



# FUEN

FEDERAL UNION OF EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES  
FÖDERALISTISCHE UNION EUROPÄISCHER VOLKSGRUPPEN  
ФЕДЕРАЛИСТСКИЙ СОЮЗ ЕВРОПЕЙСКИХ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫХ МЕНЬШИНСТВ  
UNION FÉDÉRALISTE DES COMMUNAUTÉS ETHNIQUES EUROPÉENNES



## **SOLIDARITY WITH THE ROMA – MINORITIES HELPING MINORITIES**

*„Time and history do not work towards simple-mindedness, but instead towards intellectual diversity; for a European society where the human dignity of each individual citizen is a condition for the human dignity of all citizens; a European society where all situations in which man is an oppressed, abandoned, abject creature shall be changed. That’s European!”*

*(Heinz Winfried Sabais (1922-1981), former mayor of the town of Darmstadt and Secretary General of the PEN-Centre in Germany, at the European Culture Congress of Europa Union Germany in 1979)*





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## Executive Summary

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*Use the expertise of minorities for the benefit of the Roma*

The project “Solidarity with the Roma – Minorities helping Minorities” represents a new model of improving the living conditions of the Roma with the help of other European minorities. People belonging to autochthonous minorities have proven social and intercultural skills, which makes them suited to act as mediators and bridge-builders. The expertise of the minorities gathered in the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) – the largest minority organisation in Europe – is to be utilised to the benefit of the Roma.

*Encouraging active participation*

Together and in cooperation with other minorities the Roma will experience more acceptance on the part of the majority population. They will develop a stronger feeling of self-esteem and will be encouraged to participate in social and governmental processes. The solidarity among the minorities shall enable the Roma to maintain their identity and to take their place as equal member in the European family of nations.

*Minorities embody added value*

The solidarity among the minorities that we aim at is not only relevant for the Roma-population. It will increase the status of all the minorities and how the overall population perceives them. When the mutual solidarity among the minorities provides a contribution to the solution of a concrete problematic situation, this will make apparent that minorities embody an added value for the society as a whole!

*Universal applicability*

*Pilot project in Hungary*

Whereas the project idea and the overall concept could be implemented in any place where a balance has to be found between the interests of minorities and the majority, the pilot project concentrates on the cooperation with Hungarian government agencies and non-governmental organisations that falls under the Roma-strategy of the European Union, which was initiated during the Hungarian Council Presidency of the EU. After an evaluation stage FUEN would like to extend its commitment for the Roma to other states in South Eastern Europe.

*Sustainability as first priority*

The sustainability of all the sub-projects is our first priority. For reasons of efficacy and cost-effectiveness, existing structures and facilities shall be used, if possible; both those of the minorities and those of the majority population.

*List of sub-projects*

Based on several fact-finding and implementation missions in Hungary and in close cooperation between FUEN and the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma a list of sub-projects has been developed. This is an open list that will be updated if needed.



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## **Solidarity with the Roma – Minorities helping Minorities**

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### *1. Necessity of civil-society commitment*

Most of the more than ten million Roma in Europe are confronted with prejudices, discrimination, intolerance and social exclusion in their everyday life. Their difficult living situation is not just a challenge for Europe as a community of values, justice and solidarity. Notwithstanding the primary responsibility of their individual home states it is also one of the most important issues for internal peace and social cohesion in Europe and a task that has to be solved as a matter of priority.

*Improvement of the situation of the Roma as a challenge at all levels*

Even though national strategies especially in the field of providing public services are very useful within the European multi-level system – they will remain without sustainable effect if they are not coming together with measures to promote acceptance and participation in society of Europe's numerically largest minority. This task can neither be fulfilled by the state level, nor by the regional or municipal level alone. Close cooperation between state and municipal institutions and the forces of civil society is required.

*Promotion of acceptance and participation in society*

Supplementary to the public services by the state and municipalities, in particular in education, health care, employment and housing, accompanying steps have to be initiated to improve social integration and civil society participation of the Roma. In such a process, with the aim of bringing minority and majority closer together, the potential of Europe-wide civil society commitment should be used more.

*Make use of civil society commitment*

### *2. Acceptance through approaching one another*

For the actors of civil society it is easier than for state or municipal authorities to enhance the social inclusion of the Roma and their participation in society. Acceptance and recognition cannot be imposed by rules; they evolve in a mutual process of cautious rapprochement without direct state interference. That requires open-mindedness and the will to rethink unprejudiced, both in the population at large as amongst the members of the Roma-communities.

*Rethink unprejudiced*

Dialogue and exchange are the most important and most effective steps for getting to know and understand one another. The first step to be taken is to start up a conversation with one another, get a view of the experiences of the other side, discover sensibilities and sensitivities and regularly also traumas, which are the result of generations-long stigmatising and exclusion. On the other hand also the tendency to self-isolation on the part of the Roma minority has to be overcome.

