The Gap: How EU development funds affect living standards of under-privileged Roma communities (Proposed), Hungary**

*Átlátszónet Foundation (András Becker) and Roma Press Center (Szilvia Suri)*

Targeted measures funded by European or national funds addressing inequalities often contribute to further increase of inequalities in Hungary. Data on national projects are not or hardly accessible. Through activities planned under this project we are going to explore these anomalies and also ensure transparency. By involving local communities and the media we want to make some pressure on decision makers to improve the efficiency of support policies. We would like to raise awareness to the ignoring of Roma citizens by EU development programs and influence decision makers to change this process. Unveiling the mechanism of negligence is the first step in our project, when we gather all information and data about relevant EU programs and compare the results with real needs of developments. Beyond the data we investigate specific programs by pursuit of many including Roma targeted projects and mainstream projects to show the absurdity and to find the real beneficiaries of these projects by examples. Empower Roma communities to act against the negligence and to learn from other practices is essential in our project. In the final part of the project we will send a message to Brussels, which contains awareness raising activities, lobby and strong recommendations for the EU Parliament to act against the neglecting of Roma citizens and mind the gap between the middle class and vulnerable groups..

## **Talk to Us! Parlate con noi! (Proposed), Italy**

*Associazione Promozione e Solidarietà (SPES) (Giuliana Cresce), Romni Onlus (Saska Jovanovic), Ariel Roma Integration Association (Ion Dumitru), RoWNI – Roma Women Network Italy, Romano Drom and Romanò pala tetehara (Vojislav Stojanovic)*

The “banality of othering” of Roma/Sinti – this we want to expose. Hate speech in the media, the failure of NRIS and segregation is fueled by racism and populism of certain political options. But it has become institutionalized through patronizing attitudes and interests also of progressive forces and mainstream civil society. The root to this is the passivity of Roma/Sinti and the lack of mainstream cultural and citizenship competences. Self-representation in politics and in media in Italy does not exist, literally. Roma/Sinti activists have the responsibility to challenge this. We will organize public debates in five cities where representatives of all political parties will be invited to listen to the needs, problems and proposals of the communities formulated in public by young Roma/Sinti, who will prepare the dossier and invitations to dialogue tutored by partners. The invitation we will launch to all political bodies is to activate listening posts and organize occasions of confrontation. The same we will ask of the media, by providing them with varied direct sources of information. We want to take a public stance with ample visibility. Roma and Sinti communities have voices. Now that everybody knows it, there is no excuse for not involving us.

## **Documenting new experiences of ‘Otherness’ and advocating for successful integration of Roma migrants through better education (Proposed, Serbia)**

*Public Policy Research Centre (PPRC), (Tanja Jakobi) and Forum Roma of Serbia (FRS) (Igor Kostić)*

Having in mind that lack of job solutions and discrimination are the major driving forces behind the ongoing migration of Roma, this project aims to address these shortcomings at the national and local level, and enhance bottom up social inclusion of Roma migrants in Serbia through better fine-tuned policies to suit needs of the subgroups within the Roma migrants population at national and local levels. Specifically, our focus will be on employability of the Roma migrants with some level of education received in the EU countries in which they have resided. The project will explore new venues for employment of Roma migrants in partnerships with EU business associations represented in Serbia; and through proactive policies toward EU partners in creating opportunities for orderly labor migrant options in EU i.e. seasonal employment opportunities for Roma migrants. The second part of the project will deal with discourse related to ‘othering’

of Roma migrants, in the Serbian society by looking into narratives in media and institutional surroundings, and Roma migrants' personal experience with discriminative narratives. The aim is to assess the impact of discriminative discourse on Roma migrants' motivation to look for sustainable living options in Serbia. Both dimensions – employability and discriminative discourse will be further scrutinized by controlling for impact of austerity measures and influx of migrants on possible change in Roma migrants status. Findings of the research will be followed by recommendations for policy measures and advocacy tools. The project will be implemented in partnership between the CENTRE and the Forum Roma of Serbia, Belgrade.

### **Everyone should have a chance! (Current), Slovakia**

*Centre for the Research of Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK) (Alena Chudžíková) and Roma Research and Advocacy Center (Zuzana Balážová)*

Anchored in human rights paradigm, *Everyone should have a chance!* project seeks to challenge political and public discourses securitizing and constructing Roma as threats to the majority. Political discourse feeds on presumptions of causality between Roma ethnicity and certain attributes (e.g. laziness, predisposition to criminal behaviour, etc.) and use them to justify repressive measures in order to score political points. Using social science research and promotion of positive examples of Roma inclusion we aim to debunk the myths of ethnicity being linked with particular behaviours and to propose feasible measures to increase Roma employment. Our advocacy strategy will be based on partnerships with stakeholders that could potentially implement the proposed measures. We will provide our expertise and support in the process.

Communication being crucial, we will use mass- and social media for spreading our messages via a short video, brief blogs and v-logs and photo albums with our commentaries. We aim to target the broadest possible audience going beyond the usual NGO and academic circle. Our aim is to continue building a critical mass supporting our ideas thus decreasing the populist electorate.