Good Practices of Community Conflict Management in the Central Eastern European Region

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FOREWORD

The general objective of the project "Best Practices of Community Conflict Management in the Central Eastern European Region" (hereinafter referred to as GPCCM-REG) was to create a methodological and practical guide to local practitioners of the EU Member States, in which they would be able to find helpful instructions on how to plan, fund and implement programmes aiming at community conflicts prevention and/or management.

Based on research findings, a distinction can be made between Member States of the Central Eastern European region and Western European region on the grounds of (apart from other characteristics) value dimensions and community organisation aspects. Due to historical reasons, one of the key distinct features of respective Member States societies is a low confidence level when dealing with institutions as well as in terms of inter-personal relationships.

Because of the above-suggested similarities, the citizens of these Member States face comparable conflicts in often quite distinct communities, such as neighbourhood or school conflicts, conflicts between members of various ethnic/national minorities and the majority population, religions disputes, inter-generational dissonances, etc. Such community conflicts inevitably affect people's everyday lives and their feeling of security in general.

During the implementation of policies within its competency, the Ministry of Interior of Hungary frequently faces continuous need for advice: local practitioners need know-how and methods, which would help them manage community conflicts, get stakeholders involved, and plan, finance and deliver projects in general. The reason for such request is that practitioners do not have enough experiences with project based management. The expertise knowledge is particularly needed when it comes to evaluation of practices and exchange of good practices on local, as well as on national level.

We hope that this publication offers valuable ideas in terms of concepts and practices and that it has a potential to become a useful manual for those, who are interested in implementing new projects either on national or international level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Quote of the Experts
"I would like to thank to all the participants in the interviews and discussions."
 • *Ioan Durnescu*

"I would like to thank to all those, who found spare time in their busy lives during the past two years to share with me interesting data, information, experiences and stories without which I would not be able to write my Country Report."
 • *Petra Binkova*

"Thank you to all brave and wise people from the less privileged groups in Slovakia Thank you to all dedicated daytoday field-workers whose names did not make it into this publication. Your energy holds piece in the country."
 • *Zuzana Vasicakova Ocenasova*

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Facing the Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2011, Hungary, and more closely the Hungarian Ministry of Interior was interested in strengthening the cooperation among the Member States of the region and enabling the national experts to exchange experiences in the field of crime prevention– in order to explore the potential of restorative methods for building safer communities.

The GPCCM-REG project ("Good Practices of Community Conflict Management in the Central Eastern European Region", project no. JLS/2010/ISEC/FP/C2 4000001469) was implemented between January 2011 and June 2013 in 5 Member States.

Based on the premise that communities in the Central Eastern European region, Member States face similar conflicts, which directly influence quality of people's lives and their security perceptions, the project aimed at selecting and evaluating programmes that effectively address such issues. Under professional and financial management of the Hungarian Ministry of Interior, suitable programmes implemented in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary were selected and evaluated with the help of on-spot visits and interviews.

Moreover, one project of each participating country was presented during a one-and-a-half-day international thematic seminar under the aegis of the European Crime Prevention Network, which was organised in June 2011 in Budapest. This seminar also included presentation of projects from other EU countries, thus it offered an interesting comparison of good practices from various perspectives. The main result of the project is the present publication that includes good practices templates and projects evaluations. Recommendations concerning project planning, content and management included in this publication were elaborated on the basis of the project evaluations. An inseparable part of the publication is an example of a model project plan, which offers essential steps for all those interested in the project implementation activities.

The project was finalised after 29 months of intensive work of all experts involved in it. The project as a whole was coordinated by the Ministry of Interior of Hungary, specifically by the staff responsible for the professional and the financial management. The expert tasks of the project were completed by national experts from Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary. The experts completed their tasks on an individual basis in their own countries as selectors and evaluators of good practices (3-5 projects for each country), as well as during their joint engagements as an expert working group (evaluating, selecting guidelines, cross-referencing, providing feedback to each other, etc.)

AUTHORS

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Gabriella Benedek is a social development practitioner and works for the Foresee Research Group as a consultant since 2008. She has developed and led several of Foresee Research Group's strategic projects in the field of community development, research, extra-curricular education and programme evaluation. Gabriella's main fields of interests are civil society and active citizenship, community conflicts, network development and local philanthropy, hence her career and work has been grounded on empowerment and participatory approaches to conflict resolution, dialogue, research and management and evaluation.

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BULGARIA
1.1 INTRODUCTION

According to the Constitution, Bulgaria is a Parliamentary Republic, with 240 members of the Parliament. The official language is Bulgarian, and the religion of the most of the population is Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The capital of Bulgaria is Sofia. The monetary unit is Lev (NBG after denomination).

Administrative and territorial division: 28 districts (6 statistical regions) and 260 municipalities.

According to a census of 1 February 2011 the population of Bulgaria is 7.351.234. The urban population constitutes 72% of the population. The density of the population is 67,7 persons/sq.km.Ethnic composition of the population: Bulgarian 83,9%, Turkish 9,4%, Roma 4,7%.

Bulgaria is located in Southeast Europe, in the northeast part of the Balkan Peninsula. This geographic location places it on the crossroad between Europe, Asia and Africa.

Bulgaria is situated closer to the Equator than the pole. It falls within the southern part of the temperate climate zone with subtropical influence. Its location on the transition line between two climate zones influences the climate, soils, vegetation and animal species. All of them are characterized by great diversity.

The country's geographic position also determines the relatively wide angle of sunlight that falls on the country, making the country predominantly sunny. The official time in Bulgaria is Eastern European Time, which is two hours ahead of Greenwich Time. The Black and the Aegean Sea also influence the country's climate.

The influence of the Mediterranean is extensive for the climate in the southern parts of the country, while the Black Sea influences the climate over an area extending some 40 km inland, supporting diverse flora and fauna. The Danube River is important for the country, both with regard to water resources and for species diversity. Bulgaria's favourable geographic location creates excellent preconditions for the development of tourism.

Bulgaria is also a transport crossroad, affording access to Western Europe, the Near East and the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. A series of major European transport corridors pass through Bulgaria.

No limitations on rights or privileges are allowed because of race, citizenship, ethnicity, sex, national origin, religion, education, beliefs, political affiliations, personal or social position, or property status. The state authority is divided into the legislative, executive and legal branches. The political life of Bulgaria is based on the principle of political pluralism.

The National Reform Programme of the Republic of Bulgaria (2011-2015) was developed within the framework of implementing the Europe 2020 strategy, which was approved by the European Council in June 2010 and in compliance with the new instrument for better coordination of the economic policies in the EU, the so called European semester.

The territory of Bulgaria has been inhabited since antiquity, as the country's many ancient settlements and burial mounds attest. Present-day Bulgaria was a cradle of some of the earliest civilizations in Europe – the oldest gold ornament ever discovered, unearthed in the Chalcholite necropolis near Varna, is evidence of that. From the age of Ancient Thrace we have inherited valuable cultural monuments, including tombs (such as the Kazanlak tomb, the Aleksandrovska tomb, and the Sveshtarska tomb); treasures (the Panagyursko, Rogozensko, and Valchitransko teasures, among others); and sanctuaries and temples (at Perperikon, Starosel, Kozi Gramadi, Begliktash, and elsewhere).

The democratic changes in Bulgaria started at the end of 1989, when multi-party elections were held and a new constitution was adopted. At this time Bulgaria began its transition to democratic development and a market economy. Its foreign policy was redirected towards rapprochement with European institutions. Since 1991, Bulgaria has been a member of the Council of Europe, and in 2004 Bulgaria became a member of NATO. In 1995, it filed an application to join the European Union, with negotiations commenced in 1999. On 25 April 2005, the Accession Treaty granting the Republic of Bulgaria the right to join the European Union was signed in Luxemburg. On 1 January 2007, after fulfilling all membership criteria, Bulgaria became a member of the European Union.

The basis of the Bulgarian economy is free economic initiative. The state creates conditions for the free development of science, education, and the arts and provides support for them. The state also makes provisions to preserve the country's historical and cultural heritage. According to the Constitution, the basic institutions of the state include the National Assembly (Parliament); the President; the Council of Ministers; legal bodies such as the courts, the prosecutor's office, and the office of investigation; the Constitutional Court; the Higher Court Council; and other organs of local self-government.

The National Assembly is vested with legislative authority and exercises parliamentary supervision. The President is the head of the state, embodying the unity of the nation and representing the Republic of Bulgaria internationally. The Council of Ministers is in charge of and enacts the external and internal policies of the country, in conformity with the Constitution and the laws of the land. The legal authorities defend the rights and the legal interests of citizens, of juridical persons, and of the state. Since the country's liberation in 1878, Bulgaria has been governed by governments led by 50 Prime Ministers. The territory of the Republic of Bulgaria is divided into municipalities and counties.

The economy of Bulgaria is an open market economy with a developed private sector and a limited number of state enterprises. The Bulgarian economy is characterized by economic, political and financial stability.

The country has a strategic geographic location. The level of national indebtedness and the state deficit for 2011 is also among the lowest in the EU.

Bulgaria is one of three countries in the EU that has not changed tax rates as a result of the financial crisis.

Crime prevention strategy (2012–2020)

The crime prevention strategy is a part of the system for strategic administration of state policies and the main component in the planning of state activities in the sector of security and public order. The strategy aims to limit conventional crime by taking account of its link to and interaction with organized crime, corruption, economic crime, traffic accidents, national strategy as a whole and other fields of public and state security of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Strategic goal
The strategy's main goal is to set up a political framework for building a complex and sustainable statutory and institutional basis for the successful conducting of Government policy in the field of crime prevention.
The achievement of the main goal will lead to:
- Reduction of costs for countering crime;
- Reduction of the share of crimes of high level of public danger;
- Increase of citizens trust in institutions an enhancement of their participation in the implementation of prevention policies;

National strategy of Roma integration (2012–2020)
The National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2012–2020), is a policy framework document, laying down the guidelines for the implementation of the social integration policy of the Roma people. Following the EU framework for national Roma integration strategies, the term Roma is used in this document as an umbrella term covering both Bulgarian citizens in a vulnerable socio-economic position who identify themselves as Roma, and citizens in a similar situation defined by the majority as Roma, regardless of their self-identification.

The National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2012–2020) is a strategic document, an expression of the political commitment of the Government to the European development of Bulgaria, in line with the National Reform Programme of the Republic of Bulgaria (2011–2015)1 and with the National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 initiative. The document was drawn up in compliance with the strategic and operational national documents of the institutions responsible for its implementation – Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Home Affairs, Commission for Pro-

tection from Discrimination, etc. in implementation of the national policy for raising the quality of life and ensuring equal opportunities for all Bulgarian citizens.

The Strategy applies an integrated targeted approach to the citizens of Roma background in vulnerable position, which falls within the framework of a more general strategy for combating poverty and exclusion, and does not exclude rendering support to disadvantaged persons from other ethnic groups.

The Strategy builds on what was achieved in the ten-year period of the Framework Programme for Roma Integration in the Bulgarian society and includes the fully developed and updated strategic document adopted by the Council of Ministers on 12 May 2010 – Framework Programme for Roma Integration in the Bulgarian Society 2010–2020 – which was the outcome of broad discussions among the Roma community, the civil sector, the responsible public institutions and the academic community.

The Strategy meets the international standards of human rights and rights of persons belonging to minorities: International UN instruments, tackling human rights, to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a signatory: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 (in effect for R. Bulgaria from 1970); International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966 (in effect for R. Bulgaria from 1970); International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1966 (in effect for R. Bulgaria 1992); The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979 (in effect for R. Bulgaria 1982); Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (in effect for R. Bulgaria 1991), etc.

The Strategy is based on the principles of the EU political framework for the protection of human rights, ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens and preventing discrimination based on various grounds, including ethnicity, such as: Council Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment among persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, etc.

The Strategy fits into the context of development of the European policies in the area of Roma integration, taking account of: the guidelines provided through the Communication from the European Commission (EC) of 5 April, 2011 – EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020; and the Council Conclusions, adopted on 19 May 2011; the 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion, adopted by the Council of EU on 8 June 2009; the recognized necessity to enhance the efforts of the governments aimed at achieving tangible results of the Roma integration activ-

ities, the relevant EU political instruments and institutional mechanisms, programmes and initiatives: the outcomes of the actions within the framework of the European platform for Roma inclusion; the EU summit meetings on the Roma issue; the Communication from the EC to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions – Non-discrimination and Equal Opportunities: a Renewed Commitment, Community Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion {SEC(2008)2172} of July 2008, Council Conclusions of 8 December 2008 on Roma Inclusion; European Parliament Resolution of 11 March 2009 on the social situation of the Roma and their improved access to the labour market in EU (2008/2137\INI), European Parliament Resolution of 1 June 2006 on the situation of Roma women in the EU; European Parliament Resolution of 28 April 2005 on the situation of Roma in the European Union.[2]

The Strategy is also in line with the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on Protection of National Minorities. It is in compliance with the Council recommendation on initiating affirmative actions for the Roma community, which must take place observing the conditions of transparency, public consent and the democratic principles in the country.

The National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2012–2020) takes into account the existing situation of the Roma community resident in the country in terms of socio-economic and demographic conditions. It adopts and integrates into a single strategic document the objectives and measures contained in the strategic documents in the area of Roma integration, such as: Strategy for Educational Integration of the Children from the Ethnic minorities; Health Strategy for Disadvantaged Persons belonging to the Ethnic Minorities, 2005–2015 and National Programme for Improvement of the Housing of Roma in the Republic of Bulgaria in the period 2005–2015.

This document is adopted for the period up to and including 2020. The operational implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2012–2020) shall be carried out through the Action Plan (AP), to be implemented in two sections. The first section, 2012–2014, will be completed with the completion of the implementation of the National Action Plan for the international initiative Decade of Roma Inclusion, updated in 2011. An overall analysis of the implementation during this period will be performed in connection with its completion (2 February 2015).

The census shows a persistent tendency on the part of the people, identified by the general population as Roma or Gipsy to identify themselves as Bulgarians, Turks, Romanians, etc., which is possibly due to the fact that the persons participating in the census have the right to define their ethnic background themselves or to refrain from indicating it.

The persons from the Roma ethnic group are distributed across all regions in the country. Their share of the population is largest in the regions of Montana (12,7%) and Sliven (11,8%) followed by the regions of Dobrich (8,8%) and Yambol (8,5%) as opposed to the country average of 4,9%. Approximately half (55,4%) of the persons who identified themselves as belonging to the Roma ethnic group reside in the cities. The age structure of the Roma population shows a distinct pattern, where the relative size of the age groups decreases with an increase in age: children in the age group 0 to 9 years constitute one fifth (20,8%) of all persons who identify themselves as Roma, the groups of 10-19 year-old and 20-29 year-old persons show equal relative shares of 18,3% each, the 30-39 year-old cohort constitutes 15,2%; the 40-49 year-old cohort 11,6%; the 50-59 year-old cohort 8,7%; the 60-69 year-old cohort 4,9%; the 70-79 year-old cohort 1,9%; and the 80+ cohort 0,4%.

The projects in this publication presente some of the best practices in community management in mixed population areas in Bulgaria. They demonstrate the implementation of the strategic goal of the national integration strategy.