*Building trust through dialogue and exchange*



*Recognise being different  
as added value*

*Emotional intelligence and  
empathy as key*

In an atmosphere of intercultural openness a basis for trust can grow, which is needed to address prejudices, fears and conflict potential, but also wishes, expectations and hope relating to someone's personal array of experiences. It is crucial, in the specific situation of minority and majority to accept one another and to not consider being different as a threat, but to regard it as enrichment arising from diversity and to recognise this as the added value that is specific for the minorities.

Consequently, short-term-oriented pragmatism is not what is required here, but rather emotional intelligence, empathy and authentic personal commitment, in order to achieve acceptance through approaching one another in intercultural dialogue.

### *3. Minorities as bridge-builders*

*Use common background  
and experiences*

*More self-confidence*

*Practice subsidiarity*

When it comes to approaching one another and building bridges of trust, representatives of national minorities and ethnic groups are particularly qualified for the task. They frequently have a similar background and experience and have themselves suffered from exclusion and distrust.

Not a few of them, however, also found ways and possibilities for getting the minority and majority population to work together constructively. It is not unusual that representatives of minorities draw a special self-confidence from their experience and knowledge based on their personal efforts to improve their original situation and based on the opportunities for participation in society that they became aware of. It qualifies them to support others to help themselves and while doing so take account of the principle of subsidiarity.

*Minorities as  
intermediaries*

*Scientifically proven  
added value*

From this starting point the minorities almost automatically get the task of an intermediary. The intermediary-role is one of the skills that characterise minorities and that apart from other skills show their added value for cohesion in state and society. Minorities have, as academic research shows – e.g. the Competence Analysis by the European Academy Bozen/Bolzano (EU-RAC): “Minorities as Standortfactor in the German-Danish Border Region”, Bozen/Bolzano 2007 – a specific social and intercultural competence, which goes hand in hand with a keen awareness for justice and equal treatment.

### *4. Solidarity with the Roma*

*Acceptance based  
on solidarity*

Solidarity amongst persons belonging to minorities and their specific social-cultural character should be used Europe-wide to raise more awareness and acceptance for the Roma minority in their particular social situation. Efforts must be made to create a solidarity alliance of people belonging to the Roma with other minority organisations in order to involve them in social processes. By establishing trustful contacts internally and joint external



*Better advocacy by working in tandem*

*Taking the experiences in other regions into account*

action in regard to voicing common interest (“in tandem-principle”), the negative attitudes that the Roma initially run across if they act isolated and on their own can be broken down.

Experiences in the German-Danish border region prove that consistent inclusion of the Roma minority in the “Dialogue Forum North” – a joint platform for communication and speaking up of all the autochthonous minorities in the region – led to a clear effect of more solidarity amongst the minorities. The way the Roma represent their interest was improved and the awareness of their interests amongst parts of the majority population was clearly raised.

*Converging interests of minority and majority*

*Early involvement of the Roma in conceptualisation and planning*

*Minorities as regional factor for establishing businesses*

## *5. Minorities as factor for establishing businesses*

With its specific background and experience the minorities organised in the Federal Union of European Nationalities (FUEN) can amongst other things use their competence to identify in regard to the Roma converging interests of the minority and majority population.

These steps can only be followed with success, when the ethnic group of the Roma is involved extensively and at an early stage in the planning of concrete projects. In this way they will be able to accept the project as their own.

The concentration on thus identified commonalities will be more than just a process of awareness-raising. From it, concrete conclusions can be derived, both for more social inclusion, but also about the importance of minorities as regional factor for establishing businesses. Especially this aspect gains increasing economic importance in the light of the demographic development of the Roma population in South East Europe.

*Loyalty and minority protection*

*Minority model of the German-Danish border region*

## *6. Model for the resolution of social conflict*

The freedom of affiliation guaranteed by the state and the protection and support for minorities on the one hand and the respect for the law and loyalty of the minorities as required by the state are closely interconnected. Reliability, accountability and partnership built on mutual respect and trust are the credo of every successful minority policy.

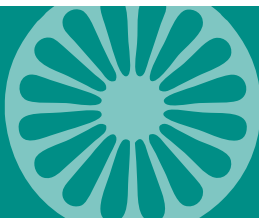
On this basis, the minorities and the majority in the German-Danish border region entered into a symbiotic relationship leading them from originally a conflictual situation, through a neutral situation to a situation of harmony and cooperation. Today this minority policy has been embedded in a legal, institutional and social framework. The experiences from the German-Danish border region serve as a model for peaceful resolution of minority conflicts for other regions of Europe as well.

