



BRIEF & RESULTS

Roundtable: Virtual Event/Skype

'BARRIERS TO THE LABOUR MARKET: A VICIOUS CIRCLE'

"Fighting discrimination and anti-Gypsyism in education and employment in the EU" (PAL) - JUST/2014/RDIS/AG/DISC/8115

Date: 17 August 2017; Time: 14.00-16.00 CET

(8am NY, 1pm London, 2pm Brussels, 3pm Bucharest)

Organized by: The Center for Social Responsibility in the Digital Age
SRDA www.srda.eu

The 3rd SRDA-PAL Roundtable was held on Skype, the 17 August, and was aimed to continue SRDA's event from 12 June, in Brussels. Following a particularly interesting and successful roundtable event and its constructive conclusions, during an ad-hoc working lunch, SRDA decided to continue the dialogue on the same topic, using its own resources and time.

Note: the PAL project WS 'Implementation of Empowerment Services for Non-Discrimination and Roma-Integration' chapter did not require a continuation of this activity, it was SRDA's choice.

The PAL project, 'Fighting discrimination and anti-Gypsyism in education and employment in EU' (PAL) JUST/2014/RDIS/AG/DISC/8115, is funded by the Rights Equality and Citizenship Programme.

The roundtable brought together representatives from the educational and management fields, from Belgium and Romania-- there were 4 participants, who had the opportunity to continue the discussion started in June.

One main issue opened the dialogue: Prejudices still exist, therefore, **building trust is essential.**

There were also covered:

- Example of personal experiences, which proved hard to deal with, due to rejection of (any) help;





- The rejection of education & employment many times depends on the leaders of the respective Roma community; it also depends on the social workers or the teachers, or trainers, working with the community;
- The idea of young talents should be pursued; many are artistically inclined (music, dance, crafts...);
- The fear of losing identity once they change— Is this something to worry about? Would their traditions have to change?...
- Funding from other sources than the European institutions would be a good contribution to assisting the Roma community.

The importance of dialogue across European countries was mentioned several times- everyone agreed. The collaboration must continue.

Concluding remarks

1. **Building Trust** - Given the Roma rights are often abused or dismissed, education will have to help the various constituents and educators assist with the matter;
2. **Communicating with the Roma community** - The importance of the dialogue with the Roma community was stressed again. It is important to hear their side of the story—although there is a lot of reluctance (their attitude must change, or they will continue to marginalize themselves), some are willing to move forward, and with their help, attempt the integration of more Romani;
3. **Education & Employment, main elements of Integration** – There are educational programmes in place which challenge this situation and even more integration effort through different activities is being developed in this sense—dissemination is key;
4. **Stimulating Talents** – Encouraging the young artists should be an ongoing preoccupation among those assisting the Roma community. Social workers and educators alike, should identify and assist with perfecting and continue to encourage these talent. Schools of arts & crafts could be one way to support this endeavour;
5. **Similarities and Differences** – The exchange of information between countries should be able to tackle the similarities and differences between the Roma communities across Europe. Where similarities are identified, it should become a reflex to share the findings with the next door neighbour country colleague. This should be immediately followed by an event, bringing together experts from each country to discuss the findings, decide on actions, and move on to the concrete steps;
6. **Success Stories Help** – The more success stories are shared, the better it is. People in all communities are looking for role models. From a young age,





these examples should be shared with the Roma families and in school, starting with the first graders. The earlier the start, the better the impact.

Using the existing mechanism to fight discrimination is good, however, the methods must be upgraded / improved, constantly. Every good idea that spins off a formal or informal meeting must be noted and disseminated among the Network(s) assisting the Roma communities. A better communication among the support groups, associations, foundations... is imperative. The PAL Leadership & Consortium already had the initiative of creating the PAL Network, which in September reached a total of 67 members.

Actions

Near future action: There will be a 4th Roundtable, on 14 September, exclusively supported by SRDA, most likely an interactive 2hrs Skype event, with participants from the UK and Romania.

Future action: SRDA will provide a collaboration Plan & Timeline with the participants, to be implemented a/o January 2018.

Notes

The preliminary preparation for this roundtable (#3) i.e. talks with participating guests, prior to 17 Aug, lasted about 45 mins and the meeting, a little over 1hr.