Sources

Online resources:

- Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015)
  http://romadecade.org

- Bulgarian Government website
  www.government.bg

- National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Integration Issues
  http://www.nccedi.government.bg

- European Network against Racism
  http://www.enar-eu.org/

- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
  http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/1346-LGBT-2010_thematic-study_BG.pdf

- Statistical data
  http://www.nsi.bg/index.php

1.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

1.2.1

Project title	**The family starts with the children**
Delivering organisation	Library and Cultural Club
Partners involved	• Regional Police Directorate-Pleven; • The Association of Mayors and Deputy Mayors "Miziya" 2006; • Association of village youths "Together"; • Pleven Municipality.
Project duration	January 2010 – December 2011
Project scope	Bulgaria, Pleven Municipality – villages Bukovlak, Bohot, Brashlyanitsa, Tarnene and Yasen.
Targeted problem, target group	A large number of unemployed Roma families. Increase in criminal activity in villages of Pleven municipality. Roma children between 7 and 14 years old.
Change/progress achieved	• No anti-social actions of Roma children have been registered in these areas; • Roma children from the target groups have not dropped out of school and continue their education; • No underage marriages have been registered, while three marriages involving children from the target groups have been postponed until they come of age; • As a result of the increased responsibility of the parents, none of the children from these villages was moved to a state institution.
Means of achieving change/progress	The model was successful, because it introduced radical new techniques and methods in order to educate integrate and support Roma children.

Key success factors	Using the power of art Roma families are integrated, their illegal or anti-social actions have been reduced to a minimum. Some of the strong points of the project are the mobilization of the local resources, changes in the regional libraries and the local population, which is now able to understand Roma problems, as well as the creation of innovative organizations.
Overall budget of the project	30.000 EUR

PROBLEM PRESENTATION

These are the poorest families, which often have several children. Therefore often their only income is the social benefits. The parents cannot find jobs because they lack professional qualifications. Roma children drop out of their schools early and the majority of them are characterised by deviant behaviour and illegal and criminal activities. In these villages, due to their remote locations and the lack of specialized organizations and institutions, Roma children are in the most risky groups.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project introduced an innovative approach to prevent the criminal behaviour of children of Roma origin who live in the smallest settlements in Pleven municipality. The project achieved its goal through:

- Creating art clubs in the local Library and Cultural Clubs for preventive work with children through art;
- School for Parents to increase the feeling of responsibility of the parents in bringing up their children;
- Public Councils raising the awareness of the local communities and authorities of Roma problems, participation in solving these problems.

The project activities are performed in five multiethnic villages Bukovlak, Bohot, Brashlyanitsa, Tarnene and Yasen. There areas are inhabited by socially excluded Roma communities.

The project is run by Community Fund "Library and Cultural Club" of Pleven, whose major partner is the Regional Police Department of Pleven under the directorate of the Ministry of Interior. The project has created a network of partnerships involving Pleven Municipality, the Association of Mayors and Deputy Mayors "Miziya-2006", "Together" Association of Village Youths, Association "Youth Bureau for Social Services and Civil Initiatives".

The major goal of the project is to introduce an innovative and sustainable model for prevention of crime and criminal behaviour by Roma children through the influence of art:

- Creating art clubs in the local Library and Cultural Clubs as alternative spaces for education and personal development of Roma children in five multiethnic villages Bukovlak, Bohot, Brashlyanitsa, Tarnene and Yasen;
- Increasing the parents' knowledge and responsibilities through information and direct contact with the parents in the School for Parents;
- Increasing the civil activity of the village communities through the creation of Public Councils responsible for the support of the children of Roma descent who are at risks of committing crimes.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION ASPECT

For the effective and useful outcome of the project activities, some research was carried out observing the causes of the anti-social actions of Roma children. The research also examined the skills and the interests of Roma parents, as well as the possibilities of the local communities for participation in the project. On the basis of this research an innovative approach to prevention was developed and implemented in the five villages.

Art clubs were set up in suitable places in the local Library and Cultural Clubs, work programmes were developed, and specialists and volunteers who were educated and prepared for working with the target groups were recruited. The children's groups were formed by means of a method using special criteria guaranteeing accessibility in the formation of these groups.

In these Art clubs Roma children gain experience in the areas of painting, dancing, music and theatre. Well-educated people from these villages, librarians and teachers assist the young people in their work. In addition, a mobile team consisting of a psychologist, a social worker and an educator work with the children conducting both group and individual activities.

"The School for Parents" programme organised group and individual discussion sessions with parents and other family members of the children from the target group. The working plan was developed taking into account the weak points in the knowledge or of each parent that had been identified by previous research.

In an effort to involve the inhabitants of the five villages, special Social Councils were created. Their members became the village mayors, the Principals of the schools, and respected local leaders from these villages. As a result of the activity of the highly respected members of these villages, charity campaigns were launched seeking material and moral support for these children and their families.

PARTNERS INVOLVED IN PLANNING AND/OR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

A major partner of the project is the Regional Police Department of Pleven under the directorate of the Ministry of Interior. Specialists from the Police Department developed the methodology of the research, as well as the analysis of the results and the creation of the analysis Report. They also made special suggestions and recommendations for the future realization of the project. Members of the Regional Police Department of Pleven under the directorate of the Ministry of Interior took part in the training of the teams of "Public educators". Police experts also act as lecturers in the School for Parents.

Further partners of the project are the five Libraries and Cultural Clubs in the villages Bukovlak, Bohot, Brashlyanitsa, Tarnene and Yasen. "Art clubs" and the "School for Parents" have been set up in these Libraries and Cultural Clubs. The staff of these Libraries and Cultural Clubs is involved in the leading of the art activities and in the coordination of the project activities at a local level.

The Association of Mayors and Deputy Mayors " iziya-2006" ensured the direct participation of the mayors in the design and coordination of the work of the Public Councils in the 5 villages.

The Association of the Village youths "Together" mobilized the youths in the five villages to launch charity campaigns connected with the project.
Pleven Municipality as a partner secured the financial stability of the project after its finalizing, through financing the leading organization from the Municipality budget.

EVALUATION OF THE PROJECT

A Plan for Interior Monitoring and Assessment was developed after the start of the project. It contained quality and quantity indicators, as well as tools of collecting information for their reporting. Representatives of partner organizations took part in a monitoring team regularly observing the activities of the project. The task of the team is to follow the progress, results and level of influence of the project.

CONCLUSION, KEY SUCCESS FACTORS
The planned aims were achieved. The innovative working model for Roma children in the Municipality has been successfully introduced. As a result of the project in 2011:

• No anti-social actions of Roma children have been registered in these areas;
• Roma children from the target groups have not yet dropped out of school and continue their education;
• No underage marriages have been registered, while three marriages involving children from the target

groups have been postponed until they come of age;
- As a result of the increased feeling of responsibility of the parents, none of the children from these villages have been moved to a state institution.

REPORTS OR DOCUMENTS ON THE PROJECT

Three reports were completed during the implementation of the project. A Model for the development of the method has been created. This model will be disseminated to other villages with multiethnic populations. This will enable these smaller towns and villages to deal with the criminal actions of children. The scheme can also be used in places with isolated Roma groups or with a high rate of criminal activity. This technique uses art to make children familiar with ommon human values and behaviours. This enables them to mix with the others and helps them to stop their anti-social behaviour.

1.2.2

Project title	START OF COMMUNICATION AND WORK IN A MULTIETHNIC ENVIRONMENT
Delivering organisation	C.E.G.A. – Creating Effective Grassroots Alternatives Foundation
Partners involved	• Youth Centre of Sevlievo, • Youth organization "Pokrosen"; • Initiative group "Youth in action"; • Initiative group "Zora".
Project duration	November 2006 – July 2007.
Project scope	Location: Bulgarian localities – Biala Slatina, Dupnitsa, Kazanlak and Sevlievo.
Targeted problem, target group	Communication and work between young people from different ethnic backgrounds. Bulgarian, Roma and other ethnic origins, aged 14-19 years.

Change/progress achieved	A change in young people's attitudes, learning how to communicate and work in a multicultural environment and to identify problem areas in communication between young people from different ethnic groups.
Means of achieving change/progress	Conducting a survey among young people in order to identify their attitudes towards communication in a multiethnic environment, organizing two exchange visits hosted by Roma and non-Roma young people, organizing two workshops to create a handbook on communication and work in a multiethnic environment.
Key success factors	Building social skills in a multicultural environment.
Overall budget of the project	

PROBLEM PRESENTATION

In an effort to counteract prejudices among young people, the plans were to carry out a survey among young people to identify their attitudes towards communication in a multi-ethnic environment, to organize two exchange visits hosted by Roma and non-Roma young people, and to organize two workshops to create a handbook on communication and work in a multiethnic environment.

The project objectives for the eight-month period were to foster social and creative skills and to improve inter-ethnic dialogue between young people from 24 Bulgarian and Roma settlements from Slatina, Dupnitsa, Kazanlak and Sevlievo.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Questionnaires were designed to explore attitudes and to identify problems of 800 young people from various ethnic groups in four cities involved in the project concerning interaction in a multiethnic environment. After processing and analysing the results, recommendations will be made for measures to improve communication and work in multicultural environments. At the end of the project, the results will be presented to local authorities and institutions in the four locations at workshops aimed at building partnerships and assisting programme development with examples of joint activities.

Following the survey, two exchange visits are organised hosted by a Bulgarian and a Roma youth organization. The programme involves five youths from the village and is led by the local project coordinator. The goal of exchange programmes is to help young people to get to know the way of life of the Roma and the Bulgarian community, their traditions, their attitudes and stereotypes, and the problems people need to face when communicating with other ethnic groups. The exchange programme includes training sessions to develop communication and social skills to resolve differences and conflicts and to communicate effectively in a multicultural environment. The training sessions are constructed based on the results of the survey. The exchange visits together with the training sessions highlight the problems of different ethnicities and enhance familiarity with ethnicity, which helps overcome prejudice. The exchange programme is expected to constitute a first step in learning to communicate and work in a multicultural environment. The implementation of the two exchange visits involves two tasks in "Everybody's personality."

Based on the presentations of the two ethnic groups, flyers were designed containing the most important and specific features of Bulgarians and the Roma. The flyers were distributed among 1.000 youth from the two ethnic groups in 4 cities participating in the project.

In the next part of the project there were two workshops during which young people participated in exchange visits and created a manual with the best practices learned during the project. The handbook includes an analysis of the results of the polls and makes recommendations to local and national institutions. The goal of the first seminar was to plan the contents of the manual, the nature of the information that should be included, and the design concept. Participants were also encouraged to identify the benefits of communicating and working in a multicultural environment. Between the first and second sessions, all partner organizations/groups were shown the plan of the Handbook and were asked to give feedback and contribute text and photo materials illustrating examples of tolerant interethnic relations. During the second session, participants worked with the previously collected textual and visual materials and constructed the final version of the Handbook. The process of working on the Handbook is expected to strengthen the creative and social skills of young people and help them to communicate and work in a multicultural environment, which is in itself a success story to be presented in the Handbook.

After the completion of the Handbook, it was officially presented at the four places where the project was implemented, and at a national level. Copies of the Guide are available in local and national institutions. The Handbook was followed with interest by Foundation "SEGA" and local organizations, and the recommendations contained in the book are taken into consideration in the development of local and national policies.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION ASPECT ABOUT THE SURVEY

Target
The aim of the survey was to identify the attitudes of young people towards communication and work in a multicultural environment and to identify problem areas in communication between young people from different ethnic groups. The survey was conducted within the project "Start to communicate and work in a multicultural environment", but its results are important both for the project and for building a picture of interethnic relations among young people in contemporary Bulgarian society.

Range
The survey was conducted in four places – Dupnitsa, Kazanlak, Byala Slatina Sevlievo (in Sevlievo the Vocational School, located in the nearby village Gradnitsa, was covered). Teams of interviewers made up of volunteers distributed 200 questionnaires in each city. Of the 800 questionnaires 777 were completed.

The survey does not claim to be representative.

Two of the questions included in the survey were at the same time released on two online poll sites by CEGA Foundation. 44 answers were received to these questions. Although these answers are not included in the overall results, they are used as helpful resources for lessons.

Target Group:

The target group of the survey included youth from Bulgarian, Roma and other ethnic origins, aged 14-19 years. The majority of respondents were high school students.

Respondents' ethnic origin was not recorded in the questionnaires and was not revealed by the interviewers. The goal of the survey was to construct a picture of interethnic communication problems among young people as a whole, without taking into account ethnic differences.
The poll was anonymous.

Questionnaire:

The questionnaire consists of 10 questions. Given the target group and its highly negative attitude towards this type of research, the majority of the items were closed questions. The questionnaire was prepared to take the minimum amount of time to complete but still give the clearest picture of young people's attitudes in relation to the problem

CONCLUSIONS, KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

1. Young people have contact with their peers from other ethnic groups, but they lack the conditions and communication skills to interact and work in a multicultural environment. Much of the difficulty in communication is associated with stereotypical attitudes.

2. Many young people do not realize that they have problems communicating with other ethnicities.

3. There is a group of young people, though not a large group, who do not have any contact with other ethnic groups. They attend purely Bulgarian or Roma segregated schools and are utterly unprepared to communicate in a multicultural environment.

4. Most young people do not share the negative public attitudes towards other ethnicities. They have positive attitudes towards communication in multicultural environments.

5. Conflicts between representatives of Roma and Bulgarian ethnicity are commonplace.

6. The attitudes of young people towards other ethnic groups depend heavily on the media created image of a particular ethnic group.

7. Yet many young people suffer from the prejudices of their parents and families, which greatly hampers the development of their social skills and work in multicultural environment.

8. Very often young people do not recognize their friends and acquaintances as members of other ethnic groups, although they are. When they hear "other ethnicity" the image constructed in the media and in the family pops into their minds: the image of "the other" is "far from us", "it is incompatible with us", "we cannot accept it".

9. Young people need a push factor to effectively carry out work in a multicultural environment.

10. Most young people do not realize the necessity and benefits of building social skills in a multicultural environment.

1.2.3

Project title	**DIFFERENT TOGETHER IN FOOTBALL, IN ONE TEAM, IN ONE SCHOOL**
Delivering organisation	C.E.G.A. – Creating Effective Grassroots Alternatives Foundation.
Partners involved	• Bulgarian Football Union, • Sofia Municipality, • Four High Schools from Sofia region
Project duration	October 2008 – December 2009.
Project scope	Sofia area.
Targeted problem, target group	Good communication between young people from different ethnic minorities. The target group includes students, parents and teachers to participate in an intervention programme that will lead to improvement of the host environment in the process of integration into the school.
Change/progress achieved	Students overcome negative stereotypes of "the other"
Means of achieving change/ progress	Organizing and campaigning, individual and group meetings to motivate parents, students and teachers from the Bulgarian and Roma communities to participate in shared school events by engaging them in football and sports activities.
Key success factors	Good cooperation among the partners. Target group includes a broad range of representatives like students, parents and teachers with different ethnic origins.
Overall budget of the project	

The target group of the project proposal includes students, parents and teachers invited to participate in an intervention programme that will lead to improvement of the host environment in the process of integration into the school. The largest share of the target group are children and parents from the minority population and from the majority population, who are the agents of change. 450 students, parents and teachers in five schools with children from different ethnic origins.

PROBLEM PRESENTATION

The number of Roma students is the largest in the territory of Sofia Municipality in the country. The students are scattered across several districts. There are three distinct schools with 100% of Roma student populations. Without intervention in the host environment, municipal policy for the integration of children and students from ethnic minorities, together with civil society organizations in mainstream schools in the city, can lead to secondary segregation of some of these schools. Similar symptoms have been present in schools in Lyulin, Krasna Polyana, which are partners in the project. A study of the Sociology Department of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" among pupils of Roma origin in Bulgarian schools in Krasna Polyana school shows insulation space between students from different ethnic backgrounds, and a gap between them and the teachers. The activities of the project will deal with the problem of negative stereotypes of the majority of the pupils from ethnic minorities and reduce the outflow of ethnic Bulgarians from the host schools and isolation among school children.

