

# ANNUAL REPORT NGO YOUNG ROMA 2015



2015

NGO YOUNG ROMA

*The annual report here presented summarises all activities undertaken by the NGO Young Roma during 2014. The report provides an overview of implemented projects, as well as individual activities in the field of advocacy for better situation of Roma in Montenegro. The annual report provides an overview of finance and each donor's share in the overall financial structure of our organisation.*

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## *About us*

NGO Young Roma – Herceg Novi was registered in May 2005 as a local non-profit organization with the aim to contribute to improving the situation of Roma in Montenegro and their full integration into Montenegrin society.

Activities of Young Roma are primarily focused on working with the community and monitoring the implementation of national and local action plans in the field of social inclusion and integration of Roma, by encouraging active participation, advocacy, promotion and mediation in the exercise of minority rights.

To achieve its goal, our organization:

- Animates and encourages young Roma men and women to be active participants in the decision making process relating to the integration of Roma;
- Provides an active contribution to the education of Roma children and youth;
- Works on resolving citizenship status and identity documents issues;
- Contributes to the improvement of living conditions for the Roma community;
- Works on preservation of Roma culture and tradition;
- Initiates development of local action plans and strategic documents at the local level in the field of Roma integration;
- Cooperates with all relevant national and international organizations aimed at improving the situation of Roma community.

Our organization is particularly recognized for activities and results in the field of regulation of the legal status of Roma inhabited at the territory of Montenegro. NGO Young Roma has also initiated and coordinated drafting and adoption of local action plans for Roma integration in the municipalities of Herceg Novi, Kotor and Tivat.

Through its dedicated work, this, at first, small, local organization, has grown into a credible partner of national and local institutions and international organizations. Since 2013, NGO Young Roma was the focal point of the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

As part of our regular activities, we cooperate with a number of local organizations and are members of several national and international coalitions of non-governmental organizations with a common aim to improve the situation of the Roma community.

## Projects

### + SUPPORT TO SOCIAL PROTECTION AND EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA



The project "Support to social protection and employment of Roma" is the continuation of the project "Personal documents - the first step towards equality 3", which was conducted in cooperation with the UNDP Office in Montenegro, from November 2013 to March 2015. These two projects have been implemented in a firm synergy, complementing each other's activities.

The project targeted three particularly sensitive areas of importance for the target group, namely: civil registration, social protection and employment.

With the aim to inform the RE population, but also to provide them with the aid in the exercise of fundamental rights in a given area, the project envisaged the following activities:

- monitoring the process of civil registration for already identified users,
- engagement of three mediators to assist Roma users to exercise rights to social protection and the registration with the Employment Agency of Montenegro,
- organising information sessions with users on human rights and needs of users in the field of social protection and employment in Kotor, Herceg Novi and Tivat,
- initiating and finalising the procedure for obtaining 89 ID cards for children,
- organising 9 field visits to Kotor, Tivat, Herceg Novi, Pljevlja, Pristina and Kragujevac.

During the implementation of the project for personal documents from 2008 to 2011 and from 2013 to the end of 2014, we collected over 5 thousand different documents, fully resolved legal status for 250 people and initiated procedures for 130 Roma persons in need of regulating the legal status.



## + DECADE FOCAL POINT (DFP)



Full participation and involvement of Romani communities, including through Romani civil society, is one of the commitments made within the Decade. As enshrined in the Decade's Terms of Reference, Romani civil society is entitled to participate actively in the Decade process including in decision making, contribute to effective implementation of the National Decade Action Plans by initiating dialogue between the local authorities and local Romani communities, communicate the goals and objectives of the Decade to the Romani population, actively participate and offer its input and expertise in implementation and monitoring at the national level of the National Decade Action Plans, and ensure the participation of Roma to the broadest possible extent in the Decade process at the national level.

To ensure this, the Decade Secretariat issued an open call for selection of Decade Focal Points in 2012, when Young Roma was selected as DFP Montenegro.

Due to the fact that the Decade of Roma Inclusion was getting closer to its official end, our organization and our partners from the DFP network mostly focused on the wide-range advocacy for the continuation and launch of a second Decade 2015-2025.

The year 2015 was marked by following activities:

- Representatives of the Romani civil society participated in five international events dedicated to the integration of Roma, through DFP procedures and in particular to: European Platform for Roma Inclusion (Brussels), a thematic conference "An integrated approach to social inclusion of the Roma through housing and employment" (Sarajevo), Final conference and the 28th International Steering Committee Meeting of the Decade (Sarajevo), ERRC's conference "Classrooms Beyond Race - Inclusive Education for Romani children" (Belgrade) and a Youth Summit (Sarajevo).
- Representatives of the Decade Focal Points Network and the Decade Secretariat had a meeting with Marta Garcia Fidalgo, coordinator for Roma issues in the Directorate General for the EU Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), with whom they discussed the future participation of civil society in the new initiative - Roma Integration 2020.
- Representatives of the NGO Young Roma participated in the 4 internal meeting of the Decade Focal Points Network in Brussels, Istanbul, Belgrade and Sarajevo.
- The Regional Roma Council was established with a aim of providing the effective inclusion of the Roma community in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of public policies affecting the Roma. The members of this body are the leaders of national coalitions of Roma and pro-Roma NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia; amongst which the NGO Young Roma.
- Regular consultations have been held with the representatives of Romani civil society in Montenegro on the current social inclusion policy, through the organisation of meetings and via electronic communication tools.
- We translated and disseminated several reports of international organizations addressing the integration of Roma in Montenegro.



