



**Training of National and European Advocates
defending and representing the rights of people
exposed to discrimination**



TRANSPOSE Aims

The TRANSPOSE project aims to develop with the participating organisations of a network of experienced and competent advocates from the Traveller and Roma communities whose skills have been enhanced to a level, which allows locally based Traveller and Roma organisations to ensure the benefits of the provisions of the EU Directives are applied to Traveller and Roma communities who are experiencing severe levels of racism and discrimination.

Key Action

The Key Action will be for the participants to complete a series of training modules developed to enhance and enable their skills as community advocates.

Project Focus

The project will also focus on how the experience of training and supporting advocates by each partner organization can be shared and it is intended that a model of best practice for advocacy in relation to discrimination be produced.

The project will also make specific proposals for how work in the area of community advocacy can be utilised and documented in order to develop training tools that can be adapted and replicated by other organisations, in a practical way, at a local level.

Transpose Objectives

- That each partner organization will have trained a number of advocates in the area of discrimination.
- A model of good practice for community advocacy work will be documented and reported on.
- Access strategies will be developed to ensure marginalized groups can secure their rights and entitlements.
- Contacts between Roma and Traveller advocates will be greatly enhanced.

Long-term objectives of the work over the implementation phase:

- Access strategies will be developed to ensure marginalized groups can secure their rights and entitlements.
- Develop a vision and approach to advocacy that is appropriate to the needs of Travellers and Roma, and which can also be replicated by other victims of discrimination or their representative organisations.
- Gain an understanding of the way in which double discrimination occurs, particularly in relation to gender and disabilities and incorporate this into the training.
- To ensure Travellers and Roma and other marginalized groups have access to the resources to generate advocacy services that will secure the rights created by the EU directives.
- To maximise the impact of the EU directives for victims of discrimination and create an awareness of the rights that flow from the two EU directives.

Rationale

The introduction of Council Directive 2000/43/EC, implementing the Principle of Equal Treatment Irrespective of Racial or Ethnic Background (*The Race Equality Directive*) and Council Directive 2000/78/EC, establishing a General Framework for Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation (*The Employment Framework Directive*), are significant legal developments aimed at ensuring a levelling up of the equality protections for minority groups throughout the European Union. The Directives for the first time bring the significant legal mechanisms of the EU into the protection of equal treatment.

The Race Equality Directive presents new challenges and new opportunities for NGO's involved in advocacy on behalf of minorities who have been traditionally excluded and marginalized within member states. While many of these NGO's have built up significant experience in campaigning and lobbying on behalf of the communities with whom they work, engagement in many of the judicial and quasijudicial mechanisms developed under the scope of the Race Directive and Employment Directive will be a new experience. The project proposed by ITM, ERRC and IHC brings together the experience of three NGOs who over the last number of years have been significant participants at local, national, and international level in direct advocacy and campaigning for change and a greater legal and judicial protection for the communities and interests that they represent.

The project seeks to build on the work carried out by these organisations in particular in the delivery of an effective community advocacy programme geared at local Traveller and Roma participants who are active in day to day promotion and protection of Traveller and Roma rights through their direct work within these communities. While many community workers and activists have developed extensive skills in promoting the rights of Traveller and Roma, direct engagement in quasijudicial fora, and using legal protection in the area of equality is new, and presents significant new opportunities for these workers. So far there has been little in the way of sharing experience between Roma and Traveller civil society organisations. This project aims to start the exchange of ideas and best practice between these two groups.

Programme Content and Structure

The experience of the partner organisations is founded on the reality that effective community advocacy is based on a number of factors. Among these are:

- That the advocate or advocate organisation has standing and credibility within the community on whose behalf they are working.
- That promotion and dissemination of information on legal rights is actively engaged in.
- Those forums where rights are advocated exist and are accessible.
- That policy makers are aware of short falls in provisions and that mechanisms are developed to ensure effective remedies.

On this basis the partner organisations have developed a programme of training, which consists of awareness raising of legislative provisions, media and information dissemination skills, and effective lobbying of relevant actors to bring about change for Traveller and Roma communities.