Organising two training sessions for training of 40 teachers in six host schools to work with parents of children from ethnic backgrounds and to engage parents in their children's education.

Formation of football teams, fan clubs and school majorette groups of students from different ethnic backgrounds in the six schools included in the project and their involvement in joint activities.

Formation and training of 6 teams of parents and teachers of students in schools. Conducting a football tournament between the two schools involved in the project with students, their parents and teachers.

Organizing and conducting a football tournament under the motto *"Together in football."*
The project includes host schools where the following preliminary issues were identified:
Isolation of pupils of Roma origin in school.

- Irregular attendance and dropping out among the 6th-8th grade students from ethnic minorities;
- Lack of involvement of parents in school life and hampered communication between parents and teachers;
- Outflow of Bulgarian parents from neighbourhood schools attended by children of different ethnic communities and a tendency toward segregation of secondary schools.

Implementation of activities with the specific goals of encouraging social inclusion and creating conditions for integration through joint participation of all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers from different ethnic backgrounds.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Performance indicators 1:

- Number of students and parents from different ethnic backgrounds involved in the football team in school clubs and fan Cheerleaders: total of 387 teachers, parents and students;

- Number of students and parents from different ethnic backgrounds involved in football as audience: more than 550 people;

- Number of parents of Bulgarian and Roma students withdrawing their children during the 2008/2009 school year: during that school year none of the parents withdrew their children from schools involved in the project.

Performance indicators 2:

- Number of students from different ethnic backgrounds involved in school activities: a total of 308 students participated in the school football teams, majorettes and fan clubs;
- Number of teachers improving their ability to work in a multicultural environment and involvement of parents: 43 teachers from schools involved in the project;

- Number of parents involved in school events: 79 parents participated regularly in training football teams;
- Increased number of Roma parents successfully attracted to participate in parent-teacher meetings, compared to the previous two school years in schools with the most serious problems in the education of Roma children: 37 elementary school and 123 secondary school teachers were able to contact parents through Cheerleaders and football teams;
- Increased number of Roma parents who discussed problems with their children, compared with the previous two academic years;
- An increased number of parents involved in various school events, compared with the previous two school years: 123 and 131 high school for the first time in several years, school activities were held with the participation of parents.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION FACTORS

Indicators of achievement:

- Proportion of presence/absence of parents at football practice during the project: The permanent presence of all parents in training was a problem for all schools. However, teachers have created a core group of parents and teachers participating in teams;

- Involvement of parents from different ethnic backgrounds in soccer tournaments: Participants' families from different ethnic backgrounds participated as members of the audience in tournaments;
- Increased involvement of parents in other school events, compared with the previous two school years: The interest of the students in Cheerleaders and football teams helped to involve parents in the football teams and achieve their presence at the tournament.

Involvement of students of different ethnic origins in general school activities:

- Number of children from different ethnic backgrounds, as the audience involved in football tournaments: The football tournament held in the summer (June) was an interschool event and was attended by children from different ethnic backgrounds. Their exact number was not monitored, but more than 550 people;
- Increased participation in extracurricular activities outside the school among children of different ethnic origins compared to the previous two years: Students involved in extracurricular activities in schools 131, 123 and 37 attended school for the first time for extracurricular activities;
- Increased communication between children from different ethnic backgrounds: joint participation in football teams, majorettes and fan clubs.

CONCLUSION, KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

The end result of the project activities is positive. The project achieved the main objectives set for each of the target groups: Students overcame negative stereotypes of "the other" and made riends, helped each other. Parents are involved in activities, which helps the integration process. Teachers acquired new knowledge and skills to work in a multicultural environment. Institutions in Sofia and the Bulgarian Football Union catalyze the process of working on some project and overcoming personal prejudices.

The project used football and majorettes as a tool of integration of students, parents and teachers from different ethnic backgrounds. By involving students in various forms of activities the different stereotypes gained by the students in their family were reduced.

Sustainability of project activities is provided by continuing extracurricular activities after project completion. With the resources provided by the ESF all necessary equipment was purchased. Cheerleaders and football teams remain in the schools. The success of the activities of students and their motivation are the reason schools decide to maintain the fan clubs, majorettes and school football teams formed during the project. Cheerleaders and football teams are registered in three partner schools – School 74, School 54 and School 37. Activities are funded as extracurricular activities.

Reasons why the activities are appropriate and may lead to change, as evidenced by the evaluation of the expert were the range of partners involved, the high quality of cooperation and the innovative methods to motivate citizens and others. The main lesson learnt from the leading organization and its partners during the implementation of the project is that collaboration between NGOs, schools and the community in activities that include teachers, students and parents, gives good results. This project also showed that the key to success in working with students, improving their motivation for learning and overcoming bias is the extent to which teachers are open to children, ready to apply new teaching methods and extra work as extracurricular activities.

The project was based on some basic principles of management:

- Most widespread inclusion of target groups in the implementation of activities;
- Teamwork and equal partners. The leading organization is the "first among equals";
- Responsibility and strict implementation of the obligations of each partner;

Compliance with schedules for implementation of activities;
- Mutual learning and practice;
- Trust and transparency at all levels;
- Strict financial reporting performed.

1.2.4

Project title	**CREATING CONDITIONS OF EQUALITY FOR ROMA CANDIDATES FOR BECOMING POLICE OFFICERS IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR**
Delivering organisation	Regional Police Directorate of Veliko Tarnovo – Ministry of Interior.
Partners involved	– Amalipe Foundation, – Psychologists from NGO "Centre Maria".
Project duration	September 2008 – December 2008.
Project scope	Velico Tarnovo District.
Targeted problem, target group	Lack of Roma police officers in a broad region with Roma population. 15 young boys and girls of Roma origin.
Change/progress achieved	All 15 boys and girls from Roma origin have passed the training successfully.
Means of achieving change/ progress	• Conducting awareness programmes among young people from the Roma community in the larger settlements in Veliko Tarnovo area to increase motivation to work for the Ministry of Interior. Informing young people of the general and specific requirements of age, education, vocational training, psychological fitness and other conditions stated in the competition for entry into public affairs at the Ministry of Interior. • Meetings during the awareness campaign with senior officials of the police in Veliko Tarnovo and representatives from NGOs and local Roma communities. • Introduction of young Roma to the rules of a competition for entry into public service in Ministry of Interior and regulations; • Organizing and conducting physical preparation and preliminary study of physical fitness of candidates; • Organizing and conducting trainings for candidates from NGO "Maria" psychologists and NGO Amalipe in order to pass the epata study of intellectual abilities and skills.

Key success factors	Good cooperation between partners and the target group in the project
Overall budget of the project	

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM

In September and October 2008 the District Police Directorate of Veliko Tarnovo and Centre "Amalipe" participated in a joint project "Creating conditions of equality for Roma candidates for public office in the Ministry of Interior."

The project included awareness campaigns among Roma youth from Veliko Tarnovo area on the possibilities to apply for a job in the Ministry of Interior, a motivational campaign and organization of courses in Bulgarian language, physical fitness and psychological fitness to allow youth to submitted successful applications to work for the Ministry of Interior.

LOCATION OF THE PROBLEM:

The number of Roma Police Officers at Regional Police Department (RDP) of Veliko Tarnovo is small relative to the total number of police officers and is not in proportion with the number of Roma residents in the area. The management of RDP recognised the need for the appointment of

Roma officers who were willing and eligible to participate in competitions for entry into public office at the Ministry of Interior, but Roma youths failed to complete the relevant stages of the competition.

Location of the problem.
The need for the appointment of Roma officers applies to the whole area, but the need is especially great in the settlements with large Roma populations: Gorna Oryahovitsa Pavlikeni, Strazhitsa, Kilifarevo and White Church towns.

Integration of affected and interested parties.
The interested parties are:
- Boys and girls of Roma origin who wish to apply for initial entry into the civil service in the Ministry of Interior;
- Communities in urban areas with large Roma concentration, and places where Roma communities live in compact masses in order to maintain public order and bring the police service to them.

Analysis of the causes of the problem

In the Roma community itself there is an understanding that if young Roma apply for jobs in the Ministry of Interior, they will not be admitted. Furthermore, information about the competitions cannot always reach all young Roma who wish to be eligible to participate in the meetings.

The immediate problem is that youths do not want to complete

the stages of a competition for entry into public service in Ministry of Interior. In the last two years, four young Roma have met the terms and conditions to participate in competitions for entry into public service in the Ministry of Interior. Two of the youths admitted to the competition were recommended by the Amalipe foundation, but they nevertheless failed to pass the first and second stages of the competition.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Guidelines developed for resolving the problem

Under the provisions of the Act for Protection against Discrimination there are special measures in favour of persons or groups disadvantaged on the grounds of ethnicity in order to equalize their opportunities where such measures are necessary.

Guideline for resolving the problem:

- Conducting awareness programmes among young people from the Roma community in the larger settlements in the Veliko Tarnovo area to increase motivation to work for the Ministry of Interior, including provision of information regarding the general and specific requirements for age, education, vocational training, psychological fitness and other conditions stated in the competition for entry into public affairs in the Ministry of Interior.

- Meetings during the awareness campaign with senior officials of the police in Veliko Tarnovo and representatives from NGOs and local Roma communities.
- Introduction of young Roma to the rules of a competition for entry into public service in the Ministry of Interior and regulations;
- Organizing and conducting physical preparation and preliminary study of physical fitness of candidates;
- Organizing and conducting trainings for candidates from NGO "Maria" psychologists and NGO Amalipe in order to pass the epata study of intellectual abilities and skills.

The project is a good example of learning from mistakes because Roma boys and girls could not apply to join civil service in the Ministry of Interior immediately after the training.

The number of Roma Police Officers at Regional Police Department (RDP) of Veliko Tarnovo is small relative to the total number of police officers and is not in proportion with the number of Roma residents in the area. The management of RDP recognised the need for the appointment of Roma officers who were willing and eligible to participate in competitions for entry into public office at the Ministry of Interior, but Roma youth failed to complete the relevant stages of the competition.

CZECH REPUBLIC

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Czech population (10.436.560)[3] is relatively homogeneous with more significant social differences existing mainly between different regions. According to Eurostat data, the poverty rate in the Czech Republic is among the lowest in Europe.[4] On the other hand, material deprivation as well as concentration of poverty within specific population groups is high, with the unemployed facing the highest risk of poverty. The social exclusion concept is clearly wider than the concept of poverty as it represents mechanism that separates people from the mainstream of society. In the discourse of EU social policy, social exclusion is defined first of all as a consequence of combined influence of unemployment, low education and qualifications, low income, inadequate housing, impaired environment, high level of criminality, inaccessibility of quality medical care and quality education, family crisis, and other social institutions that are crucial for civil society. In fact, the problem of social exclusion is rather new to the Czech society as it was practically unknown before the political changes and economic restructuring after 1989. Since then there have been several factors affecting social exclusion, of which the impeded access to housing, labour market and education can be identified as the principal ones.[5] Concerning the issue of housing, it is important to realise that socially excluded localities are most likely to be found in certain regions and certain parts of towns or villages, specifically in those parts which are not considered to be appealing to other residents for various reasons. These localities have been gradually populated by relocated families of socially excluded individuals who had no other choice but remain in such places despite their efforts to leave them. This concerns primarily families of the long-term unemployed. Furthermore, their social and economic position is directly connected to the fact that minimal education and no or low qualifications are the main reasons for their unemployment and inability to reintegrate into the structured labour market. Such vicious circle prompts some people to turn to crime, others are at risk of various socio-pathological phenomena such us prostitution or drug addiction. Generally speaking, in the Czech Republic, the term social exclusion is usually associated with regions where the Roma minority forms the majority (250.000). Although being part of an ethnic minority does not presume a higher risk of social exclusion, the findings of a study conducted for the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs by Gabal Analysis & Consulting (GAC) revealed the existence of 330 Roma localities affected by social exclusion and indicated their general tendency to increase in number.[6] According to this study, it can be estimated that approximately 80.000 members of Roma communities suffer from social exclusion in the Czech Republic. Despite the fact that the issue of social exclusion should not be regarded as exclusively a Roma problem, the

[3] Census of Population and Housing 2011: Basic final results.

[4] See at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu.

[5] Action Plan for the Czech Republic within the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015), see at http://www.roma-decade.org.

[6] Gabal Analysis & Consulting (2006) Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and the Absorption Capacity of Subjects Operating in These Localities. Prague: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

Ohrožené
romské lokality
v jednotlivých
krajích

■ Důsledkem vnitřní migrace Romů,
kteří se stěhují z větších měst do menších,
je mnohdy vznik takzvaných ghett.

■ Z ciziny se do ČR podle odborníků Romové
příliš nestěhují, výjimkou je migrace ze Slovenska.
Odtud přicházejí do ČR za příbuznými.
Romští aktivisté ale tvrdí, že počet Romů v ČR
se v posledních letech spíše snížil kvůli emigraci.

position of socially excluded Roma population in Czech society is undoubtedly a very specific problem which deserves more space for detailed background explanation than this text can provide.

What shall be at any case pointed out is the fact that after the split of the Czechoslovak Federation (1993), a large proportion of the Slovak Roma were prevented from participating in the Czech social system as a result of the Act no. 40/1993 on the gaining and losing of citizenship of the Czech Republic and the difficulty of the administrative process of gaining citizenship. The situation for the Roma with Slovak citizenship got even worse in the late 1990s and left the central public administrative bodies with no other option but to reflect on the problem and try to create practical measures to improve the situation of the Romani communities. The first government report on the Roma situation after 1989, the so-called Bratinka Report,[7] was issued in 1997 and identified the causes of failure in the fields of employment and education. Since this report, multiple governmental analyses, reports and strategies for Roma integration have been formulated. All of them tackled the issue but with mixed results. Nonetheless, what made the difference in government's bodies approach was the above mentioned research by GAC (2006), which presented unprecedented findings that had been missing for further progress in addressing the issue of the social exclusion of the Roma communities in the Czech Republic.[8] This and other research consequently triggered a noticeable interest in more research projects focused on delivering important data concerning the structure of social exclusion. This undoubtedly helped the governmental bodies draw up some systematic measures and implement them in socially excluded localities.

Socially excluded localities in the Czech Republic
Source • http://www.lidovky.cz.