## ↓ THROUGH EDUCATION TO INTEGRATION



Inclusion and retention of Roma children in the education system is the most important element of their integration and socialization. Problems such as illiteracy and weak economic power of parents significantly hinder this process.

Therefore, the objective of this project is to support quality education for Roma children in the municipality of Herceg Novi. The specific objectives of this project are: to improve the regularity of school attendance by Roma children, to improve knowledge and increase the number of Roma children who successfully finish the school year, as well as to increase awareness of parents of Roma children on the importance of education.

The main activities under this project were:

- daily maintenance of workshops with children in the presence of two mentors who have been providing assistance to children in learning, homework, motivated them to achieve better results at school, as well as to regularly attend school classes;
- making of individual databases of school success of Roma children (monitoring of the education process);
- several motivational and thematic workshops with parents with the aim of providing support and improving success of Roma children,
- regular meetings with principals, mentors and parents of the involved children.

During 2015, the project activities were carried out in the premises of the primary school "Daso Pavičić" in Igalo. The project implementation started in 2013, when it was supported by the OSCE / ODIHR and the Municipality of Herceg Novi and conducted NGO Young Roma. Since 2014, the NGO Young Roma is a mediator in the realization of this project, which is now under the direct jurisdiction of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro.





## ✚ ENHANCING THE EMPLOYABILITY OF ROMA WOMEN IN HERCEG NOVI - DORRA NUOVA



During 2015, Young Roma continued with implementation of the Program of making and selling jewellery in cooperation with the Employment Agency for a period of 4 months, starting from April 1. Funding for this project was provided through Public Works Program of the Employment Agency. Four young unemployed persons registered with the Labour Bureau Herceg Novi participated in the program.

With the support and assistance provided by the German international organization Help - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe eV, it was possible to extend the employment period for additional two months and expand our activities in the municipality of Kotor.

Unique jewellery originated in Dorra Nuova workshops was sold during the summer season at the stands in Kotor and Herceg Novi. All income from the sale of jewellery was used to purchase new materials. In addition, the Dorra jewellery items were exhibited at the several art festivals in Herceg Novi, namely Fest on Scales, Small Festival of autumn Tastes and Greetings to the City. This project contributed to the reduction of unemployment and increasing competitiveness of members of the Roma population.



## ✦ BASIC LITERACY PROGRAM FOR ADULT ROMA IN HERCEG NOVI



This project, supported by the Municipality of Herceg Novi, aims to provide adult Roma with elementary literacy skills in order to facilitate their daily life and accelerate their integration into the Montenegrin society. The target group of the project consists of adult Roma men and women who live in Herceg Novi. The added value of the project is that their children are included in the program "Through Education to Integration".

The main activities of the project are organizing classes of Montenegrin / Serbian language and the basics of mathematics 3 times per week in duration of 3 academic hours. In addition, as an added value of the project, creative workshops will be organized for children of parents attending the program.



## ✚ BUILDING PREFABRICATED HOUSES FOR 8 ROMA FAMILIES IN HERCEG NOVI

The aim of the project is to secure durable housing solutions for 23 members of the Roma community in Herceg Novi as a tool for inclusion of the targeted groups in to the Montenegrin society. This is being done in full respect of existing strategies and national action plans and other relevant documents.

Stemming from belief that the right to adequate housing condition is a basic human right, that is as such guaranteed by international documents that oblige Montenegro, the NGO Young Roma approached the Help for assistance in solving the problem of eight Roma families against whom the Institute Dr Simo Milosevic launched a lawsuit seeking their eviction from the land plot owned by the Institute, in March 2015.

Given the mandate, its basic principle of assisting people to help themselves and addressing the needs of the vulnerable population groups, Help – Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V. launched the housing project in cooperation with the Municipality of Herceg Novi. Bearing in mind the importance of local partnership in solving Romani issues, Help and NGO Young Roma – Herceg Novi, have signed the Memorandum on Understanding, which positioned our organisation as project partners.

Young Roma, as a local partner, will take responsibility in providing all necessary assistance for solving this issue, as to contribute to the sustainable implementation of the project activities and ensure sustainable results of the proposed intervention.