The focus may be foremost on the Roma as a target group, but that does not exclude other groups living under similar social-economic and cultural con-



*Model, also for other groups*

ditions. The project avoids – in line with the recommendations of the Roma portal of the European Commission from 24 April 2009 (<http://ec.europa.eu/roma>) – to consider the situation of the Roma as a singular case or to focus on general terms such as poverty and (traditional) way of living, which is rightfully criticised by the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma. In its core it is a model action programme that it applicable for all inclusion endeavours and could be used on a wide basis.



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## Project list

**As of: 23 May 2013**

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Based on several fact-finding and implementation missions in Hungary, FUEN and the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma in Heidelberg elaborated a list of sub-projects. These range from sports and cultural activities, projects in the field of education and training, to teaching about heat generation with renewable energy and organic horticulture. In spite of the diversity, all these projects have in common that they are focusing on the concrete living situation of the Roma and that they offer chances to develop themselves in those areas where they have specific talents, abilities and interests.

FUEN has engaged in an intensive dialogue with the Hungarian Ministry for Human Resources, the National Self-Administration of the Hungarian Germans and other minorities who are organised in the Council of Self-Administrations in Hungary, and with non-governmental organisations that work on Roma-issues. The first objective was the suitability and feasibility of the projects and their prioritisation. At a later stage the willingness of the minorities and specific NGOs in Hungary, to become active for specific sub-projects and to assume responsibility, was explored within the framework of our project design. The implementation of the sub-projects – for a part as pilot projects – takes place in close cooperation with the Hungarian Polgár Foundation and the Kiút-programme located at this foundation. Both NGOs have a lot of professional expertise and practical experience in relation to Roma-projects. The partnership between FUEN and the Polgár/Kiút Foundation is an excellent chance to combine the Europe-wide network of FUEN with the expertise and the local commitment of Polgár/Kiút and to develop synergies.

The responsible Hungarian Ministry for Human Resources supports the total project. We agreed to apply for funding to the European Commission in close cooperation with the Ministry and based on an agreement with them.

The Robert Bosch Foundation in Stuttgart, Germany, has made a significant financial contribution, to cover the costs in the preparatory stage for fact-finding and implementation missions and, building on this, to enable us to develop an application in order to obtain EU-funding.

Based on these preparations so far 17 sub-projects have been identified. The following sub-projects are proposed:

### *1. Football training camp and regional police academy*

The project will use the integrating effect of sports and make a contribution to overcome exclusion and discrimination of the Roma. There are a large number of talented young Roma-football players in Hungary. It is hard for them to play in normal teams, where they frequently are suffering from discrimination.

The idea is to invite young football players for a training session in Germany and to offer them the opportunity to be trained by experts from the German national football association and its subdivisions. An excellent place to do this is the sports school Malente in Schleswig-Holstein, which has regularly been used as the training centre where the German national football team has been preparing for important tournaments. Football players and trainers from the German and the Danish minority and the Sinti and Roma in Schleswig-Holstein will be attracted as train-





ing partners and as coaches. A final football tournament, in which the minority teams, local football associations and the regional police academy of Eutin will be participating, will be complemented by a press conference and presented to the public.

The sportive part will be linked to a higher project aim:

The close distance to the regional police academy of Schleswig-Holstein in Eutin will be used for a meeting that has a social and political objective. The members of the Roma-team and policemen of approximately the same age, who already know each other from the playing field, will come into contact with each other while visiting the regional police academy.

The regional sports federation Schleswig-Holstein and the Schleswig-Holstein regional football federation have expressed their interest and readiness to FUEN and to the Central Council of the German Sinti and Roma, in principle, to implement this project together with them.

The preparation of the programme, also psychologically, lies in the hands of people who have experience in engaging in dialogue and who belong to the autochthonous minorities in Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark. For organising the meeting and making contacts with the administration and with politicians, active and former representatives from the administration and from politics are available. On the middle and longer term we want to develop international police cooperation, of which this sportive encounter may be the start. In Hungary there is already an organisation of Roma in the police force. Based on the experience so far, these forms of cooperation are mutually beneficial. They contribute to greater acceptance amongst the Roma of the way the police is performing its tasks and to a reduction in stereotypes and reservations on the part of the majority population towards the Roma.

## *2. Film project “A Rom dreams of the Champions League”*

This project of making a documentary suited for cinema and TV, has as its objective to view the daily reality of the Roma in Hungary from the perspective of sports. The film project will present active Roma who succeed, within the framework of their minority, in re-inventing themselves through sports (in this case football) and to become role models in their families and also role models in their minority. The film project shall counteract the prejudices among the majority population that have been existing for centuries, not in the last place by presenting the Roma not as a group, but as individuals with their own dreams, passion and views for the future. In this way the project is suited to show the connecting social power of football. In light of the “Decade of Roma Inclusion” that is drawing to an end in 2015, the film should in that year be shown on international film festivals and on European TV-channels. It shall show that integration is possible, without forcing the Roma to give up or even deny their cultural identity. It furthermore offers the chance, in a difficult political environment, to present to Europe a differentiated understanding of the Hungarian reality. In particular, on the chances for development that Hungary offers to its Roma. This is not in the last place reflected by the little known fact that the national selection of the Hungarian Roma finished second in the European football championship of the European minorities in Germany in 2012.