In that regard, the Czech Government already showed an initiative when it decided to accede to the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 under Government Resolution No 136 of 26 January 2005 on accession to the international initiative Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015.[9] The Decade Declaration was signed on 2 February 2005 in Sofia where the twelve participating European countries[10] agreed to outline and apply policies, programmes and action plans contributing to a reduction in the poverty and social exclusion faced by the Roma and to address the situation faced by the Roma communities on both national and local level. Since 2005, the annual Report on the Implementation of the Decade has been submitted to the Czech Government jointly by a member of the Government and the Chairperson of the Government Council for Roma Affairs. During its presidency, the Czech Republic continued integration processes of previous presidencies which were focused on inclusive education, well being and rights of children, Roma women, implementation of integration policies at local level, and media image of the Roma.[11]

Another important step – on national and international scale – towards finding effective tools to challenge the issue of social exclusion in general and Roma integration in particular was the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 proposed by the European Commission.[12] It marked an unprecedented commitment by EU Member States to promoting the inclusion of Roma on their territory. In this framework, all Member States were expected to present to the European Commission a strategy for Roma inclusion or sets of policy measures within their social inclusion policies for improving the situation of Roma people and, for this purpose, to set up national contact points. Following the Commission's Framework Communication, the Czech Government did not create a new National Roma Integration Strategy but presented Concept of Romany Integration for 2010–2013.[13] It also developed a national coordination mechanism relating to the Roma agency, which includes all the European Commission's demands. It primarily focuses on the socially excluded Roma population and creates priority sub-categories, such as groups vulnerable because of sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or nationality. The Concept also contains a whole range of other goals in the areas of Romani language and culture, excess debt, social protection and safety. All the priority areas are based on the real national context and set their goals realistically. In fact, the Concept is an update of the previous concepts since 2000 and sets priorities and short-term goals. For this reason it can propose realistic measures for the short- and medium-term. Despite there are still a few shortcomings (use of community instruments, empowerment, budgets for individual measures), it nonetheless proves that the Czech Republic is experienced enough when it comes to Roma integration strategies and specific measures targeting Roma, such as the above mentioned Decade of Roma Inclusion, involvement in the EU Roma Network and building on experiences from previous strategies.

[9] The Czech Republic's Presidency of the Council of the European Union lasted from 1 January 2009 until 30 June 2009.

[10] Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, and Spain.

[11] Action Plan for the Czech Republic within the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015), see at http://www.roma-decade.org.

[12] See at http://eur-lex.europa.eu.

[13] See at http://ec.europa.eu.

The position of the main candidate on the best-drafted national plan in the Czech Republic so far should be however attributed to the Strategy for Combating Social Exclusion for the period of 2011–2015.[14] The document, which was prepared by the Czech Government Agency for Social Inclusion in Roma Localities, includes more than 100 measures. It represents the most specific commitment by the Czech Republic for dealing with the given issue to date, particularly in the fields of education, employment, housing, security, social services and family policy, while addressing both the situation of those living in socially excluded localities and the situation of the territories in which such localities form. What is equally as important is the fact that the document establishes deadlines by which goals should be met, financing arrangements, ministries responsible for implementation, in addition, it is not difficult to monitor its fulfilment. By the end of 2014 the Agency for Social Inclusion in Romani localities will propose a set of further measures for the period of 2015–2020.[15]

Last but not least, the problematics of socially excluded localities significantly depends on operation of relevant local authorities, which are major drivers of the change. This however does not mean that the change process should be left exclusively to local authorities. Local policies must be indisputably supported by central and regional policies and must be able to utilize the experiences and capabilities of NGOs, implemented programmes and tools, educational and academic institutions, etc. Yet, the correlation between the local and the central subject presents the most crucial point where many promising initiatives and schemes may be for various reasons disintegrated once and for all. Consequently, the only step forward with regards to any substantial change of social exclusion strategies can only occur when several prerequisites are met first. For example, formulation of goals and strategies must be specific for each locality and must reflect its specific situation and dynamism. At the same time, it is crucial for the local authorities to be able to access all information on existing integration tools and their operation on national level and about different best practices. This information shall be provided through an effective cooperation with the central or nation-wide bodies. In other words, the municipalities that commit themselves to the change strategy should be provided with support at all levels (central, regional, expert). Central policy and expert capabilities and resources must take a closer look at the local situation and conditions, showing full respect to the local circumstances.

To put it differently, it tends not to be popular but necessary to say that social exclusion is a practical approach by local governments, which have no systemic tools to apply any other solution. In addition, the local governments must cope with the consequences of social exclusion "from the above", i.e. from the official economic system and social structure of Czech society. There is a relatively strong conflict of interest between the local and central policies relating to socially excluded communities. While the central authorities declare

[14] See at http://www.socialni-zacleno-vani.cz.

[15] Ibid. 16 See at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1049641.stm.

their commitment to initiating and supporting the social inclusion process in order to gradually decrease the number of socially excluded localities, for the local governments, their existence represents a relatively acceptable method of coping with occurrence and reproduction of socially excluded groups of citizens. The current status has been partially caused by "unstable" features of integration programs. This inevitably leads to the lack of public and policy support. However, the central authorities start to introduce some degree of dynamism, while local governments intend to stabilise the situation while trying to introduce specific changes.

To take this even one step further or deeper, when it comes to municipalities, their abilities and possibilities will depend on the level of readiness of regional governments to be involved in and coordinate with their efforts. Considering regional authorities' knowledge of the situation in the regions and municipalities and their level of readiness to achieve sustainable changes, there are just a few regional authorities ready for the change. In the majority of regions, necessary analyses and documents are still waiting to be elaborated to allow active participation of regions in social inclusion support projects. Regions represent an important territorial link between the central and local levels. Many regional authorities currently have no necessary professional and managerial resources available to cooperate with local authorities. Without such expert, conceptual and project support from the regional level, the local authorities cannot be expected to supply such support. Fortunately, according to latest reports and analyses, the central level starts to provide the crucial expert support in designing and developing the new and prospective strategy and in ensuring resources necessary to implement the change.

With regard to what was stated or implied above, the three projects presented in this publication, which offer three best practices in the field of community conflict management in socially excluded localities in the Czech Republic, prove that the above-mentioned fragile synergy between the central and the local can come to life and if it does, it leads to quite remarkable results. Thanks to this publication the main principles of the three projects can be disseminated throughout the region of Central and East Europe and may inspire others to change their immediate environment. In case this happens, even if only once, the primary hopes and expectations of those who implemented the projects in their original locations and all those who contributed to their successful outcomes would be not only entirely fulfilled, but certainly way overpassed.

TABLE: DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSION, AREAS AND SOCIAL POLICY – CZECH REPUBLIC			
Social inclusion		**Social exclusion**	
Area	Indication	Precondition	Social Policy
Economic activities	• consumption • poverty and material deprivation	Resource contribution: • income • housing • other resources	• income support • social services • housing
Market activities	• jobs • un/employment • working conditions	• flexible approach (principle of equal opportunity + social capital) • abilities (human potential)	• work incentives • measures against discrimination
Social activities	• (non-) participation in social contact • limited width and quality of contact	• social contacts and networks • quality of contacts and networks	• social work • prevention of isolation • empowerment • participation • partnership
Political activities	• (non-)participation in political activities such as elections • membership in associations	• trust in institutions • legitimacy of representation and the political system	• access to realisation of political and civic rights • recognition policy

Source • Mareš and Sirovátka (2008)

Sources:

Gabal Analysis & Consulting (2006) Analysis of Socially Excluded Roma Localities and the Absorption Capacity of Subjects Operating in These Localities. Prague: Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

Mareš, P. and Sirovátka, T. (2008) Social Exclusion and Social (Inclusion). Czech Sociological Review, 44 (2), pp. 271-294.

Online resources:

Action Plan for the Czech Republic within the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005 – 2015)
http://www.romadecade.org

Bratinka Report
http://www.vlada.cz

Concept of Romany Integration for 2010-2013
http://ec.europa.eu

EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020
http://eur-lex.europa.eu

Strategy for Combating Social Exclusion for the period of 2011-2015
http://www.socialni-zaclenovani.cz

Statistical data
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

2.2.1

Project title	**CRIME PREVENTION ASSISTANT**
Delivering organisation	Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic
Partners involved	• Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic • Municipal Councils • Municipal police • Police of the Czech Republic • Local community centres • Local primary and secondary schools • Various NGOs delivering social services (depending on location) • Inhabitants of socially excluded localities
Project duration	June 2011 – June 2014
Project scope	The project is realised in socially excluded locations in 11 selected towns in Central Bohemian Region (Kutná Hora), Ústí nad Laben Region (Litvínov, Chomutov, Most, Obrnice, Děčín, Šluknov) and Moravia-Silesian Region (Karviná, Ostrava, Haviřov, Orlová). These 11 selected towns are among those with the highest concentration of socially excluded communities.
Targeted problem, target group	**Target groups:** • Inhabitants of socially excluded communities • The long-term unemployed or those who proved to be difficult to be employed • Members of Roma ethnic minority **Targeted problems:** • High incidence of crimes and other offences • Lack of the feeling of security among citizens living inside and near respective locations

- Insufficient means to guarantee and pursue the law enforcement principles - Low motivation to work or to look for employment, no chance of finding employment, no working habits for long-term unemployed inhabitants - Low working and social competencies, basic or no educational attainment - No plan for sustainable strategies to resolve basic community problems - No effective official policy for social integration, empowerment, and prevention and elimination of social exclusion - No experience in sharing good practice standards from other regions - No prevention or other strategies for eliminating (inter)personal conflicts and other minor or latent offences	Weak inner cohesion and positive patterns within families due to their long-term low social status - High danger of racially-motivated and extremist activities - General negative perception of members of socially excluded communities by majority population
Change/progress achieved	- The number of crimes and other offences was reduced - The feeling of security among citizens was strengthened - The long-time unemployed and those with no chance of finding employment but with a specific knowledge of respective locations found jobs - A positive relationship between inhabitants of socially excluded communities and local police officers was established; local families (parents as well as children) changed their attitudes toward law enforcement principles

- Local inhabitants involved in the project acquired new skills and practical experience in the fields of law, security and crime prevention which raised their chances on the job market
- The local inhabitants involved in the project gradually transferred the right or desirable patterns of social behaviour onto their closest ones or those they were in frequent contact with
- Gradual shift towards a positive perception of members of socially excluded communities by majority population
- Crime prevention assistants have been positively perceived and evaluated by local minority population as well as by the rest of citizens
- Crime prevention assistants have been generally perceived as part of the security system in which citizens can trust

	• The project triggered creation of several new local prevention programmes • Position of crime prevention assistant was incorporated into official strategic documents of each particular municipality
Means of achieving change / progress	The project is designed as a collaboration and active participation of citizens living in a socially excluded community in the system of public security management. It also includes intensive work with potentially problematic individuals, (re)distribution of information about how to tackle various life situations, how to deal effectively and independently with problems connected to (inter)personal relations, and how to actively participate in the life of the community.

| Key success factors | • Establishing positive perception of CPAs by local citizens
• Tackling the relevant and urgent problems to achieve concrete results by taking concrete actions performed by and for concrete people
• Overcoming long-lasting prejudices toward a certain group of people through a constructive and non-oppressive course of actions
• Maintaining an active but sensitive involvement of CPAs in everyday life of community as whole as well as well as of every single citizen in need
• Sustaining an open and trustful collaboration of all parties involved | Overall budget of the project | The project is financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) – 1.516.925 EUR. Until June 2014 ESF funding will keep covering 100% of labour costs which were set on maximum 675 EUR per one project employee/month. The project can also be implemented with the financial support of the Ministry of the Interior. In this case the maximum limit remains the same but there is a condition that the respective town or municipality must financially contribute (10%). One of the project's conditions is that all participating municipalities will seek alternative sources of funding for CP assistants once the ESF funding is over. |

CRIME PREVENTION ASSISTANT – PROJECT PRESENTATION

The project is realised in socially excluded locations in 11 selected towns in Central Bohemian Region (Kutná Hora), Ústí nad Laben Region (Litvínov, Chomutov, Most, Obrnice, Děčín, Šluknov) and Moravia-Silesian Region (Karviná, Ostrava, Havířov, Orlová). The 11 selected towns are among those with the highest concentration of socially excluded communities. Some of these towns were already included in the Daybreak project (see the section on Daybreak project in this publication) where the Crime Prevention Assistant project was originally piloted as one of its subprojects. Moreover, all these towns had an evident and legitimate commitment by local authorities to progress towards inclusion of respective localities and its inhabitants, which forms a necessary prerequisite for any complex change.

In general, the project introduces a fresh alternative approach to already existing practices of community policing strategies. It was launched to help citizens in socially excluded communities with intense social and security problems to become actively involved with their immediate social environment. The project starts with a specifically designed selection process through which several individuals are chosen in each project location to work in 2-member teams of crime prevention assistants. The selection committee consists of the representatives of the municipal and state police, the relevant city council and the Ministry of the Interior. These CP assistant teams work together with the municipal police officers to help maintain public order and security in their locations. The civic and moral authority of CP assistant teams has proved to be very effective help for state and municipal police, particularly when resolving long-term and enduring local issues. After completing an initial practical training, CP assistants may perform tasks of patrol officers. If there is a low-risk and low-intensity violation of public order in the location assigned to them, CP assistants are allowed to settle the matter themselves or, if needed, to ask municipal police for assistance. CP assistants also collaborate with local NGOs, therefore they are actively involved in coordination and implementation of leisure time activities designed for potentially problematic groups (particularly adolescents and youths up to 20 years of age). The primary purpose of the project is to reduce criminal activities and offences, strengthen feeling of security among citizens from socially excluded communities and diminish support of extremist groups by citizens living in surrounding areas. Its secondary objective is to stimulate and help those living in socially excluded communities to acquire new skills, to be more motivated when searching for a job and to deal effectively with their (inter)personal and family affairs.

The project is divided into several phases and its final output is the CP assistant who is capable of solving problems within his/her own community independently, responsibly and legally.

The project is divided into the following phases:
1. A detailed analysis of the socio-economic state of the location prior to the beginning of the project. It includes evaluation of current crime rate statistics and all other factors which influence the crime rate in that particular location, socio-demographic analysis, and analysis of citizens' financial situation (income level, social support dependency etc.)
2. Survey of prior interest in the position of crime prevention assistant in a given location. This phase takes place prior to the actual CP assistant selection process. In general, during this phase an intensive search inside the location in question takes place. Results of this search or fieldwork shall shed more light on the attitudes of local citizens toward the CP assistant concept and its introduction into their community. If some suitable candidates are found during this fieldwork, they are approached and (if they are interested) invited to the official selection process for the position.
3. Call for the position of Crime Prevention Assistant. The municipal police officers directly approach suitable candidates (see previous phase). Anybody else can learn about the event through media campaigns in the local press or in PR channels of local NGOs.
4. Preliminary selection process follows the state and municipal police assessment criteria. The state police assesses the candidates according to various relevant data (criminal history, current engagement etc.) and

the municipal police pre-selects them according to the nature of their offences (if relevant). Those who were considered to have a high potential to commit crime would be declined and could not proceed to the next phase.
5. Official selection process for the CP assistant positions. There are no strict demands for the level of educational attainment although those who have some education may have an advantage. The most important factors for the candidates are how well respected they are within their community, how well they know the location and how well they know the local inhabitants. The actual selection process is divided into two consecutive parts. During the first part, the selection committee interviews and assesses each candidate according to given selection criteria. The candidates with the highest assessment rank qualify for the second part of the selection process. The selection committee consists of representatives of the state and municipal police, municipal council and the Ministry of the Interior.
6. Introductory education and training of selected adepts. This is, in fact, the second part of the CP assistant selection process and, at the same time, the first part of a compulsory education and training process. It includes topics such as concept of social exclusion, nature of criminal and other offenses, extreme poverty, necessity defence, etc. At the end of this part, all candidates take the final written and oral exams. Each

of them is also assessed by a psychologist and lecturer. Successful candidates are then accepted for a position of Crime Prevention Assistant.

7. Practical training at the workplace. Newly admitted CP assistants without any experience in patrolling start working under the supervision of a police officer who is assigned to them as their mentor. This phase of the project primarily consists of directed training at the workplace, i.e. the mentor instructs the CP assistants about the multifaceted nature of their job and gives them feedback. The Mentor continuously monitors and evaluates individual progress of each CP assistant.