The project is supported by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and through Stability Pact for South East Europe, and implemented by the Municipality of Herceg Novi, Help and Young Roma





## ✚ INSTITUTIONAL GRANT



The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade awarded institutional grant to our organization within the call "Strengthening civil society in Serbia and Montenegro." This Call aims to finance the functioning of civil society organisations in their work through so-called core funding.

Through this grant, the organisation can cover project development, fundraising expenses, management development, strategic planning, improvement of financial management systems, etc.





## *Initiatives*

During 2015, Young Roma submitted several initiatives to relevant local and national authorities, and international organizations with the aim of regulating individual and collective rights of members of marginalized groups, particularly Roma. Below are some of the most important:

- We have prepared a contribution to the report on Montenegro's progress in EU integration in 2015. The document, which is mainly focused on the poor results in the implementation of relevant national strategies, as well as the unequal regional reallocation of available resources and limited access to employment for the Roma, has been submitted to the EU Delegation to Montenegro and the European Commission Directorate for Neighbourhood Policy and the enlargement negotiations.
- Together with national partners, we discussed the Report on the implementation of the Strategy for improving the situation of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro for 2014 and, in accordance with the findings, prepared recommendations for more meaningful and comprehensive reporting for the current year and provided recommendations for drafting the new Strategy for Roma Integration 2016-2020.
- Together with the German organization Help, we advocated for finding housing solutions for eight Roma families from the settlement Sistet in Herceg Novi, and succeeded in doing so. We have also advocated for more appropriate housing solutions for Roma families living in settlements Prvoborac and Lovanja 2 in Kotor.
- We applied and were selected for membership in the Working Group for Drafting Strategy for improving the situation of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016 – 2020. Samir Jaha was supported by 24 CSOs for membership in the Working Group.
- Together with partner organizations from the former Yugoslavia we established the Regional Roma Council, with a aim to provide more effective inclusion of the Roma community in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of public policies affecting the Roma, and used various national and international forums to talk about the need to continue the second Decade.
- We prepared a number of press releases through which we pointed out to the burning issues faced by members of the Roma community and Romani NGOs in Montenegro.
- In the reporting period, we submitted dozens of petitions, requests and letters for solving individual problems of members of Roma population. Requests were sent to the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, social welfare centres, municipalities, and others.

## *Finansijski izvještaj*

During the reporting period, as in previous years, NGO Young Roma was funded through project grants from international grants, as well as through donations of the Municipality of Herceg Novi and state authorities. Certain project activities conducted by our organization were funded based on individual contracts between our associates and donors, which is the case in the project "Through Education to Integration" funded by the OSCE, where NGO Young Roma appears as a mediator in the implementation. Honoraria fees for these projects were directly transferred to our associates; therefore, these payments will not be shown in the financial structure of the organisation.

<b>FINANCIAL OVERVIEW IN 2015 PER DONORS</b>	
<b>DONOR</b>	<b>AMMOUNT IN EUROS (€)</b>
The Royal Norwegian Embassy	31413,35
UNDP Montenegro	15209
Decade Secretariat – Budapest	9728,75
Help Montenegro	6454,38
Employment Agency of Montenegro - EAM	4402,08
Municipality of Herceg Novi	3000
Ministry of Finance – Games of Chance	1300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>71507,56</b>
<b>Total paid taxes and surtaxes for 2015</b>	<b>7099,00</b>



## *Team in 2015*

1. Samir Jaha, executive director
2. Dženita Brčvak, project manager
3. Saša Pavićević, financial and office manager
4. Sanja Knežević, local office coordinator in Herceg Novi
5. Mehmet Beriša - Gigo, local project coordinator
6. Senka Domović Bulut, project assistant for the program Through education to integration
7. Emrah Jefkaj, project associate for the program Through education to integration
8. Jovanka Rečević, project assistant for the program Through education to integration
9. Jelena Simović, project assistant for the Basic Literacy Program for Adults
10. Suzana Banković, project assistant for the Basic Literacy Program for Adults
11. Džafer Brahim, project associate for personal documents
12. Mustafa Sadrijaj, project associate for personal documents
13. Anita Dinić, project associate for personal documents
14. Mona Jašaraj, engaged within the project Enhancing the employability of Romani women in Herceg Novi –Jewellery workshop “Dorra Nouva”
15. Indire Rama, engaged within the project Enhancing the employability of Romani women in Herceg Novi –Jewellery workshop “Dorra Nouva”
16. Jemine Jefkaj, engaged within the project Enhancing the employability of Romani women in Herceg Novi –Jewellery workshop “Dorra Nouva”
17. Tina Tafa, engaged within the project Enhancing the employability of Romani women in Herceg Novi –Jewellery workshop “Dorra Nouva”
18. Marinela Mračević, engaged within the project Enhancing the employability of Romani women in Herceg Novi –Jewellery workshop “Dorra Nouva”
19. Ibrahim Tatari, intern
20. Allmir Tahiri, scholarship fellow.