## *3. Roma talent promotion*

The purpose of the project is the development and social integration of the existing, but not systematically evaluated and supported Roma-intelligentsia. At least one percent of the Roma children should, based on the abilities they have, receive specific encouragement. Among them



are talents in the fields of sports, science and the arts.

As a short-term objective we want to establish a complex support system that will evaluate and support outstanding gifted and motivated Roma children, who come from disadvantaged social environments. We intend to start a secondary school for Roma operating across the country, with a focus on adequate education of talents.

The organisation carrying out the project is the Polgár Foundation in cooperation with the Roma Talent Support Council RTT (Roma Tehetségsegítő Tanács). We plan to support 100 Roma children, who have already been registered in a database ([www.romatehetseg.hu](http://www.romatehetseg.hu)) administered by the Polgár Foundation. Our point of departure is an analysis of the national education programme, made by the Polgár Foundation. It leads to the outcome that equal opportunities for Roma children have to be improved in a sustainable way. The recommendation is to extend the positive experiences from the Hungarian Roma-football talent programme to a complex talent support system. Based on this, the Polgár Foundation helped to establish the Roma Talent Support Council (RTT), in order to achieve better knowledge and create a better network for supporting talents among the Roma population.

During talent evaluation events of the foundation, suitable participants for the projects are selected based on recommendations by schools with a high percentage of socially disadvantaged school students. In holiday camps organised by Polgár they have the opportunity to show their abilities. At the same time a special training programme for mentors is being developed.

These measures were so far financed by the Swiss-Hungarian Scholarship Fund. The available budget, however, was not enough to guarantee the sustainability of the project. Therefore we want to include the project as the core project on the part of the Hungarian government in the multiannual programme period of the EU that starts in 2014. The costs of the pilot project for 100 children over a duration of 24 months will amount to circa 300,000 Euro.

#### *4. Biomeiler (bio-heat generator), energy generation and composting*

During winter, a large proportion of the Roma-minority is not able to heat their houses or apartments sufficiently or at all. The fuel available on the market is unaffordable for almost everyone. For Roma living in rural areas in houses with a small yard, so-called Biomeilers (bio-heat generators) can be constructed to generate warm water all year long that can be used as a simple way of underfloor heating.

The Biomeiler is a large compost heap, with water-filled tubes at regular vertical distances that are fitted to a grid and that are connected. In the process of composting, anaerobic bacteria are converting the organic material into heat. The water in the water-tube-system will reach a constant temperature of circa 55-60 degrees Celsius throughout the year. The closed system connects the Biomeiler with the house, in which tubes are fitted as underfloor heating. A small, possibly solar-powered, low energy pump is required as investment next to the tubes and the grid, furthermore a shredder for the compost material. Once the Biomeiler starts generating heat in less than one week, it can continue producing heat for 12 until 16 months. Then the compost has gone rotten and can be used as fertiliser for the gardening land. The top-quality product, several cubic meters of natural fertiliser, will be available as a "by-product" for organic horticulture.

A new Biomeiler can be built with the available tubes, grids and pumps. If the tubes have been mounted already beforehand, the Biomeiler can be constructed with few persons within one



single day.

The good experiences that farmers from Nordschleswig (DK) and parts of northern Germany and Switzerland have with the Biomeiler, will be presented by experts to interested Roma-communities, both in theory and in practice. In different places the future users will help in the supervised construction of the first Biomeilers. Possibly, we will start with constructing a larger-sized Biomeiler for a community centre.

Because of the easy way of building this extremely inexpensive way of generating heat-energy on an organic basis it can lead to sustainable improvement of the living situation of families.

## *5. Horticulture and product marketing*

The aim of the project is to transfer knowledge on horticulture and agriculture, in order to provide a better basis for self-sufficiency with horticulture products that are not or only little used by the Roma till now. The long-term objective is to earn revenue by selling the products, using the model of a cooperative.