8. Continuing education. The aim of this important and inseparable phase of the project is to provide CP assistants with new types of knowledge, skills and experiences required by the labour market. Apart from the above-mentioned training and education, their continuing education includes topics such as social fieldwork, money owing, motivation to search for a job and educate oneself, communication skills etc. The role of the mentor in this case is to monitor continuously the CP assistants' work, to assess them and to manage their training and education needs.

9. Becoming part of the municipal police patrol unit system. At the beginning of this phase the CP assistants must be ready to start working independently in their respective socially excluded communities. They are equipped with communication technology in order to be able to report about their work and give information to the municipal police operation unit if needed. CP assistants work either independently as 2-member teams or as a joint patrol of the municipal police officer.

10. Independent work of CP assistant. This phase is a continuation of the previous one. The number of joint patrols is being gradually reduced and CP assistants start working more independently.

11. Permanent employment in the state or private sector. This is an ideal finalisation of the Crime Prevention Assistant project. The main objective of the project, as was stated before, is to enable individuals from the target group to acquire new types of qualification and to raise their chances on the job market. The projects' authors and managers expect that a minimum of 20% of CP assistants would find permanent employment after completing the CP assistant job. Their previous engagements inside the municipal police structure will give them the necessary training, education, experiences and references.

Moreover, it should be pointed out that the local citizens perceive CP assistants' work as positive and most of them claim to have very good experiences with them. Apart from their help to maintain public order, CP assistants also help with negotiations with problematic Roma families, for whom CP assistants routinely present a higher authority than any

police officer dressed in a uniform or any representative of the state authority. A significant success of CP assistants is, in fact, that they helped eliminate bullying, violent attacks and stealing among children around local elementary school buildings, where CP assistants work every day. Thanks to CP assistants and their work, the Municipal police in all participating locations solved hundreds of cases which had for long been regarded as unsolvable (illegal waste dumping in residential areas, violation of public order by a few problematic families etc.).

As mentioned above, one of the main project objectives has been to motivate people to seek jobs and to improve their lives. The fulfilment of this objective exceeded all expectations as the number of those interested in the CP assistant position was ten times higher than the number of available positions. The high number of applicants from the Roma minority completely overruled the deep-rooted prejudice that it is precisely them who do not want to work and prefer to live on social benefits. In fact, it became obvious that CP assistants have become an important part of the local security system. A growing number of people decide to contact CP assistants to ask for help instead of calling the police.

What shall not be forgotten as a crucial factor for the project's success is an exceptionally good collaboration among the parties involved. In 2011 the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic was the main guarantor of the project and the subject responsible for its financing. Since 2012 the project has been co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF), while the main guarantor remains the same. The Ministry of the Interior in collaboration with the respective municipalities provides methodical guidance during the project implementation, monitors the allocation of financial resources etc. The Ministry of Interior also plays an important role in supervising basic education, training and continuing education of CP assistants while the Police of the Czech Republic and the municipal police offered their knowledge, experience, and mentorship. Yet, from its very beginning the project has been also designed to be open to collaboration with other subjects. CP assistants thus participate in activities, such as local community centre management or local elementary school patrolling. Furthermore, while gaining more practical experience CP assistants start collaborating with various other local subjects, such as associations delivering different types of social work.

To conclude, by now CP assistants have become an essential and irreplaceable communication channel between police officers and local citizens because they are able to resolve local people's problems and to communicate these problems or other important information to the municipality council and police. The CP Assistant project currently represents one of the few effective tools of how to positively stimulate individuals who have been repeatedly in conflict with the law and for whom police did not have any efficient methods

before. The project provides employment for 50 CP assistants and 30 additional persons who are trained and registered as their possible replacement.

Nonetheless, it is important to add that the implementation of the project may face the following bottlenecks:
- It is difficult to find a relevant partner to start the project if there is no active NGO working with the local population.
- It is not always an easy matter to gain the trust of the locals, particularly those living in socially excluded communities.
- CPAs cannot always remain neutral when solving problems that concern their closest ones.
- CPAs cannot perform effectively unless they have a firm but sincere mentorship and well-defined purpose of their work.
- There cannot be any progress unless mentors fulfil their task responsibly and respectfully.

2.2.2

Project title	**DAYBREAK**
Delivering organisation	Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic
Partners involved	- Municipal Council • Police of the Czech Republic • Municipal Police - Regional Labour Office - Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic - Local community centres - Local primary and secondary schools - Various NGOs delivering social services (depending on location) - Inhabitants of socially excluded localities
Project duration	September 2009 – December 2011
Project scope	This project focused primarily on introducing changes in towns and municipalities or parts of them where the risk of inhabitants perpetrating crime or becoming victims of crime is high for economic, social or other reasons.

	The measures taken were complex and their impact was practical, visible and had both short term and long-term impact. It serves as a good example of a comprehensive community crime prevention programme
Targeted problem, target group	Target groups: • Inhabitants of socially excluded communities • The long-term unemployed or those who proved to be difficult to be employed • Members of Roma ethnic minority Targeted problems: • Lack of sanctions or appropriate responses to crime of adult members of respective communities • Lack of sanctions or appropriate responses to crime of under–aged (juvenile) offenders

	• Lack of local workplaces • Lack of working and social competencies (basic or no education) • Lack of solidarity, deeply prejudiced attitudes • Local hierarchy (personal and family hostilities) • Insufficient continuous institutional support • Poor infrastructure • Lack of sustainable strategies to solve basic community problems • High risk of racially-motivated and extremist activities
Change/progress achieved	• Establishing mutual trust on local level by giving responsibilities to people who are local residents and will not be seen as outsiders • Trained mediators succeeded in maintaining a peaceful environment which allows social and educative interventions • Successful introduction of alternative forms of punishment which prevent re-offending and give offenders other options • Substantial decrease of criminal activities typical of socially excluded areas

• Establishing mutual trust between adult mentors and the local youths which enabled them to start solving problems of frequent youth delinquency
• Higher school attendance, parents regularly visiting school meetings as their interest in their children's school results kept growing
• Noticeable improvement concerning communication between the Police and Roma representatives
• Successfully resolved (inter)personal conflicts through Roma mentors
• Fewer complaints addressed to the Police
• Growing interest of other municipalities with similar excluded outskirts to start such project

Means of achieving change / progress	The Daybreak project starts with the assumption that the situation in the socially excluded areas can be improved and that the solution to the problem can be partially borne by the local community. It comprises of a number of partial sub-projects and additional activities targeted at children and adults in order to improve their chances of decent living. (For more information, see project presentation bellow.)
Key success factors	To resolve specific problems in the community, stakeholders will have to adopt a multidisciplinary and collegial approach in which they will combine support measures (e.g. active employment policy) with prevention, education, and, if necessary, repression. (For more information, see project presentation below.)

Overall budget of the project	The Daybreak prevention project was realised in socially excluded communities in 30 towns or municipalities. As part of this project, more than 40 sub-projects received financing of 369.105 EUR. The expenses of the pilot part of the project (2009–2011) were fully covered by the Ministry of the Interior. The project will continue under the local municipality management, which means that it will be co-financed locally (10%). The Daybreak project was classified by regional and municipal governments as their priority within the crime prevention activities for 2011–12.

DAYBREAK – PROJECT PRESENTATION

This Daybreak project focuses primarily on introducing changes in towns and municipalities or parts of them where the risk of inhabitants perpetrating crime or becoming victims of crime is high for economic, social or other reasons. The measures taken were complex and their impact was practical, visible and had both short term and long-term

impact. It serves as a good example of a comprehensive community crime prevention programme. In 2009 the Daybreak project was piloted in Most (the Chanov estate). In 2010 it was extended to other socially excluded locations in the municipalities of Most, Litvínov, Děčín, Obrnice, Trmice, Kladno, Ostrava, Karviná, Havířov, and Orlová. In 2011 the project was further extended and by its finalisation at the end of that year, there were 30 towns or municipalities across the country involved in it.

In general, the Daybreak project starts with the assumption that the situation in the socially excluded areas can be improved and that the solution to the problem can be partially borne by the local community. It comprises a number of partial sub-projects and additional activities targeted at children and adults in order to improve their chances of decent living:

1. **Safe home:**
   A selected residential compound inside the socially excluded community was designed as a safer place in terms of crime, vandalism, and trespassing. The planned activities were implemented by the inhabitants themselves and with the help of the commissioned construction company. The house had a door-keeper who was in charge of supervising the order and the overall situation inside the building.

2. **Field workers – prevention of crime and extremism in conflict communities**
   Several field workers (the number depended on the size of a particular community) were trained by the Head of Municipal Police. He subsequently supervised and monitored their activities, such as encouraging citizens to report and share problems in a constructive way, establishing procedures for alternative conflict resolution, and maintaining order in public spaces. This sub-project proved to be so successful and popular that it was partly redesigned and reintroduced as a separate project called Crime Prevention Assistant, which is also included in this publication.

3. **Social exclusion and the Police**
   This sub-project objective was to train members of the State and Municipal Police. The course participants received background information about socially excluded communities, learnt how to operate in such an environment and how to contribute to the mutual communication and elimination of risks related to social exclusion.

4. **Mentor sub-project**
   This sub-project was aimed at decreasing the risk of repeated offences of the Roma by offering perpetrators an alternative form of punishment. It inevitably increased their chances of meeting the conditions of

the alternative form of punishment or measure so that they could avoid regular prison sentence. The Roma mentor acted as a mediator between the client and the judiciary. In the course of the alternative form of punishment, the mentor helped the client solve practical problems and provided assistance in job seeking. Mentors received entry-level training in which they learnt the basics of the criminal law and developed their communication and interpersonal skills. Each participant had to take a final exam. Furthermore, mentors received proficiency training the curricula of which were based on mentors' individual needs. All mentors operated under the guidance of the Probation and Mediation Service of the Czech Republic.

5. **Extended specific education, after-school activities, club-rooms etc.**
   The main intention of this sub-project was to identify pre-school, school and after-school activities that would motivate the children to attend school regularly and attract them to spend their leisure time meaningfully.
   In most locations, the school management (in primary as well as secondary schools) implemented a special teaching curriculum with extended instruction for various creative activities, such as dancing, singing, playing instruments, and drawing. This enabled children to learn to enjoy the education process, they acquired new skills, got a chance to feel successful, appreciated, and proud of their achievements. Where there was no kindergarten (in smaller communities), the schools also provided special classes for pre-schoolers. Children who attended these classes received free snacks and lunch (food was covered by the Municipality). They normally attended school accompanied by school assistants (minority representatives). With their help they learnt the Czech language in small groups, basic hygiene skills, they accustomed themselves to the school rules and, above all, they learnt to perceive school attendance as a natural and standard part of their lives. After official school hours many schools were turned into clubs operated by local community centres for children and their parents. This allowed children and their parents to freely participate in various workshops and leisure-time activities.

From the above information it can be learnt that to solve specific problems in the community, stakeholders will have to adopt a multidisciplinary and collegial approach in which they will combine support measures (e.g. active employment policy) with prevention, education, and, if necessary, repression. The following are tools or measures that proved to be the key success factors of various sub-projects and the Daybreak project as whole:

- Involvement of the inhabitants in the renewal of their housing (under expert supervision) proved useful. Such involvement develops bonds between the inhabitants and houses ensuring better care afterwards.
- A caretaker supervises the house and its vicinity. Ideally, he or she is a widely recognized personality, serving as intermediary between tenants and property owner.
- Education sub-programme for adults, including activities such as functional literacy development courses, incentive-oriented courses are provided by subjects (NGO etc.) who maintain direct contact with respective localities.
- Introducing publicly beneficial work or socially useful jobs helps establish (or maintain) basic work habits, improves Roma's status in the eyes of public, and (in some cases) provides steady income.
- Educating sub-programme for children, which provides assistance to primary school pupils ensuring that they complete the compulsory education program and motivates children/teenagers to attain professional skills rather than rely on welfare benefits.
- Pre-school sub-programme, which helps children to become accustomed to a school environment and regime. The school maintains closer contact with families of pre-school children, the school and parents gradually get acquainted and mutual trust is built. The work of a teacher's assistant significantly improves school attendance and achievements of pupils. The teacher's assistant builds and reinforces Roma children's and parents' trust in the school and prevents misunderstandings between a family and school.
- The teacher's assistant is an expert familiarized with the environment from which the children come, and is aware of specific behavioural and habitual differences which he or she does not take as insolence, discourtesy or negligence. He or she is able to motivate others to adjust their behaviours.
- Schools clubs and other after school activities become an integral part of the everyday life of families. They increase family members' motivation to learn and allow participation of parents in school operation.
- Utilization of school premises: Children and parents from a locality perceive their school as an institution committed to helping them.
- As a part of the crime prevention program, the police assistants develop expert capabilities to solve the problem of social exclusion from the criminality perspective. Moreover, inhabitants of the locality feel safer provided that mutually positive relationship has been built.
- Various prevention activities that help participants develop new social competencies, share information, learn, etc.
- Roma mentors are crucial for helping to avoid prison sentences for persons who have been offered an alternative form of punishment but failed to comply with the alternative punishment conditions.

- Community centres are important for prevention of undesirable phenomena among children and youths and to improve their social competencies.

In 2009 the Daybreak project was selected as an example of best practice for the IPACY project (2010–2011, Implementing Preventive Actions for Children and Youth), the aim of which was to build networks, identify good practices and help early prevention structures in several European countries. The project was financially supported from the Prevention of and Fight against Crime Programme and its outcome was a manual for early prevention structures, listing possible pitfalls and how to avoid them, good methods and resources that can be used, and giving step-by-step advice to build early prevention structures.

2.2.3

Project title	MEETING WITH CITIZENS
Delivering organisation	• Police Headquarters of the Moravian-Sileasian Region, Police of the Czech Republic • Municipal Police
Partners involved	• Police of the Czech Republic • Municipal Police • Municipal Councils or official local governments of particular locations' authorities • Local licensing • Local community spaces • Inhabitants of relevant town or city quarters
Project duration	September 2008 (pilot phase) September 2008 – (ongoing)
Project scope	Multiple locations in the Moravian-Sileasian Region
Targeted problem, target group	Target group: • Inhabitants of relevant communities in conflict Targeted problems: The following is the list of some of the major problems that were tackled and solved in all respective locations: • drug use among youth • crimes against elderly • general crime activities of minors • ethnic tensions • binge drinking • domestic violence • general violating of public order • petty theft • bullying
Change/progress achieved	• Dialogue between police, the public and local government representatives takes an innovative form of so called face-to-face approach and is natural, professionally conducted and empathic • Meetings with the active participation of all involved parties started to be perceived as an essential component of the direct democracy on local level • Targeted problems were not only discussed, but also resolved • Citizens started to perceive police officers as those who are "there" primarily for them

Means of achieving change / progress	• The police thoroughly set up a date, prepared printed flyers, distributed them to all citizens living in that quarter, informed the local media, and organized all that was necessary for the meeting to happen. • Media presence indicates that there is a general interest in local issues and encourages people to believe things will indeed change after the meeting.
Key success factors	• Identifying community problems and providing community solutions and police strategies for them so as to encourage the community to become partners in controlling and preventing crime • Defining specific, measurable, and attainable goals set for a given period, and tracking such data over time to measure change • Creating more friendly relations between police and citizens and between citizens themselves

	• Implementing general rules while adding distinct characteristics not only to everyday police practice, but also to the lives of local citizens • Awareness of the Police that they can only justify their own future meaningful involvement on local level if they keep improving a close and collaborative relationship with the local citizens
Overall budget of the project	As stated before, the project is based on the will and wish of municipal police and the local government to resolve local inhabitants' problems with the help of those who are involved, i.e. local inhabitants themselves. All external partners of the project made an agreement to provide spaces and others assistance for free. There are no additional costs because the rest of activities are inseparable part of the local governments' agendas.

