CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ROMA COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

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Official Roma organisations in Finland

• **National level:** Advisory Committee on Romany Affairs (ACRA) in Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
  - national initiatives, proposals, strengthening of the Romany language and culture.

2. **Rural level:** Provincial ACRA:s
  - rural initiatives, proposals, suggestions for local work groups etc.

• **Local level:** Municipal Romany work groups
  - The work will focus on the central issues of the local Roma like integration, daycare, schooling, working life and society
Romany work groups:
The innovation of Western Finland Provincial ACRA

• Roma are minders of their own matters and developers with the local level in the Romany work groups (15 groups).
• Like this actualizes positive integration and we get to know each other on the municipal level.
• Roma are no more visitors and foreigners in their own country. (Tuula Lindberg, the secretary of Western Finland Provincial ACRA. 18.8.2008)
Assembly of the Romany work group in Jyväskylä (since 2003, budget 1000 €)

- Roma
  - 9 official members, other Roma are welcome

- Jyväskylä City Parish
- ACRA of Western Finland Province
- Jyväskylä University
- Tenancy
- Social Work
- Jyväskylä Adult Education
- Police
- Employment Office
- Employment and Economic Development Centre
- Day-care and preschooling
- Shooling

Jyväskylä

JYVÄSKYLÄ
What have we done?

- Seminars
- Tailored refresher course for employment
- **Roma into working life** – a project in co-operation with Romano Missio (NGO)
- Equality plan of Jyväskylä City
- Ideas for the multicultural house
- Start up of **Romany language teaching** in basic schools and stipends for students
- Support for preschooling and schooling: lessons and **culture mediator**
- Co-operation with local NCO:s
- **Open meetings** for everybody with themes as: tenancy, social benefits and social work, arbitration of crimes, facing of Roma and the police (results: better understanding, more social benefit for cloths of Roma women, contact person in policeforce, debt advice for rental problems)
- Clubs for father and child and mother and child
- We are going to have: Clubs for homework (support of shooling)
Roma into working life – project

- The purpose of the project was to improve the employment opportunities of the Roma population in the Jyväskylä Region through by

  - Rising the level of education
  - Supporting Roma to seek employment
  - Supporting the entrepreneurship of the Roma
  - Working with attitudes
  - Make a research on the Roma

Total budget: 840 000 euros

The EQUAL programme; theme Combating racism and xenophobia in the labour market
### Supporting individuals by Roma workers

#### Aims 2005
- Personal plans 50
- Work practise places 12
- Supported work places 10
- Open work places 3
- Training places 45
- Entreprices 2

#### Outcomes 2008
- Personal plans 111
- Work practises places 58
- Supported work places 16
- Open work places 11
- Training places 50
- Entreprices 3
TuRom – Successful mutual integration

Tu Rom = This is Romany language and means you Roma, human, person.

The aim of TuRom training programme is that the members of the Roma and the majority could build and cross over the bridge between the two cultures and get to know each other as human beings.

Both the Roma and the majority should be integrated to multicultural society.

Evaluation

Fine:
Good commitment of Roma, authorities and project personnel
  • Giving feedback, new ideas, encouragement

Administrator – City of Jyväskylä
  • Opens the doors, commitment

Roma workers’ resources

Obstacles:
  Change resistance, employers attitudes, hard to establish a permanent posts,

Lessons to learn:
  We should include whole families more in the activities

Transformability:
  - Regional authorities should make suggestions to local councils to set up municipal Romany work groups. The organisation has to be official.
  - TuRom –training is locally, nationally and internationally transformal
EXPERIENCES OF PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION OF THE ROMA ENTREPRENEURS IN FINLAND

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Key words: prejudice, discrimination, the Roma entrepreneur, social marginality, phenomenography
About the research

- The purpose of the research is to describe and understand the prejudice and discrimination the Finnish Roma experience as entrepreneurs.
- The starting point for the research is social marginality.
- Quantitative, phenomenographical research (in terested in: experiences, perceptions).
- Full text of the article is available: [Trust formation and experiences of prejudice and discrimination of Roma entrepreneurs in Finland](http://info.emeraldinsight.com/products/journals/journals.htm?PHPSESSID=np6nu0tvI04ltl6hnpm8dhmgA2&id=jec)

*Journal of Enterprising Communities: People and Places in the Global Economy; Volume: 2 Issue: 2; 2008 Research paper*
Experiences

• Almost all entrepreneurs had experienced prejudice and discrimination but their experiences were based on differing interactive relationships.
• The entrepreneurs working in horse dealing and those serving Roma clientele had mainly positive experiences.
• Those entrepreneurs who operated in the markets usually controlled by the main population had experienced direct discrimination and harassment.
Table 1. Experiences of Prejudice/Discrimination

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Entrepreneurs were positive

- Entrepreneurs are not in the margin of the society.
- Entrepreneurship could be one way for Roma to get out of the margin.
- The beginning Roma entrepreneurs must know what their capabilities are.
- This entails knowing also what skills they are still lacking.
- The necessary knowledge can be acquired according to the entrepreneurs, by first getting vocational training and then information or training of running a business.
- Roma entrepreneurs don’t need more special supports from the society than the other entrepreneurs do. They can use the same networks and supports that others if they are treated equal.
Suggestions of the Roma entrepreneurs

Solution to prejudice

Ttrust building

Roma

Solution to discrimination

Elimination of Prejudice

Legislation

Entrepreneurs themselves

Joint responsibility of Roma

Main population

Individuals

Employers

Education

Customer service

Media
Ma joka tänään toitaisin tékisín
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