

## **"Integration of the largest ethnic minority into urban life"** **Proposal of Budapest for an URBACT II network**

Roma culture is a determinative part of diversity in Hungary and its capital, Budapest, too. Even though the values of Roma culture have their beneficent effects on the majority culture, Roma people are the most discriminated and deprived group in our society. Besides this, it has a high importance for us to make efforts to ensure and develop equal opportunities in every fields of life for all the inhabitants of Budapest. As we think, the discrimination and deprivation of roma people is not a country specific phenomenon but it has a lot of similarities on European level, too. That's why we concentrate our project plan on these well determined issues that need specified answers and solutions.

Budapest aims at a network dealing with the problems of large **national and ethnic minorities**, particularly regarding Europe's largest ethnic minority, the roma. Our aim during the network is to **share knowledge and expertise** within the framework of workshops. These should look for answers given to specific social phenomenons to help the process of **integration and inclusion of roma persons living in urban areas in the European member states**. We'd like to use the results of the partnership to develop the activities of Budapest in improving the quality of roma inhabitants' life.

Our ideas are based on the newly elaborated Complex Roma Concept of Budapest. The concept has been elaborated with the involvement of the roma NGOs and political organizations of Budapest.

The Concept is in line with the „Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015”, the political commitment by governments in Central and Southeastern Europe to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma within a regional framework. The Decade focuses on the **priority areas of education, employment, health, and housing** (and commits governments to take into account also the other core issues, such as poverty, discrimination, and gender mainstreaming). Budapest wants to take the **cultural field** into its program as a fifth leg of roma policies.

The City wants to achieve the objectives of the program by developing an incubator house institution, where the peculiar activities of the mentioned priority fields can be organized and run. These activities might include vocational courses, psycho-social services, business consultancy, enterprise developing consultancy, organizing exhibitions on historical and artistic topics, concerts, theatre performances, installing gastronomical function. It's a priority to represent the cultural values of roma people, to improve the development of an inclusive social environment.

Further goal of the partnership is to draft **all the accumulated information and experiences in a report** completed with **recommendations for the European Union on those activity fields that the partnership found worth to look for solutions on European level**.

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