The German minority in Denmark, in cooperation with the agricultural association (a professional organisation of the minority) plays a pioneering role in the area of organic horticulture. There are similar structures in the Danish minority in Schleswig. Organic production is interesting, especially because of the for Roma unaffordable costs of mineral fertilisers, which are not feasible as an alternative. The health aspect that is closely related to organic production will be linked to information and education about the relationship between production, nutrition, and health. The knowledge in this area that has accumulated amongst the minorities will be used to professionalise and expand already existing pilot projects with horticulture in Roma-villages in some rural areas in Hungary, with the involvement of agricultural schools and experts from Hungary and abroad. We agreed to cooperate with the Hungarian Polgár Foundation, which is already working in this area. Especially the Biomeiler (bio-heat generator)-technology – see project no. 4 – shall be applied in this context. Next to the compost produced from the Biomeilers, they can also be used to heat the greenhouses.

The main focus on improving agriculture will be accompanied by activities to get to know one another, developing bonds and trust. Apart from creating horticultures in the Roma settlements, we would like to organise training courses and practical education measures, that will be organised by the minorities and their establishments, aimed at interested people from the Roma-minority who can act as a multiplier.

## *6. Open up minority schools for Roma-children*

The project aims at further opening up schools for general and vocational education in Hungary for Roma-children. In this manner they will get the chance to experience already at a young age that living as someone from a minority is not restricted to the group of Roma, but is also a reality for other parts of society. The affiliation to a minority is a characteristic that the children share, and from which solidarity and mutual responsibility will gradually develop.

If the established minority schools will each accept a specific contingent of Roma-students, this will not only be seen as a sign of solidarity amongst the minorities, but it will also give the group of the Roma better chances for integration in society as a whole. According to practice in minority schools in Germany and Denmark this requires teachers with special qualifications who can



act as mediators. A special grant for minority schools that actively embrace teaching of Roma-children – from the national budget or from EU-funding – has to be provided as a stimulus and as compensation for the extra efforts that have to be made.

### *7. International partnerships of minority schools*

The expansion of already existing secondary school partnerships between minority schools in Hungary, Denmark and Germany will make a contribution to inclusion based on partnership of school students from the Roma minority in school exchanges. Between the Valéria-Koch-gymnasium in Pécs and the German gymnasium in Aabenraa there is already a school partnership. The intensity of contacts and intercultural exchange is declining, however – not in the last place because of the lack of funding to provide travel and accommodation for school students and teachers.

The partnership will get new impetus, when the current tradition of inter-school contacts is enhanced by including Roma-school students. In this context we aim at establishing a partnership of four schools, by stretching out the relationship to the Ghandi-gymnasium in Pécs that is exclusively attended by Roma-students, and the Duborg-school of the Danish minority in Flensburg.

The approach of solidarity among minorities across the board finds its visible and sustainable expression, once the exchange with Roma-students is intensified. Establishing private contacts, which generally takes place during school exchanges – for example by accommodating Roma-students in host families of the other minorities – will be a pioneering step in the social integration of school students from the Hungarian Roma minority.

### *8. Ease the transition from school to job with vocational training*

The model is aimed at school students, who attended compulsory school until the age of 16, but who did not make it to the highest class. And also at school students who completed the highest class of secondary school, but who were not able to get the qualifications to enter technical school or who were not accepted for technical school. For this group of school students a full time programme consisting of vocational training during one year will be established – preferably in towns of 15,000 inhabitants and more with both a German and a Roma minority. The training is also open to students from the majority population. The training will not lead to an official diploma, but the participants will receive a certificate if they follow the programme regularly and successfully. This will help them in finding a job.

The programme will for example include the following professional sectors:

Masonry, joinery, carpentry, hotel and catering, cooking, health education, nursing for those in need of care, hair dressing and beauty treatment, (graphic) design, gardening and landscape architecture.

According to demand, at first programmes in three to four professional sectors shall be offered. It is important to keep in mind that professions that are predominantly preferred by girls are included as well.

Next to vocational schooling and training the curriculum will also include classes in the mother tongue, in mathematics and IT and for the hotel and catering course also classes of English and German will be offered.



The teaching personnel will consist of former vocational school teachers, active school teachers working part time, skilled workers with lots of experience from the minority or from the majority population as well. For mother tongue and foreign language teaching and for the IT-courses also hourly paid students can be employed. The management of the course should consist of experienced people from the German and the Roma minorities in Hungary. For the technical activities, working spaces in the close vicinity are required, which have to be furnished with learning materials. Representatives of the minorities from Germany and Denmark will contribute to the establishment and development of these practice-oriented courses with their experiences in regard to vocational training measures.

### *9. Community school with boarding home*

This education project is targeted at fulfilling the objectives on which the pedagogical concept and the structure of the after-school of the German minority in Tinglev/Denmark are based. Experiences with similar structures and objectives are also widely available among the Danish majority and at the Danish minority in Germany.

The experiences of the German community school in Tinglev, which was established 60 years ago, and its methodology for education are suitable as model and guide for the project in Hungary. The knowledge available in Denmark shall be used in such a way that with advice and support from Tinglev the Roma-project will bear fruit.

