

# Study visit

## to Roma organizations and organizations working with Roma youth

24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> April 2013, Murska Sobota, Slovenia

## Follow up activities

A few weeks after the Study Visit participants were requested to let us know of the follow up activities in their local environments and organizations. We were interested to know, if and how the participation in the Study visit and field visits effected their work.

We received 6 answers.

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### By Tereza Forgačová from CZ

I spoke about study visit only with my co-worker, because unfortunately I don't work together with director of our organization.

I and my co-worker are enthusiastic for some project, but the big problem is still the motivation of clients (Roma people) ... I had idea about program for clients in our club with some Roma guest as good practice example, but don't I have any contacts for successful Roma in our Region. And now we have summer and we have less clients.

I spoke with clients about Roma - life, history, customs, traditions. And it was very interesting and we had nice time together. I hope in the fall we can try it again. And we had program about education, we had about 15 clients for all program. It was very successful :-) In this time I make program for young Roma people about alcohol.

### By Silvia Alessi from UK

I had a few meetings with my supervisors on the study visit and handed to them all the material collected. It's very difficult to realize something similar in the short period, but they got really interested in the Roma Academic Club and they would like to reproduce some of the activities that the RAC carries out here in Glasgow.

### By Maria Luigia Pierfelice from IT

Since I came back in Pescara, I'm working as always, in our center as volunteer. We make activities with Roma children and youngsters; we are welcome and well-liked by our neighbors: they know we are doing activities with recycled materials and so we give them their help. As we talked during our meeting, the main problem still rest to involve the families, because they are always busy or they have problems, for instance they are "arrest at home", or families are so numerous that mums leave their boys free and alone in the streets. So there are streets laws. Some Roma says that Roma are not anymore the same than in the past, there are only few traditions still alive (like funeral), but in the same time they are a mix between modernity and cultural identity. Anyway they are separated from the main society and the political agenda: in these weeks we are cooperating with Fondazione Romani Italia, Roma national foundation to share some project or make intervention to support integration.

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There are several obstacles, but we'll find problem solving and solutions. The second main problem is school drop-out with all his aspects and consequences.... unluckily there are not strict and direct political intervention, and even among organizations (Roma and non-Roma) and associations there are some troubles. Yes, they are not wise as Roma Academic Club!

Finally, I just says you that I love to work with Roma, because they are special people, in all shadows and light aspects, really better than "normal crazy" people affected by television and consumerism.

### By Oana Burcea from RO

The ideas that I had during the study visit in Slovenia were about the culture of Roma, about the racism within the young people.

I already had little events here in this direction. On the occasion of the European Night of the Museums, in May 18th, we had a group of Roma musicians that played in our open air museum for hundreds of persons. Also, the same evening, there were some special Roma recipes for the gourmands. I wanted to make an approach to the Roma culture in this way.

For this summer, in August, I am planning a camp with music and dances, two arts that can be bridges between Roma and non Roma. The program will be enriched with film, food, presentations, workshops ecc. Maybe I will need volunteers :-)

### By Kateřina Kršková from CZ

My local organisation (Community centre of Salvation Army in Přerov) was not very attached by my study visit. Nowadays we have only non-Roma kids here, so at least we are teaching them about social inclusion and problems of Roma people in majority. When some Roma kids will come, we are planning to do some small magazine every month about famous Roma people, with Roma dictionary, some Roma tales and so on. We also would like to invite Roma people who studied university to show kids that it is possible.

We were talking about engaging volunteers from EVS, but in my local organisation we don't have need nowadays and national Slavation Army is already working with them.

I came back very inspired, I also wanted to do some small Roma festival here, but coming back took me back to reality and nowadays it is not very possible.. So hope for the future :) My colleagues and boss are tilted to my ideas.

### By Biljana Tvrđišić from MNE

After the study visit in Slovenia I shared my experience with my colleagues and we discussed about some new things which we can do for Roma people, but things which are achievable and realistic.



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Our main activity was to motivate young Roma to go to school, I mean to increase number of them. I must say that this job hasn't been easy at all. Lots of families haven't been willing to cooperate. We made a cooperation with 6 elementary schools (from 10 schools in my hometown). We started this activity a month ago, and we should finish it till 3rd July. We were going in visit, and we were trying to motivate them for school, and schools gave us (feedback) information how many children sing up for school for this year. I have a very optimistic feeling about this work, but I am waiting final results.

Also, we had a camp in north of Montenegro, one part of national park called "Lovćen". We included also Roma youth, there were totally 45 children, and there were above 10 Roma children. Children were from 7 -14 years. We wanted to improve their position, I mean socialization. I think that this type of camp was very important for every kid, especially for Roma kids, because for a lot of them it was a first time to be out of their community and to be with other children. My idea is to make this type of camp again, since I think it was very useful for every kid, Roma and non Roma.

Starting from September, we will have a special program for two manifestations which runs NGO "Lighthouse" from 2006. Those are manifestations for children, and we will try to include as many Roma children as possible, since lot of them are very talented for art.