MEETING WITH CITIZENS – PROJECT PRESENTATION

The main purpose of communication between the police and the public lies in ensuring security and fighting crime. Ability to communicate in an effective and constructive manner belongs among the most crucial objectives to reach the given goals. Public opinion is an opinion about matters that are of public interest and which has a good chance of winning over other arguments. For this reason, communicating with the public has a significantly impact on public opinion about the work of the police. A positive public opinion about the state police, i.e. satisfaction on the part of the citizens and trust in the police's professional conduct, is one of the conditions for the police to fulfil its legal duties. The primary objective of the project is to search for a suitable form of communication which would lead to a permanent, effective and open dialogue, to a more profound collaboration between police and its partners, positive perception of the work of the police and its quality. All this would be based on the principles of the Community Policing philosophy.

The project started in Karviná in 2008 when the Municipal Police director and the Preventive Information Service employees decided to tackle the problem between the majority of denizens and a minority of socially inadaptable residents in a specific quarter of Havirov. This could only happen with the help of CP proactive strategies and relevant prevention experience. The conflict between the two groups was connected to the fact that socially vulnerable citizens living in the nearby regional capital city were offered cheaper accommodation in that particular Havirov suburb in exchange for their flats, for which they could no longer afford to pay the rent. This offer was gratefully accepted by these citizens who then moved to the suburb, which was up to that point inhabited exclusively by the local denizens. The inherently different way of life of the newcomers (late night life, frequent noise, leaving rubbish in public places, violating traffic regulations, petty crime such as theft and robbery) soon led to conflicts with the fairly conservative denizens. The Municipal Police director then visited the Mayor of Havirov to explain the problem to him and to propose an unprecedented revolutionary way of solving the problem. That solution was the Meeting with Citizens project, which was based on the principle of the Community Policing (CP) philosophy.

One of the primary challenges of the project was to introduce dialogues that would be natural, professionally conducted and empathic. The Police of the Karvina region (North Moravia), as one of the main regional partners of the project, thus attempted to be open, communicative and transparent toward "its" citizens. Reciprocally, the citizens themselves tried to understand their own responsibility for their own safety, their property and health.

Moreover, the dialogue between police, the public and the local government took an innovative form of so called face-to-face approach. This form has proved to be of immense help when all parties involved try to find particular solutions for particular problems on local level. The entire dialogue with the police therefore relied on the active participation of the public (members of a particular local community) and representatives of particular local governments.

As was stated before, the genesis of the project started in 2008. The pilot meeting with the citizens of the community in conflict took place in a suburb of Karvina. This location has a characteristic mix of denizens and socially inadaptable inhabitants. This fact presents problems for their mutual co-existence. During the meetings, police had to deal with specific problems and suggested solutions for them. Moreover, the police personally introduced their local officers serving in this particular suburb to everybody. Further meetings of similar kind took place in all problematic locations of that municipality. These locations were selected according to specific criteria (crime rate etc.) The following example of one meeting with citizens in Karvina attended by the author of this text in July 2011 suitably describes the general means of achieving progress:

Since the mayor of Karvina was very keen on CP projects in general and Meeting with Citizens in particular, he decided to support the project and allowed the police to use the gym inside the local elementary school building for the meeting. The police thus set a suitable date, printed flyers, distributed them to all citizens living in that quarter, informed the local media, and organized all that was necessary for the meeting to happen. The working title of the session was Meeting with Citizens or How to Solve Problems on Local Level.

The meeting was attended by the following invited members of the police:

• Municipal Police director, who guaranteed a transparent engagement by the police top management. Also, the Municipal Police director has a position within the Municipal Police system equivalent to the Mayor of the town. His presence thus represents a serious and sincere interest by the state police to solve citizens' problems.
• Head of the local police unit, who is directly responsible for all police officers working in a given location. He was therefore able to answer questions addressing very specific issues and to directly react to the criticism of police work when it came to concrete matters. Moreover, as their superior officer, he could also guarantee implementation of suggested solutions by local police officers.
• Local police officer, who is the one who works in a problematic location on an everyday basis, thus his presence during the meeting was crucial. He had to introduce him/herself to all citizens who were present during

the meeting in order for them to know who they could contact or speak to at the moment when any problem occurred.

- Traffic police officer, who had an important role during the meeting when it came to questions of safety and continuity of the traffic flow and of adjusting the traffic signs and signals in a given location.
- Police spokesperson, who acted as a moderator because of his/her experience in structuring, timing and overall dynamics of the negotiation process. He/she represented a neutral party and used various techniques to open or improve dialogue between disputing parties and worked to help the parties reach an agreement (with concrete effects) on the disputed matters.

The local government was represented by the Mayor of Karviná, head of the Municipal Police and the head of the Housing and Accommodation Department of the Town Hall. The invited guest was the owner of the houses in the conflict location who initialized the moving of socially vulnerable citizens to the location inhabited solely by denizens. The meeting was attended by approximately 170 local citizens from different social classes. The meeting also attracted the attention of different types of media, thus the story of the innovative face-to-face approached described above reached the TV screens or pages of the local and regional newspapers. The media reactions as well as the reactions of those who participated in the first meeting proved that the project was a successful attempt to begin a permanent and open dialogue and more effective collaboration between the police, local authorities and citizens.

When returning to the general conception of the project, it is important to point out that, as in many other countries, CP in the Czech Republic promotes organizational strategies (which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques) to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues. In other words, the goal of CP in the Czech Republic is to identify community problems and provide community solutions and police strategies for them so as to encourage the community to become partners in controlling and preventing crime. Still, measuring the effectiveness of CP is not a simple matter of implementing a given strategy. It involves defining specific, measurable, and attainable goals set for a given period, and tracking that data over time to measure change. CP thus calls for a more sophisticated approach to evaluation – one that looks at how feedback information is used, not only how it measures outcomes.

The Meeting with Citizens project has continued on and by now the local police resolve most of the local problems as successfully as when the meeting took place for the first time. The structure of the meetings still remains the same and the length varies as it depends on the type of problems to be solved and on the number of citizens and their active

engagement in the discussion. Each new meeting with citizens proves that the collaboration between the police and the citizens has been markedly improving. The police are being very active to react to citizens' incentives, which brings satisfaction to all parties involved and helps to create more friendly relations between police and citizens and between citizens themselves.

Since 2008 the project Meeting with Citizens has gone through a four-year period of many positive experiences and it still successfully continues its existence in the Karviná region. There are plans to implement it soon in new regions in the Czech Republic. Based on those previous experiences, the project has been, compared to the first piloted meeting in Karvina, expanded and improved. The reaction of the police to the problems is now being monitored and evaluated. Based on these evaluations, it can be concluded that in all locations where the meeting took place the situation considerably improved: Crime rates decreased and the public respect for the police work noticeably increased.

Furthermore, the above-described CP practice implemented in the Meeting with Citizens project can be seen as an example of a very new approach of the Czech police, which was introduced on a local level in a specifically selected region and which was later on launched all over the country. The author of the text tried to describe the origin and the background of the implementation process. Although one

can find similar examples in other CP experienced countries, there are always very distinctive features that must be taken into account in every particular country, region or community. The project thus became valuable because its authors succeeded in implementing general rules while adding distinct characteristics not only in everyday police practice, but also in the lives of many citizens in the Czech Republic.

With regard to this project it is also important to stress that the police must be aware of the fact that they can only justify their own future meaningful involvement on a local level if they keep improving a close and collaborative relationship with the local citizens. One of the sources of inspiration to succeed in this has become so called problem-oriented policing (POP). According to this model, incidents that come to the attention of the police are only symptoms of deeper problems. To become more effective, police must seek to address the underlying conditions of crime, rather than reacting to incidents on an individual basis. Although CP and POP are different models of policing, they are not mutually exclusive and can easily coexist side by side. POP emphasizes the importance of new responses and strategies that are preventive in nature, it does not rely exclusively on law-enforcement and engages other public agencies, the community and the private sector when their involvement has the potential to contribute to the reduction of the problem. This was, in fact, a starting point of Meeting with Citizens project which has

been very successful and positively perceived so far not only by the members of local authorities, but also by the citizens.

The project has continued until now in all original locations. All given tasks are being continuously accomplished. Each new meeting with citizens proves that collaboration between police and the citizens has been markedly improving. Police is appreciated for being very active in reacting to citizens' incentives, which brings satisfaction for all involved parties and helps to create more friendly relations between police and citizens and between citizens themselves.

The project Meeting with Citizens was awarded the second place in the national competition of the best police projects organized by the Police Presidium called The Best Practice Award 2008. One year later it was awarded the third position in the national round of the competition called European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA). Moreover, in 2010 the police activity inspired by Meeting with Citizens became one of the four basic evaluation criteria and an example of good practice for all police units managed within the Czech Regional Police Directorates.

HUNGARY
3.1 INTRODUCTION

Hungary has a population of 10 million people (2011). The country is 93.000 sq kms, its capital is Budapest, which straddles the Danube River. Its main religion is Christianity, but public life is secularized. Hungary is a landlocked, continental country, home to Lake Balaton, the largest lake in central Europe, and to a large number of spa towns and hot springs. The Hungarian language is one of the few in Europe that do not belong to the Indo-European language family.

The pattern of the country's accession to International Organizations tracks the country's step-by-step reintegration to Europe after the end of the Soviet occupation of 1945. Hungary has been a member of the United Nations since 1955 and the Council of Europe since 1990. Hungary has been in the OECD since 1996 and a full member of NATO since 1999.
The accession to the European Union took place in May 2004.

The life expectancy at birth in Hungary is 71 years for men and 78 years for women, according to UN figures, while the GNI per capita is 12.850 USD according to the World Bank's statistics. Starting as early as 2000, the national growth-rate has been declining and threatens to turn into recession after 2010.

After the change of regimes and the fall of the hegemonic rule of the Communist Party in 1989, Hungary had to face particularly rapid and radical political, social and economic changes. This transformation from a monolithic to a pluralistic model of society affected the institutions of the political and legal system, the economy, the cultural and intellectual life, international relations and of course the everyday lives of citizens. Due to constant unthrifty budget policies and its state debt, Hungary is one of the main victims of the global economic crisis, which has affected the daily lives of a large number of its inhabitants.

A touch of nostalgia is sensible for the years of the late Kadar Regime. In 2010, a right wing central conservative party gained more than two-thirds majority in the Parliament, supposedly reflecting citizens' wish for a marked change in politics. This landslide election victory allowed the introduction of a new constitution and new election law and many others measures that need two thirds of the MPs' votes.

The history – an ambiguous living heritage
The history of Hungary is the story of seeking alliance with and independence from major rulers of Central Europe (Austria, Germany), of the Balkan (the Ottoman Empire) and Russia/The Soviet Union from the East. The redrawing of the European borders after World War I resulted in the loss of two thirds of the country's territory and left about five

million ethnic Hungarians living in neighbouring countries. The issue has remained sensitive and has had an impact on both foreign policy and internal affairs since then.[16]

Presently, the large majority of inhabitants are Hungarians, but that does not mean that Hungary was not a multicultural country. According to the results of 2011 census, 3,17% of the country's population expressed their affiliation with a national or ethnic minority.[17] Romany people are the largest, i.e. most populous minority in Hungary, although the Romany were not considered to be a people constituting a nation until as late as 1993. Then, among the 13 national minorities, distinguished as the only ethnic minority, the Roma were granted the right to form local minority governments.[18]

Hungarians are not particularly rejoiced over "the other". By the EUROBAROMETER survey, 32% of the Hungarian people agreed that "immigrants are harmful" in 2005, while in 2011, there were 1.211 cases of the ombudsman regarding the rights of national and ethnic minorities. Some minorities are more welcome and accepted than others due to historic, cultural and economic reasons.

A country split into two parts
The growing uncertainty in society and the recent economic crisis has brought citizens' prejudices against minorities (and other vulnerable groups) to the surface. The typical issues connected to Roma people are twofold: Some of the

difficulties are directly related to structural and economic issues such as long-term unemployment, poor living conditions and segregated education, while others are due to interethnic or intercultural tensions, such as discrimination, hate speeches and even hate crimes and an unprecedented series of racist murders in 2009, when over the course of a little more than a year, six Roma people died as a result of the nine criminal acts under indictment. The case shook up Hungarian and international public as well:

"These problems, which were swept under the carpet for years, must be resolved. The Hungarians and the Roma do not face separate futures: Their future must be a joint one, and they must share responsibility for it."[19]

"The Roma have become the target of an organized racist violence which feeds on political populism, verbal expressions of hatred, and media hogwash, making Roma the scapegoats for larger social problems."[20]

In an infamous case in 2011, the public order of the North-eastern village of Gyöngyöspata was disturbed by groups sympathizing with the ideology of an extreme-right organization called Magyar Gárda (Hungarian Guard). The mission of the previously disbanded paramilitary organization is to take over the tasks of police of maintaining law and order against Roma groups and to protest against Roma people living in villages. After investigating the case, the Minority Ombuds-

[16] See at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1049641.stm.

[17] See at http://www.ksh.hu/nepszamlalas/tablak_teruleti_00.

[18] Act LXXVII of 1993 on the Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities.

[19] Mária Silkó Szurmainé, head of department at the Hungarian National Resources Ministry.

[20] Vladimír Špidla, then Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the Czech Republic

man reported that neither the local, nor the relevant national policies have had an adequate response to the problems aggravated by the financial and economic crisis and pointed out legislative and law enforcement deficiencies and the missing and/or inadequate mediation procedures of state and local authorities. The Ombudsman also emphasized his concern that after the conflict, the situation was still not resolved and external help was needed to ease the tensions and fears and to restore peace and tranquillity in the village and the country, which had "split into two parts".[21]

Characterization

Along with the major trends mentioned above, the following characteristics, I believe, have implications for the formation and management of community conflicts in Hungary in the 2010's. While some of these may be more typical of Hungarian social development than the social development of other CEE countries, a scent of similarities or variations may always hang around in the region, especially when countries or regions are concerned which were formerly part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

A strong ideological division froze into a two-pole system. Citizens and civic groups are highly affected by political issues. Hungarian public life is seriously struck by an ideological division, which often impedes the ability of the groups to cooperate and compromise when it comes to conflict management.

Conflicts are ethnicized/culturalized by public discourses broadcast by public figures and the media. For everyday people, it is problematic or impossible to see behind the hegemonic interpretations, which mask the actual local fault lines. Following the introduction of the previously mentioned Minority Law in 1993, ethnic businesses flourished, which fuelled the mistrust in competent and genuine representation of ethnic minorities, especially of the Roma. As Mária Herczog suggests "it is essential that the media– having a significant impact on shaping public opinion – shift from the biased coverage of criminal offences that concentrates primarily on the scandalous aspects of crimes." Instead, it could inform the general public about the more complex issues behind the phenomena of crime.

Sometimes conflicts are held to be risky to unveil and to talk about. Stakeholders often feel uncomfortable or embarrassed to open up about a conflict. "The least said, the soonest mended." However, I believe a strategy of covering up conflicts until they escalate and burst out prevents efficient and non-violent management and provokes ad-hoc, authoritarian or unsustainable short-term "solutions".