The training modules will consist of delivery of training within Ireland to advocates with parallel modules developed at targeted participants from Italy, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. There will also be transnational training events consisting of all participants, in Hungary, Italy and Ireland.

Each training module has been developed with a specific theme relevant to effective advocacy. Each module will consist of training and follow-up activity by the participants targeted at relevant bodies, e.g. Legal Profession Representative Bodies, Specialised Bodies, Human Rights Organisations and Associations of Journalists.

Each Training event will be delivered over daylong sessions, focussing on topics that enhance skills and knowledge that can be used as an advocacy tool at local level. The first module is the foundation stone of the project and so will take place over a two-day period to ensure that participants have as thorough an understanding of discrimination and the Directives and relevant legislation as possible.

Module One - The Race Directive

To ensure understanding of the context in which the advocacy project is to develop the primary part of the project will consist of the development of training on the provisions of the Race Directive. The programme for this training will consist of the following two-day training event to be held in Ireland for Travellers and in Italy for Roma participants.

- Identifying grounds of discrimination.
- Multiple grounds of Discrimination
- Direct discrimination
- Indirect Discrimination.
- Introduction to the Race Directive.
- Transposition of the Race Directive into domestic legislation.
- Utilising Domestic provisions.
- Practical approach to the grounds for discrimination.
- Practical understanding of the complaints procedure.
- Contrast national directive implementation on Equality promotion mechanisms i.e. specialised bodies.
- Dissemination of appropriate literature and training material training pack on Equality legislation and race directive.

With the support of the Project coordinator and Project mentor, project participants will be facilitated to make contact with domestic Specialised Bodies responsible for equality legislation implementation, and to become familiar with their structures and functions.

Module Two - Practical Monitoring

This module will be a transnational event in Budapest, drawing on the skills and experience of the European Roma Rights Centre in the area of effective monitoring of the human rights situation of Roma.

To achieve appropriate protection under the equality legislation it is a prerequisite that an effective mechanism for monitoring and documenting breaches of legislation are maintained. The role of local organisations in effective monitoring is crucial. The daily face-to-face contact between project participants and members of the Traveller / Roma community is of vital importance in ensuring that effective practical monitoring on the compliance with, and the recording of abuses of legally recognised rights is carried out.

Module Two will be designed to ensure that the skills of participants are enhanced to ensure that an ethical and professional level of monitoring exists within Traveller and Roma local organisations. This module will consist of the following.

- Investigation
- Documenting individual cases of discrimination
- Interviewing victims and transcribing testimonies
- Documenting systemic discrimination through the use of statistical data
- Verification of information and data
- Effective reporting

Each participant will be set the task of documenting acts of discrimination against members of their community, to be completed before the next module. In doing this they will be given support by telephone and email from the project partners.

Module Three - Using Litigation

The module will be a parallel module in Dublin for Travellers and Budapest for Roma.

Following from effective monitoring and documentation of breaches of equality legislation is access to appropriate remedies for breach of rights. The development of appropriate access to tribunals and judicial forums where abuse of rights are remedied is vital to the improvement of the situation of Travellers and Roma. The purpose of a litigation-training module will be to ensure that Project participants will have the ability to recognise potential cases of strategic importance and be in a position where the domestic legislation allows them to provide direct representation of Traveller and Roma complainants before quasi-judicial tribunals.

This module will cover

- Structure of Domestic Tribunals/Courts
- Personal Advocacy Skills
- Legal Services; Civil Legal Aid Systems, NGO Law Centres, Legal Practitioners.
- Supporting Complainants
- Mediation
- Concepts of “Test Case” and strategic cases
- Resources
- Working with lawyers
- Situational testing techniques

The role of legal practitioners in advising and representing Travellers and Roma is of vital importance in developing cases involving complicated legal issues. Following from this module Project participants with the support of the Project Coordinator and Project Mentor will be facilitated to make contact with local or regional bar associations to present issues of inequality for Traveller and Roma. The development of contact at this level will facilitate the creation of a panel of Traveller and Roma friendly legal practitioners willing to advise on strategic and important cases.