The school that will be developed in Hungary, preferably in a region with several minorities next to the majority population, will be a school where different cultures will meet one another, and where school students will be educated as an alternative to the regular school. The school students will learn about the other culture by living, learning and working together. In regard to the inclusion of Roma-school students and because of their frequent premature dropout from school, we will focus on the age group of 13- to 14-year-olds.

The school should have the form of a school with classes all day long or additional as a boarding school. The location should be so that children from families of the German minority and from Roma families, and eventually also from another minority, have the chance to attend the school. The main focus of the educational work will be on developing the social and professional skills of the school students; to foster and sustain these skills in the sense of lifelong learning. Teaching and upbringing are also aimed at discovering talents and promoting these talents. The contact between different cultures in such a small space of learning together requires respect and tolerance for the other, and thus acceptance and trust can be developed. In teaching professional skills, there will be a lot of attention for languages as essential vehicle of culture. The curriculum therefore consists of classes in Hungarian and English for all, German as mother tongue for the Hungarian Germans and as a foreign language for the Roma. Already in the planning phase, a council of parents from the representatives of the self-governments of the German and the Roma minority, and possibly additional minorities, will be established. The management of the school should be in the hands of experienced teachers from the minorities who are involved in the project.

### *10. Preventing school dropout – close the education gap in the intermediate*





### *levels with Tanoda (afternoon school)*

The project aims at increasing the participation of the Roma in education during a difficult period of growing up, and at the same time will give the school students from other minorities stimulus and opportunities to earn a school diploma. The idea is to start a pilot project that will be implemented by a Hungarian municipality in cooperation with the minority self-administrations in Hungary and FUEN. Some safeguards will have to be built in to make the project sustainable and to make it transferable.

The focus of this best-practice project will be on school student of the age of 13-16 years, in the second and third levels of education, with significant learning lags and educational deficits that make it hard for them to obtain their diploma. Because of their social situation, they will need targeted support. The measure is aimed at supporting these young people in their progress to the next grade. It shall motivate them to continue education and not to drop out from school. The project consists of a series of measures:

- making sure that weak school students become literate
- increasing the proficiency in the Hungarian language, both written and orally
- reducing learning lags in the main school subjects
- strengthening the knowledge of one foreign language, which will enable the school students to continue secondary education in the following school years.

The support will be given to groups of up to three students, but also individually, if necessary. The parents will be invited – especially in the beginning – to have a look at the learning location and how their children are learning. We will have to select a group of facilitators, who want to work in a team on this targeted form of tuition:

- teachers, also from the majority population
- parents, preferably also those who are active in church or in schools
- university students who live close to the school
- school students from the last two years of gymnasium, especially for the IT-classes

We want to attract trainers and educators for Hungarian, one or two foreign languages, mathematics and information technology. Students should receive an hourly-based remuneration, all the others receive a compensation for their travel costs.

We will have to rent a spacious residential building and refurbish it for this training. We will have to examine if the costs for rent could be borne by the municipality or if the municipality can provide an suitable municipal building free of charge.

### *11. Learning for life in a Grundtvig-inspired folk high school*

The school shall be established as an institute based on two pillars, namely first of all as a centre of knowledge, where a wide range of aspects related to the identity of the Roma can be learnt, exercised, developed and reinvented, such as their language, literature, history, music, theatre, dance, art, photography, ceramics, tailoring, drawing, cooking, et cetera. Secondly as a self-sufficient, productive agricultural school, where environmentally friendly techniques of plant farming can be learnt and applied. The target group are school students,



- who have finished their compulsory schooling and who did not find a first job on the labour market,
- who live in poor circumstances and have a great need to learn new technologies
- who are following secondary or also tertiary education, but who would like to come into direct contact with other students in their age group, who are in a similar situation.

The school will offer a general education programme. It will offer specific education in the subjects that are being taught, but will not be specialised. The basic idea is to educate the young people for life and to reflect on the fundamental issues of the culture of the Roma-minority, both as individuals and as members of society and the local community.

The philosophy of the Danish reformist Nikolai Grundtvig, which is targeted at broad social participation, will be reflected in the willingness of students to become active and to commit to the aims of the school. This is also so for the ability of the teachers to motivate their students, and for the plainness and clarity of the curriculum. The basic concept is intended to make sure that everything that is being taught will be useful and important and therefore alleviate the life of the families of the school students.

The guidelines for developing the school programme are:

- The core subjects are aimed at providing education for life.
- Social and political issues play an important role.
- The school is there to allow students to experience life in society, i.e. the centre will be the home where school students and teachers are living together.
- The families of the students are strongly involved.
- Education is informal and based on participation.
- It is aimed at active participation and at increasing self-confidence.
- There is a strong focus on lifelong learning.