Individual coping strategies countervail community solutions and solidarity. The level of social participation and the significance of communities have decreased dramatically, which implicates a serious decline in relevant competences,

[21] Prof. Dr. Máté Szabó, Parliamentary Commissioner of Fundamental Rights, Hungary: Presentation at the 10th World Conference of the International Ombudsman Institute, 11-16 November 2012 in Wellington.

such as empathy, tolerance and cooperation, and retards the development of the skills of representation, advocacy, cooperation and joint action for a common goal.

Malcontent and pessimism. The figures seem to reinforce the widespread stereotypes about the pessimism of Hungarians. For example, the 2006 Eurobarometer survey in Hungary showed that only half of the people interviewed said that they were satisfied in general with their lives. An explanation, in the words of anthropologist Nancy Ries, is that "powerlessness in Hungary is romanticized through talk about suffering. Most Hungarians enjoy talking about historical tragedies: the country is depicted as victimized by unfair neighbours. (...) litanies of suffering have become "the dominant mode of public discourse" after the end of Communism".

Lack of trust and the democratic deficit. A dependent/paternalistic but at the same time, suspicious and sly attitude persists in the relations between the elite and the "people". This attitude undermines the operation of the institutions from the grass-root level through to the Parliament, the national top level of representative democracy, and to the European level. It did not matter that following the political transition in 1989 the democratic multi-party system and its institutions became established and their operation strengthened. In parallel with this process people sensed that they had little opportunity to participate in the management of the country's affairs. The community is apathetic to the democratic institutions.

The guiding principle of subsidiarity is difficult to put into practice. Due to the lack of practice with the implementation of participatory planning processes, the development conceptions of main local stakeholders (local governments, local NGOs and SMEs) are too often far from being synergic or are even conflicting.

The new solitude. Generally, direct personal contacts in localities and neighbourhoods have loosened and thinned out due to multiple factors, amplifying one another's effects. Due to the development of transportation, growing centralization of employment, and an increasing demand for mobility, people spend more time away from 'home", which weakens local attachments, especially in big cities. Real, locality-based connections shift to cyber-space: We may have hundreds of friends from all around the world on the internet, receiving texts, emails, facebook and twitter posts, but fewer and fewer real-life connections.

Increase of uncertainty, decrease of feeling safe. Anomy. Hungary, similarly to all other countries in Central and Eastern Europe had to deal with a dramatic growth of crime after the transition, but crime rates have been stagnating since then.[22] In particular the incidence of traditional crimes such as crimes against property and violence, almost doubled at the beginning of the transition period. Besides relative deprivation, some of the reasons are related the state of anomy in the society. According to another survey conducted in

[22] Albrecht, H-J. (1999) Countries in Transition: Effects of Political, Social and Economic Change on Crime and Criminal Justice – Sanctions and Their Implementation, European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law and Criminal Justice, 7 (4), 448-479.

2005, the main motivation for maintaining a law-abiding life is mainly the fear of punishment rather than the interests of the community or a sense of social operation.[23]

Supporting factors to alternative management of community conflicts

NGOs. There are over 40,000 NGOs in Hungary and a few thousand of them work in the field of local development. NGOs can add value to seeking new solutions to social challenges because they are close to the problems (or are able to get close to them) and because, by nature, they are flexible enough legally to carry out experiments and pilot programmes to test new methodologies and approaches. Many NGOs show proficiency and expertise in their respective fields needed to plan and implement innovation for the benefit of the whole society.

The ethos of voluntary work has risen in our country overcoming suspicions inherited from the socialist regime and recognising the indirect mutual benefits of offering voluntary work, frequently within and for the local community. It has an added value for the receiving organizations but also in the personal and the professional lives of most volunteers. Taking up voluntary work regularly or occasionally enhances social cohesion, decreases the risk of exclusion and it is a good form of participation in community life, thus strengthening local networks that allow the efficient management of community conflicts.

Funds are available for programmes meant to forward inclusion and strengthen social cohesion, and indirectly, to prevent the escalation of local social conflicts, especially in unprivileged, poverty stricken regions of the country. In partnership, it is often possible to find resources for a well-established consortium to implement social development projects, with a considerable human capacity enhancing element included, if needed. Although building a strong local partnership and turning proposals into successful projects may take a few years to learn, the results will ripen after a few years, as the second case study exemplifies.

Partnerships. If the cooperation between stakeholders from different sectors of the society is realized, the efficiency of community conflict management increases. Learning to facilitate such local partnerships is often learning by doing, and it is often strongly dependent on the persons in key position. Thus, one or two charismatic and devoted key figures can – yes, they can – induce a shift in local development processes, for the better, but also for the worse, of course.

Training. Mediators, facilitators and community development practitioners have been trained on many different levels in recent years in Hungary: from 30 hours' vocational training in the Civil College to the 120 hour course of complementary job training and to postgraduate courses in Budapest, Miskolc or Gödöllő. Thus, professionals and their emerging organizations and networks have penetrat-

[23] Are the Hungarians law-abiding? http://www.median.hu/object.a8a85ac1-413b-43b6-ace2-f54e2fa17e50.ivy

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ed several layers of society (e.g. law, public education, local governments, Roma organizations, Universities, helping professions, cultural houses and in regional development/ urban regeneration).

The codification of the act on mediation and alternative dispute resolution (Hungarian Mediation Act, 2002), both in civil cases and in criminal acts. The Act on Mediation contains the basic principles of mediation such as confidentiality, impartiality, interest-based negotiation, open communication and trust. Every year more and more conflicts (civil and criminal cases) are referred to alternative dispute resolution, and the compliance rate is high. Practitioners and researchers are committed to the development, feedback and practical training, theoretical modelling and propagation of alternative conflict resolution.

Learning. Hundreds of organizations and dozens of networks operate in the field of social development. Many of them are learning organizations, open to new perspectives and pay-off methods to promote social change. Knowing the complexity of the field, and being sensitive to tangible results, there is a growing number of people ready for initiatives (events, publications, web-sites and other media) endeavouring to share and disseminate good practices from Hungary or from anywhere in the world.

Conclusion

To conclude, the risk of social conflicts has multiplied, while the factors of resistance have been weakened or eliminated during the two decades of the social and economic transition. Thus, "communities" are not safe and peaceful places any more either in the local sense or in the societal sense. Changes put an end to the era of the all-positive community notion, which used to imply support, solidarity and homeliness. Nowadays the situation is more complex, likely to bear conflicts of interests and lifestyles and differences: colliding perspectives and realities.

We believe what has just melted away is an ideologically promoted notion, an illusion of a romantic, all-nice-and-good community. What remains is a blank space... which first of all shall be filled with... trust.

The current situation leaves us with the challenge to re-create the sense of community as a functioning reflective space, where differences can be articulated, negotiated and resolved. A resilient local support net should be woven by communication and participation from threads of personal relations between local citizens, initiatives of civil society organizations, services of local institutions and plans and decisions of local governments. According to Mary E. Clark[24] social change requires participation in face-to-face conversation at every level.

[24] Symptoms of Cultural Pathologies: A Hypothesis in Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: Integration and Application, 43., 52-53, cited by Judit Révész in her article Mediation without Trust at http://www.mediate.com/articles/reveszj1.cfm

Community conflicts would be appreciated as an opportunity to understand current practices and an opportunity to change malfunctioning social patterns on the concrete level. Long concealment of tensions and harm will never be effective; all stakeholders, both victims and offenders will suffer and be injured in the long run.

2. Five good practices of community conflict management

The following collection of case studies is a set of good practices in community conflict management as the term was defined in the Introduction. Some of the selected project interventions have been completed, others have moved forward into the next phase, and one is intentionally ongoing. Long-term effects are difficult to estimate in all cases, because communities are not laboratories: There are always other, significant influences acting on them (as I outlined some of the challenges and positive factors above).

The five selected cases differ in several variables: the locality (urban or rural), the key factors of the conflict (ethnic, criminal, political, governance), the time-scale of the project (from a few days to several years), and the main focus and tools of the methodology (social work, facilitation, community development, creative techniques). The projects also vary with respect to the initiators, the resources used and the outcomes.

However, they share a set of basic principles, namely they depart from local needs and build on local resources in an empowering way, fostering skills and motivations to communicate and participate. Thus, they all try to work constructively with the parties in conflict and with the community, e.g. building skills at the same time, so that the community shall be better able to resolve conflicts emerging in the future, not just the actual ones.

Finally, I believe, not just successes but also failures provide good opportunities to analyze and learn from. This is why the rationale behind this selection is to offer a diverse selection of brave and authentic initiatives that have produced some results rather than the intention to find perfect projects (which often exist only in the documentations). It was not at all an easy task to decide which project to include. Together with the ones not selected here, the new practices this work will inspire shall, I hope, contribute to the next, corpulent document More Good Practices on Community Conflict Resolution.

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3.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS
3.2.1

Project title	**AVASI KÖZÖSSÉGEK / COMMUNITIES OF AVAS NEIGHBOURHOOD**
Delivering organisation	Dialog Association/NGO
Partners involved	Jesuit Grammar School / Jezsuita Gimnázium Schools and institutions of Avas neighbourhood
Project duration	February 2009 – December 2011
Project scope	Avas, an extensive housing estate, a district of the city Miskolc (Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County)
Targeted problem, target group	Avas is the "biggest jungle of concrete in Hungary" of dramatically declining/deteriorating reputation. 40.000 people live here in block house estates (built in three phases between 1973 and 1982). The whole population of the area is targeted. Later a hassled block in Avas II, between Szilvás street and Sályi István street was selected for a pilot intervention.
Change/progress achieved	• 50 leaders of prominent local stakeholders agreed to join forces in Communities of Avas, and operate an information and support network of local institutions. • An active group of young Volunteers engaged in "Ifi Műhely", champions of community development efforts in Avas. • Several community programmes and a participatory planning initiative took place for the benefit of the whole neighbourhood, investigating the focus of establishing new community places. • Planning and launching several new development projects and initiatives for the benefit of the whole community, responsible for most of the severe conflicts in the neighbourhoods. • Initiating and/or accepting several development programmes in the interest of prevention and conflict transformation.

Means of achieving change / progress	• In a passive, unstructured, powerless community, first building trust and adequate communication channels among local players (stakeholders) in order to prepare the ground for dialogue. • Organising small-scale programmes to try and practice cooperation. • Constantly looking for and encouraging leadership, and being open to pass it on at the right moment. • Planning together with all possible stakeholders and representatives of local population, in order to tap into local thoughts, needs and intentions.
Key success factors	• Insisting on knowing well the locality, community, conflict and getting stakeholders to know these even better. • Getting people get to know each other through conversations about the neighbourhood. • Building on the power of volunteers and mobilising local resources.

	• A long-term intervention, consisting of phases of various intensity, and assuring partners that they can take their time. • Working in synchrony with different segments of the community, but bridging them from time to time, in order to make connections, share information, learn from others' perspectives, and work further on synergy. • When time is ripe for unfolding intervention ideas / development projects, initiators should be given as much support and encouragement as possible.
Limits/risks/ potentials	Sustainability of motivation, interest and level of participation Remaining open to new members Readiness and preparedness to inspire and attract development funds Preparedness for articulating and advocating special interests

Overall budget of the project	2009–2011 (3 years) **Avas Communities** – no grants, but 240 hours of volunteer effort each year (10 hours/months by two persons) **Juvenile Workshop** – 600.000 HUF grant for the action day and 384 hours of volunteer effort each year (4 hours/week by two persons) **Community Planning** – 600.000 HUF grants + 240 hours of volunteer effort each year (10 hours/months for two persons)

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1. Presentation of the problem,

The "Avas" is an infamous block-house area in the city of Miskolc. Its colloquial name, the "biggest jungle of concrete in Hungary" is indicative of the dramatically declining/deteriorating reputation of the area. 40.000 people live here in block house estates (built in three phases between 1973 and 1982). The prices of property steadily fall (far beyond national tendencies), along with the well-being of the tenants.

The area's reputation dramatically decreased due the broadly mediatised scandal in 2008/2009 on the effects of "immigration" of 200-300 families to the Avas, mostly Roma. The families had been made to move to the Avas from the slums of nearby villages through the infamous abuse of the "Fészekrakó" (NESTBUILDING) programme. In fact, smart lawyers had been striking up illegal deals with the beneficiaries of national aid programme meant to provide financial help for families to build or purchase their own homes, resulting in an obligate and unsustainable existence of marginalized people provoking blame and anger from the side of troubled neighbours, fuming with racism, on top.

The block houses of the Avas were built for the working class or lower middle class people, and as start-up families' first homes. Originally, the local authority rented out the flats but later, by 1989, most of the tenants could buy the property. There are only a few quality common/community places where people can meet, indoors or outdoors. One would sense a general malaise: the insecure feelings and the frustration of immobility grows steadily in the community, together with the maintenance costs, the household bills, and the negative general morale of recession and corruption – one should consider the fact that the Region of Eastern Hungary is already associated with unemployment, crime and poverty, steeped in prejudice. A general nationwide sentiment associates the city of Miskolc with a constant threat/presence of hidden and open conflicts between the majority and the Roma minority.

What is the characteristic of Avas? What kind of people live in this area? We need to have in-depth understanding of the situation so that we can estimate the challenges, the future conflicts and the solutions. The number of inhabitants of the Avas could make up a small town. They are constantly threatened by the risks of impoverishment and unemployment (there is an especially high unemployment rate for young people). Previously, the majority of the people living in the Avas had been factory workers most of whom retired early typically due to impairment of health, while the younger generation lost their jobs and became unemployed. The dated architectural solution of the blocks and the disproportionate overhead costs of centralized services (heating, hot water, maintenance) make it impossible, or at least extremely difficult for local residents, both for the inactive and those having work, to make an acceptable daily living or build secure savings.

2. Project description

The AVAS Communities development project is led by the Dialog Association for the Communities[25] a Hungarian non-profit membership organisation with a 10-year-long history. The association's territory of work covers North-East Hungary, focusing primarily on Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. Since its formation, the multiprofessional team has worked with several local communities in the region, mostly in rural areas: in small villages, such as Királd, Telkibánya, Gönc, Hidasnémeti. But it is not only rural areas where the Dialog Association intervenes.

The mission of the Dialog organisation highlights the importance of strengthening local capacities (not just working for, but working together with the community) – especially in the areas of advocacy, the building of local community and creating the platforms of independent local media. They apply community development methodology, namely working together with the local community to understand the local needs and to exploit a broad variety of local capital: human, societal and natural resources. Amongst the members of the organisation, there are professionals of cultural, ecological, social and economic fields, together with champions and local leaders of former intervention programmes in the region.

What is the conflict? There are possible and actual conflicts everywhere. The main challenge is to pick the point and the scope of the intervention appropriately. A triangle of (1) professional (and ethical) thinking, (2) understanding of the context and (3) knowledge of the intervening organisation's own goals and capacities defines the formula for emerging intervention strategies.

Here in Avas, Miskolc, the practitioners of Dialog Association took the following strategic decision: They take the lead as initiators of a broad-ranging, long-term social-development intervention. At the starting point, in fact, it was not at all a project: There were neither funding nor time constraints, thus it all started as a professional initiative endeavouring to

react to expressed needs. It is best to view the intervention at Avas as a process, which, as it will be described later, yielded several projects and project-like initiatives as its output. Thus, the project started as the initiative of a local prestigious faith-based high-school, maintained by the Jesuit Order. An innovative and influential leader had been seeking solutions to the problems of how the school, standing in the Avas as an island, could be better integrated into the district, how its high and closed walls could be opened – in the light of the slogan of the school saying "The mission in our pedagogy is the man who live for others". It is important, that the area of the "Jezsu", that is how the elite high schools is called colloquially, is not just an outstanding commanding block on the top of the district; it is also surrounded by a wonderful green park with orderly facilities. For the leader and "the Jesuits", it seemed worth investigating if and how this resource may contribute to the well-being of people beyond the walls of the high school. After contacting the Dialog Association, the cooperation started between the leaders of the two organizations – it was no picnic at the beginning, because of the differences of background and organization culture etc. After a while, mutual respect and unceasing communication yielded its fruits: the parties agreed to launch the Juvenile Workshop, where students of the high school learned and acted together with other young people from the district. The Jesuits' call, and this initial seed partnership had provided a solid base and legitimacy for the professionals to enter the district as actors in the intervention programme.