Module Four - Effective Lobbying

The module will be divided into two parts, which will focus on effective lobbying at local level and at an international level. The Module draws on the considerable experience of the Irish Traveller Movement and the European Roma Rights Centre as lobbying and advocacy organisations. The first part of the module, national lobbying, will consist of two events one held in Dublin and the other in Budapest. These events will focus on the practical aspects of lobbying and identification of appropriate policy makers. The second part of the module, international lobbying, will be a transnational event held in Dublin, which will involve all TRANSPOSE” participants and appropriate agencies including specialised bodies.

This module will consist of the following topics

- Identifying appropriate policy makers
- Political structures (local and national)
- Developing strategic relationships
- Liaising with specialised bodies
- Creating an advocacy strategy
- Writing petitions and letters of concern
- Networking and building coalitions
- Campaigning techniques
- Organising lobbying meetings and roundtable discussions
- International organisations
- Writing shadow reports to international organisations

It is intended that a follow up exercise to this workshop will be the identification by the participants of particular cases of discrimination at local level. With the support of the Project coordinator each participant will be set the task of developing a strategy to lobby on a particular aspect of discrimination; for example access to justice or accommodation. In doing this participants will be given support by telephone and email from the project partners.

Module Five - Media Skills Training

This will be a transnational module drawing on the skills of the IHC in using the media to highlight Human Rights issues. The event will be held in Rome and involve all the TRANSPOSE Project participants.

The module will include the following

- Identify media outlets
- Developing alliances with media bodies.
- Media complaints procedure
- Practical exercise drafting Press Releases, Press Statements,
- Working with local media newspapers, radio, television
- Community media outlets
- Electronic media

Following from the media module the TRANSPOSE project participants with the support of the Project Coordinator and Project Mentor will be facilitated to make contact with local or regional media organs. The participants will be a position, if there are not already, to act as a contact with local and regional media on issues of discrimination and equality cases for Travellers and Roma in the area.

Project participants will also be supported to develop a practical exercise to encourage and stimulate a debate at local level on the issues of discrimination.

Closing Conference Event

The project will build up a training package, a cadre of highly trained advocates, and a wealth of experience in organising advocacy work. This “tool kit” will be of interest to other advocates and to other organisations that are interested in combating racial discrimination.

The idea of a final conference is to disseminate this material, knowledge and information to other civil society organisations, the partners in other projects supported by the European Commission under this theme, to policy makers and to implementers such as Specialised Bodies. And to ensure that the strong contact between the Traveller and Roma participants can continue in the future.

Participant Profile

To ensure the success of the project it is essential that the participants who engage in the training have some of the basic skills necessary to take part in the training as well as have personal values and commitment towards securing equality for their community.

Crucial to the training will be openness on the part of the participants to engage with the training events and the follow up work associated with each training seminar. The project partners will ensure an appropriate gender balance, and genuine commitment from the participants in addressing the inequalities that exist towards Traveller / Roma communities within broader society as well as the gender and social inequalities that can exist within traditional Traveller and Roma communities themselves.

The structure of the ITM and the role played by members of local Traveller support groups has been crucial to the effective dissemination of the provisions of the equality legislation. It is the increased enhancement of the skills inherent in the membership of local Traveller organisations, which the ITM seek to develop in an effort to ensure the effective use of the Race Directive as implemented in national legislation.

The ITM intends to draw from its membership Traveller representatives who have been active at local and regional level as advocates within the scope of the equality legislation.

The profile of Traveller / Roma advocates targeted as participants on the PROJECT will consist of the following.

- Be of Traveller heritage or Roma ethnicity
- Be directly involved in locally managed and locally accountable Traveller/Roma support organisations.
- Have some level of experience in community work, community advocacy and or voluntary activism on behalf of their communities.
- Have basic literacy levels and capacity to help others with form filling and case management
- Have an understanding of equality issues for Travellers and Roma at local and national level
- Be prepared to train within an anti-racist and anti-sexist and non-patriarchal environment.
- Be prepared to use the skills enhanced by the Project to further benefit the broader Traveller / Roma community in a professional and competent manner.