The folk high school is intended to be a school with a boarding home. It will have all the necessary elements such as a kitchen, canteen, dorms and free time- and recreation rooms. In holiday time, other people can also use the establishment.

The Grundtvig-folk high schools that are successful in Denmark were the model for this institute, which will have the following actors:

Talented Roma-youth, who have left school without a diploma, Roma college students and multipliers from amongst the Roma minority and experts in education, environmental technologies and from Roma NGOs.

The school can make a significant contribution to prepare young Roma for life and for their profession. Also beyond the small campus, it will receive attention from the public and therefore have a positive impact on how the Roma are perceived. In this form the school will clearly have a sustainable effect.

## *12. More community houses in Roma neighbourhoods*

A community house shall in the first place be a house where people can meet. After a period of familiarisation the house can be used for several functions. It shall mainly be a place to foster inclusion of the Roma, as a place where children are prepared to go to kindergarten. The community house shall foremost be established in peripheral villages, where the majority of Roma mothers refuse to send their children to kindergarten. The hesitance of the mothers towards kindergarten is the result of several reasons: often there is no understanding for the benefits of



visiting kindergarten for the family as a whole, often the children do not have proper clothes, sometimes the distance to the local kindergarten is too far or there were not sufficient places in kindergarten for all the children.

For the mothers and their two till six year old children a community house can become a meeting point and a place where they can daily meet one another, which fosters the socialisation of the children and prepares them for later inclusion in society. This can take place by playing together, singing, making music or by making things. At first some guidance will be required and materials will have to be provided for these activities. In particular those games should be offered of which experience has shown that they stimulate the brain. For the older children, working on the vocabulary in Hungarian, and thereby enlarging the ability to express themselves, will be a priority. This will require supervision by a qualified or trained person. The aim is to break down reservations within the families and to prepare the children step by step for their three-year time in kindergarten. The preparations can also help to integrate children from Roma-families into the kindergartens of the municipality or of another provider.

One Roma mother should be responsible for running the house and be advised by a consultative body that includes the Vajda. The parents and the Vajda have to be advised beforehand about the purpose and the benefits of these measures. When confidence has grown about this programme for the children, periodical consultations about health care and in relation to pregnancies, on prevention and aftercare, can be offered and introduced.

The one-level house without basement should have a toilet, a diaper-changing table and a small kitchen. Heating must also be possible.

A Biomeiler (bio-heat generator; see project no. 4) would be able to heat the house in the cold season. During building the house already an underfloor-tube-system has to be installed. The house can function as a meeting space for the Roma and also for the members of a Roma-cooperative, which will do the product marketing within the framework of the horticulture project (see project no. 5).

### *13. Music-holiday camp and orchestra academy – recognise and stimulate talent*

The project builds on the inclination and talent for music that is common amongst the Roma-population. Playing music traditionally plays an important role in the cultural and social life of Roma-families. Many Roma have become famous as musicians because of their talent. But these talents can also be found among many street musicians, who frequently perform for less than what they are worth. It is our aim to bring the Roma-musicians “from the street to the stage”, and to stimulate and develop their talents.

The awareness of a separate cultural identity of one’s own that is typical of all minorities normally goes along with a rich culture of music. Several minorities are nurturing their regional music culture very consciously in their own academies and other establishments. The German minority in Denmark, for example, has rehearsal rooms and a recording studio in its education centre on the Knivsberg near Aabenraa and therefore it has the ideal features for the intercultural musical encounter that we want to organise. The available structures offer a suitable connecting factor to engage with the music talents from the Roma-population. We want to invite young Roma for a music-holiday camp. The main focus will be on the arts, but it will be com-





plemented by programme elements to get to know one another, and to develop bonds and trust. These accompanying activities include the transfer of information from the area of political education. They offer a suitable framework where representatives of the hosting minorities can pass on their own experiences in interacting between minority and majority. When young Roma learn that they are not the only people who have to go through an often difficult journey from the fringes to the centre of society, but that this journey is typical for minorities in general – but that success is possible, then they will be encouraged and will develop the readiness to set steps in this direction.

An ambitious middle term goal is to play music together in an orchestra academy, where people from different minorities will play together and create the harmony that so often is lacking in their real life. Public concerts of the orchestra academy and concert tours are an obvious option to raise awareness amongst the majority population for the importance and the value the minorities have for musical diversity and cultural richness.

#### *14. "Voices of Europe"*

This project aims at the further development of the existing choir project "Voices of Europe" into a youth exchange and networking project with Roma-choir singers. The aim is to show the musical skills of the Roma in particular and those of the European minorities in general. For many years the project "Voices of Europe" has been organised with much success in several minority regions in Europe. The organiser is the Youth of European Nationalities (YEN), which is the independent youth organisation of the minorities. The core of the project is formed by the concerts by the choir consisting of singers from several European minorities.

All the minorities in Europe are extremely heterogeneous in terms of needs, aims and background. One essential feature they have in common however: they have characteristics that set them apart from the majority populations – their language, their songs, their culture and not in the last place their art.

"Voices of Europe" is a unique minority project that several times has been supported by the European Commission. The choir project has brought together young people from many minorities in Europe over the years. The idea of exchange through music shall be developed by the young people themselves and grow into a "minority/Roma-choir-project". The basic idea will remain the same: young people from several minorities in Europe together with Roma-singers come together for a Voices of Europe choir meeting in a minority region in Europe and there they will get instruction from professional choir leaders. The pieces they rehearse will be presented on stage during a concert or as part of a Europe-wide tour.

#### *15. Promote media skills – using the existing skills of the Roma*

A fact that is often forgotten, is that Roma are not only the receivers of subsidies, but that they also contribute significantly to cultural diversity and are able to give valuable impetus to society with their specific talents. This should be exploited in the media sector in particular.

The non-governmental organisation "Romedia" in Budapest, established by young people belonging to the Roma, already now asks attention for the diversity of the minorities and their added value for the whole of Europe e.g. by making promotion films and by being present in the



social media. With this project Romedia will, together with other European minorities, make an important contribution to correct existing stereotypes of the Roma. In dealing with the partially disastrous situation of the Roma in Europe, it is forgotten that besides many problems, there are also many people from the Roma population who have specific skills, talents and abilities. These strong points have to be recognised, to be promoted and have to be exploited and be rendered visible for the other minorities in Europe and for the majority population as well.

The media studio Romedia in Budapest is working according to these criteria. Romedia is dedicated to presenting the issue of the Roma in the media (especially in the social networks). The NGO is managed very professionally by young women and their work is very promising and was awarded several times. Within the framework of the project, Romedia will be given the task of making several short movies about the minorities in Europe and to work on creating a positive image of the diversity of minorities in Europe in the social media. With that in mind, artists from several minorities in Europe (e.g. Sorbs, Danes, Catalans, Frisians, Ladins) will come together with Hungarian Roma-artists and artists from the German minority in Hungary, the Slovak minority and the majority population. In a village in Hungary that is predominantly inhabited by Roma and possibly other minorities, they will be given the task to present the particularities of minority culture in Europe in an artistic way. The process and the result will be covered by the media and disseminated all over Europe. In this regard especially the network of FUEN with over 90 member organisations and its good connections to the media has an important role to play.

## *16. The contribution of the Roma to cultural diversity in Europe – an inventory*

It is about time that an inventory is made of the national autochthonous minorities in Europe and to present in particular the role and the importance of the Roma as an inherent part of diversity in Europe. Roma minorities are living in 29 states of our continent. If they are counted together they are the largest minority of Europe.

We plan to document the current situation in the knowledge that in the light of globalisation, the traditions, languages and social cohesion based on the identity of many ethnic groups are endangered. The minorities should be portrayed in a handbook that forms an inventory that is intended for contemporary and future generations, which captures Europe in all its cultural diversity and is aimed at a wide public.

The book shall be designed in such a way that it can also be published on the Internet. We want to make a publication in German and English language.

Each minority will have two pages for their presentation. These will include a short description of the minority in their historical and contemporary context, a map with the position of the minority and typical photos of each ethnic group and a list of facts on the minorities, which will focus on linguistic and cultural features.

In the first part, those minorities will be portrayed from the states where a Roma minority is living. We plan to publish the book and Internet site, respectively, by 2014.

## *17. Positive campaigning*

Together with the Society for Threatened People (STP) – the second largest human rights or-



ganisation in Germany, based in Göttingen – which works closely together with FUEN, a positive campaign for the Roma and the diversity of minorities in Germany, Hungary and in the medium-term in Europe will be implemented.

With this project the manifold stereotypes about the Roma shall be counteracted. Too rarely, the positive features and achievements of the Roma are concentrated upon. In its first stage, the positive campaign will integrate the Roma more strongly into the league of minorities. In a positive campaign, the autochthonous minorities of Germany and Hungary will canvass for more social acceptance for the Roma, focusing on their positive characteristics and achievements. The long-term goal is more solidarity on the part of the minorities in Europe with the Roma and more understanding for the difficult situation they are frequently in. The starting point of the campaign will be in Germany and Hungary and will be implemented in parallel actions. Because of the cooperation between the Society of Threatened People, which has lots of campaigning experience, and FUEN with its Europe-wide network, the campaign can have a Europe-wide and lasting effect in the fight against ignorance and prejudices.

This list is open, in principle, and will be updated if there are new suitable projects