In identifying the participants for the project each partner organisation will seek to ensure an appropriate gender balance, and genuine commitment from the participants

in addressing the inequalities that exist towards Traveller and Roma communities within broader society as well as the gender and social inequality that can exist within traditional Traveller and Roma communities themselves.

The objective of the project partners is to recruit a total of thirty participants to the project, which will include 15 Traveller and 15 Roma. The geographical spread of participants will consist of

- 15 from Ireland
- 3 from Italy
- 4 from the Czech Republic
- 4 from Slovakia,
- 4 from Hungary

The gender balance of the project will consist of minimum of 14 women and 14 men. And to ensure as broad participation as possible from locally based organisations. To ensure maximum participation from local organisations within the geographical area identified by the ERRC in is intended to provide for translation and interpretation of the Project content in to the Romany language.

Trans-national Partnership

The Rationale for the creation of the three-way partnership within TRANSPOSE is based on the unique experience of the organisations involved. The diversity in awareness and transposition of the EU directives in various countries around Europe provides an ideal opportunity to exchange information and expertise between partner organisations, and to formulate a model for advocacy that can be replicated by other groups and organisations. Travellers in Ireland and Roma in other parts of Europe suffer from similar forms of discrimination. This discrimination happens at both a casual and institutionalised level.

The ITM and ERRC have formed an informal alliance over the last number of years in the course of pursuing anti-discrimination work. In particular, ERRC and ITM were at the forefront of groups to play an active role in pressing for the inclusion of Travellers and Roma in the World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa in 2001.

In addition, ITM and ERRC have undertaken study visits to each other's organisations to consult on strategies and have been involved in joint training work. The specific inclusion of IHC as a core partner derives from the ERRC's long-term work on anti-racism and anti-discrimination in Italy, and the difficulties to date in bringing about any significant improvement in the situation of Roma in that country.

ERRC

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) is an international public interest law organisation engaging in a range of activities aimed at combating anti-Romany racism and human rights abuses of Roma, in particular strategic litigation, international advocacy, research and policy development, and training of Romany activists. The ERRC is a cooperating member of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights and has consultative status with the Council of Europe, as well as with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. ERRC was founded in 1996. Since its foundation it has engaged in advocacy on behalf of Roma in Europe. Advocacy by the ERRC has been carried out on three levels. ERRC International Advocacy is one of three streams in the ERRC Programmes Department. Primary targets of ERRC International Advocacy work include the European Union, the United Nations, the Council of Europe, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

In recent years, ERRC advocacy efforts have also concentrated on the domestic level. The ERRC has become known for high-quality written submissions to various international bodies and national Governments, offering comment on the factual situation of Roma in individual European countries with reference to the international law obligations of the country at issue

ERRC will contribute with its experience of documentation of human rights abuse against Roma, strategic litigation in the field of non-discrimination, facilitating participation of Roma at national and international levels to contribute to the implementation of laws, policies, and programmes that affect them.

The ERRC brings to the project extensive experience from its engagement in a range of activities aimed at combating anti-Romany racism and human rights abuse of Roma, in particular strategic litigation, human rights monitoring, research and policy development, and training of Romany activists.

Italian Helsinki Committee

The IHC will bring an objective perspective to the work of the partnership. The IHC also has sister organisations all over the world, and can therefore access international expertise beyond the European dimension. The IHC has built on its role as international NGO concerned with the protection of human rights ranging from freedom of expression in Cuba, to training on human rights education in Lebanon, or an advocacy mission toward the EU and the Italian government against the war in Chechnya.

The IHC role at a domestic level in Italy is in relation to the analysis of data on Human Rights violations in Italy. The participation of the IHC in TRANSPOSE will provide the IHC with unique opportunity to expand its role in the area of Roma rights advocacy and built up a cadre of experience individual with will provide guidance and input to the IHC's work with the Roma community.