The Dialog association tailored the interventions in line with a two-fold strategic goals: (1) to assess, understand and mirror the local needs in a complex way, and (2) to build and/or mobilise a critical mass of local capacity, which can be, and is going to be able to address the challenges of community needs, as a community – in accordance with the principles of community development. The improvement of information flow, encouragement of the cooperation of local stakeholder institutions, and the issue of the unavailability of community sites were the challenges that the Dialog Association deemed immediately addressable in connection with the challenges on the Avas. Consequently, these served as a reasonable entering point for the intended intervention.

3. Conflict resolution elements of the projects

Three years of persistent work has yielded its results in the field. It is important to distinguish the immediate direct outputs from the effects/benefits of the process and to see how the accomplishment of one phase generated new initiatives for the future. The direct outputs resulting from the Association's initiative:

AVASI KÖZÖSSÉGEK/AVAS COMMUNITIES:

An informal network, an alliance of more than fifty prominent local stakeholders was formed, who agreed to join forces in an established informal information network,

and to operate an information and support system of local stakeholder institutions, such as churches, schools, private businesses, cultural institutions run by local government, the police, vigilante organizations and NGOs. It was never easy to maintain every partner's commitment to participation in the first year, but the Dialog Association prevented mass dropping out by sending out regular memos, operating the e-mail lists and by a generally supportive leadership style.

The member institutions provided lots of support for each other and organized community activities arranging the supply of everything from tables and chairs to photocopies, rooms for meetings, information, prizes, security services, distribution of posters and even small cash donations when needed. Instead of feeling uprooted, active members learnt to feel part of something: better informed, more capable of receiving and giving help, and an empowering experience of counting on one another. Finally, I must note that the significant group of passive members of the network are also a standby capacity, while the following Juvenile Workshop also identifies with the visions of the project.

IFI MŰHELY/JUVENILE WORKSHOP:

Ifi Műhely/Juvenile Workshop is a diverse and active group of young volunteers aged 15-30 years, the young champions of community development efforts in Avas. Its members were recruited from the Jesuit Grammar School and from other local schools. Membership is still open, the workshop is always ready to welcome new candidates. Countless interviews and surveys, and numerous successful community programmes have been organised, and while the first "greeting Summer" was held within the "Jezsu", the participants have been courageously stepping out from within the walls of the school to organize the memorable mobilizing action days, and the recent summer camp for school children. They have explored many spaces to try their wings, opportunities for learning by doing, while serving the local community better and better. Also, formal training sessions contributed to the volunteer group's learning cycle: focusing on personal development and assertiveness, and more formal learning about community development, interviewing, organizing events, advocacy work. The activists are confident that such philanthropic volunteering has had a strong positive contribution to their personal (and professional) development, thus participation proved to be mutually beneficial for the young people involved and the local community.

A professional, mature coordinator was responsible for the development of the group, while the Dialog Association was always there to support them. The programme always maintained a healthy balance between introspection and group cohesion on the one hand (working on one's own personal development and building group identity) and openness on the other (acting and working for the community, involving

new people). After 3 years, the Juvenile Workshop became independent, with its own logo, values and agenda. They are ready to continue working together with the locals for the benefit of the Avas district.

TERVEZZ BÁTRAN/DARE TO PLAN!

Organization of a series of planning initiative programmes (training, workshops, discussion groups, recommendations for urban planning) for the whole Avas district, focusing primarily on establishing new community venues, both indoors and outdoors.

The synergy of these three lines of results opened a new quality of complex public discourse about the Avas district. It created a virtual space for involving people and ideas. In the course of the discussion group sessions, which have developed into regular monthly meetings, participants can share information, voice opinions and discuss current conflicts and possible solutions. The Avas Communities is a virtual place for sharing and generating knowledge and inspiration, which multiplies within the private/institutional networks of the stakeholders.

Besides the regular meetings and discussion groups, besides talking, thinking and learning, planning together about the future of the community, interesting small-scale activities also took place at the same time (family days, action days, or-

ganizing the Avas foot race etc.). Working together generated a significant amount of trust among participants, and the experience of the possibility of mutual support made people feel more powerful than before. The positional power of the network's member institutions, and the resources at their disposal have perfectly complemented the activism, ambition and learning potential of the Juvenile Workshop, a key success factor in the constellation. Resting on these two pillars, the efforts of the Dare to Plan programmes running in parallel made participants focus on the man-made environment: a concrete and ambitious project to contribute to the Integrated City Development Concept (IVS) concerning the Avas.

In the course of the 3 years, a long series of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were prepared to reach and ask the people about their attitudes towards the Avas – remember, 40.000 people, a population of an entire small town. Drawing up a detailed picture of values, needs, intentions, and deployable capacities was not just a short phase at the beginning of the intervention, but a core part of the intervention process itself. Asking people three simple questions like what they liked in the Avas district and what they would like to see changed, and – just as importantly – what they think they could do themselves started hundreds of conversations between practitioners, volunteers and local residents. This simple but time-consuming method (sometimes coloured with photos or video-interviews) proved to be the basis of gaining information and building participation at the same time.

4. Conclusions and lessons learned from the project

Summing up the results: metaphorically speaking, the soil has been well ploughed, cultivated for "sowing seeds". Thanks to a thorough preparation phase and planning, sustainable further steps for the community became possible. What are these figurative seeds, and what can they be in today's reality? Seeds can be new ideas, a series of longer-term social and infrastructural development projects and resources accompanying them: influx of money, new people joining in and expertise.

The complexity and the volume of the structurally encoded conflicts in this case of the Avas district thus require a thorough preparatory intervention phase, which must be a participatory process, as inclusive as possible within the framework of the actual situation. This phase, addresses not only, or – paradoxically –, not primarily the parties involved in the conflicts directly! The goal is to strengthen/build/repair the network of the community, which "holds the stake" of the conflict, so that it becomes better functioning and suitable for nesting the upcoming changes and incubating future initiatives.

The long term effects and benefits of the described project (process, actually) for the whole community of the district are tangible: the design and launch of several new initiatives, pilot programmes and grater scale development projects addressing the most severe conflict neighbourhoods in the Avas II. Also, new prevention programmes for community conflict transformation have been designed. These "second generation" projects forecast the next 3-year phase of conflict-transformation in the district. These projects shall definitely be rooted in the ground of the preparatory phase I have described here, but will never be independent of the actual trends of present context.

The key figures of the 'second generation' development projects and initiatives are from the group of key players presented above: the members of Dialog Association, the former volunteers of the Juvenile workshop, several individual professional partners, who are residents in the Avas, and of course, the devoted institutions from the Avas Communities Network (the Jesuits, the Reformed Church, the Avas Secondary School, the Municipality referent etc.)

To broaden the range of local information channels, a newsletter titled Panellevél is being published. It is free, and printed in 2.000 copies, distributed at Avas. Two websites and an online blog follow current events. In order to involve more local people and build the bridges of solidarity, popular wall painting actions are planned. Photo-Voice video interviews and street art programmes are organized – to continue the tradition of the inquires and polls. A special Wall of Love had been created at the last action day, where people passing by could express why they liked their neighbourhood, and

discuss the merits of the Avas. Forums and a small planning team have discussed the function of a new community building maintained by the reformed Church. Others take a look into the distant future when planning the transformation of the grove near the Jesuit Gymnasium into public a city park of the Avas, with sports facilities, which could become an appropriate community site for the wistful people of the blocks. (The experiences of the community planning workshop in 2009 about the use of an unserviceable underpass provided useful information for the last two processes.)

In order to bring together different social groups to (re) build social capital, an interesting mentor programme has been recently launched. Students of an elite secondary school form peer partnerships with younger teenagers of Romany background attending the local primary school to offer help with school, leisure time and family matters. In a future phase of the mentor program, these young people from different social and ethnic backgrounds will plan and implement micro-projects together for the benefit of the Avas community, using this opportunity for self-development and fun – as experienced and already demonstrated by the methodology of the Juvenile Workshop.

Just recently, a new role seems to be opening for the Avas Communities. Little by little, it is beginning to be viewed as a respected (informal) institution, rather than as isolated individual players. New opportunities have opened for its

members to become acknowledged, step by step, as competent and locally embedded actors in issues concerning the Avas. From this position, with the ammunition of knowledge generated through questionnaires and planning workshops, Avas Communities can be a competent actor that can give a voice to the Avas to represent its own and common interests with the Local Government.

To conclude, we learned that the investment in the initial phase of a community conflict prevention programme yields its results over a few years, provided that the time, the flexibility, volunteer efforts and considerable amount of calculable presence can be expected in the locality. The local community needs time and investment to regenerate and prepare before facing and handling the serious conflicts. Also, building local stakeholders' knowledge of the context and understanding the roots of the conflict are critically important.

3.2.2

Project title	ON THE MARGINs OF THE CITY – JELENLÉT / PRESENCE PROGRAMME
Delivering organisation	Hungarian Maltese Charity Service /NGO
Partners involved	• City Council of Pécs (Local Government) • Esztergál Lajos Family Care Centre • TÉR Community Space Office • EON- Electricity Supplier (utilities company) • BIOKOM – communal service provider company • Secondary Schools: - Leőwey Klára Secondary School, Pécs – Downtown • Babits Mihály Secondary Scool, Pécs – Uránváros • Apáczai Secondary School, Pécs – Kertváros (Apáczai Nevelési és Általános Művelődési Központ Gimnázium) • Kodály Zoltán Secondary School, Pécs – Budai-Meszes

Project duration	Ongoing since April 2007
Project scope	Györgytelep – a segregated slum settlement in the Eastern part of Pécs.
Targeted problem, target group	1. Ninety socially disadvantaged and marginalized families in 32 households, approx. 500 persons. 80% of them are Roma. Often substandard, poor housing conditions without tap water (80%), without sewage system (100%), without communal services. Low income, unemployment, with elementary school or lower educational attainment (64%) • generally inaccessible services, disadvantaged people who live from one day to the next, at the same time, families cannot be reached by most service providers. • disintegrated community, calculating, utilitarian, fierce relations • ongoing conflicts within the community of the slum, escalation "solved" by shouting, affrays, police raids.

	2. Children and juveniles of slum (30% of population are under 18 years old). 22 classes of middle-class students attending elite secondary schools in the city of Pécs (178 males, 396 females). • Prejudice against, criminalization and blaming of poor people, especially Romani among young people; - rapidly growing distance between groups of society: lack of knowledge, no chance of making direct contact to overcome prejudices (fed by media, for instance)
Change/progress achieved	Stop indifference and neglecting people most in need; Provide quality and available social work and service-programmes in slum; Be present, stand by, enable in conflicts, struggles, decisions; Transform bias and build philanthropy volunteering elite (pupils) to help people (children) of slum. Besides the participants, their families have been tuned to solidarity, too.
Means of achieving change / progress	Presence - Social Work Program and Presence - Volunteer Programme

Key success factors	Continual and available presence (service) responding to all local needs in an empowering way. Provision of a safe and neutral space and a trusted relationship for ventilation of and reflecting on actual and foreseen conflicts. Demonstrating and offering alternative ways of managing conflicts.

1. Presentation of the problem

Györgytelep is a slum in the outskirts of Pécs, one of the larger towns in Hungary. Ninety socially disadvantaged and marginalized families live here in 32 households (approx. 500 persons). 80% of them are Roma. They often live in substandard, poor housing conditions (without tap water (80%), without sewage system (100%), without communal services). Low income or permanent unemployment, with elementary school or lower educational attainment (64%).

Children and juveniles under 18 years of age make up 30% of the population of the slum

Ongoing conflicts within the community characterize the everyday life of the slum. Typically, conflicts develop from miniscule issues such as children's fights, neighbours' vexa-

tion or minor conflicts. When escalated, disputes are "solved" by shouting, menace, affrays, fights and finally police raids.

Features of the slum phenomena

- families are despised and outcast by the majority society
- services (social, health etc.) are generally unavailable for disadvantaged people of the slum,
- at the same time, families cannot be reached by most service providers.
- families live in poverty, from one day to the next, struggling just for survival
- inadequate housing and hygienic conditions
- disintegration, remnants of community (loss of values, norms, esteem)
- often calculating, utilitarian, tense, often fierce relations

Beyond the above features lies a general and pervasive social phenomenon, the dynamic and unprecedented widening of the gap between societal groups. Invisible, yet high walls are being built "overnight", to ultimately divide the realm of society from what is beyond, the outcast world of slums. Consequently, the lack of direct experience and the low level of verified information about the "other" reduce the chance of making direct contact to reduce prejudices to the minimum. This contributes to justifying and building "walls" even higher. A vicious circle or negative spiral, which paints a dark social picture of the future: end of solidarity, permanent social conflict and securitization.

2. Project description, DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The initiator and implementer is the Hungarian Maltese Charity Service, the Maltese's, as it is colloquially known. It is a powerful and well-reputed NGO with extensive nationwide work. The main scope of the Maltese's activities are health care, disabled care, child and family care, homeless care, elderly care, care of addicts and there are also services available for the general population besides even more specialized ones, like disaster management. By way of example, an incomplete list of typical services is as follows: counselling for credit debtors, supporting debtors to electricity suppliers, running care centres, soup kitchens, day centres, temporary homes for families, playgroups and playgrounds, daytime warming room for the homeless and street outreach services, moreover, rental and repair service of medical devices, legal advice, senior citizens' clubs, low-threshold care for addicts and even laundries.[26] The Hungarian Maltese Charity Service, an organization in operation for 20 years, operates in all regions of Hungary without exception and also beyond the Hungarian state borders in the Carpathian basin. As a member organization of the Malteser International and the Hand Working Group, the organization is involved in International Aid and Development.

One of the special Maltese's programs is the Slums' programme, which offers integrated social work in segregated neighbourhoods stricken by extreme poverty and depri-

[26] http://www.maltai.hu/?action=intezmenyek&subaction=feladat

[27] Fehér, A., Marozsán, Cs. és Pattermann, K. (szerk.) (2011) Jelenlét: módszertanmesék a telepi munkáról, Budapest: Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat. - 263 p.

[28] Kiss, D. (2011) Cigánytelep nyolctól négyig: Dávid naplója, Budapest: Magyar Máltai Szeretetszolgálat.

[29] "IF I WERE..." education and training programmes for all age groups; BASELINE: helping with office routines and (re)entering official registers - in order to gain/regain citizenship and basic rights along with it, in order to stop outlaw practices; FEDÉL: providing better housing conditions; THE LOCAL MAINTAINER: employing part-time local repairman for smaller maintenance works, in 32 flats; ACTIONS TO COLLECT GARBAGE: four events, 110m3 litter collected in slum together with locals; MOBILITY: helping youth and their families to know better the city and the country where they live. Cultural programs, summer camps, site-visits; ADVOCACY – A STAPLE: workers take part in forums and decisions concerning the slum, representing the interest of the families, to get decision-makers listen to the voices from the slum. HOST: The Presence program is a hosting basis for special services, which could not outreach to the families in the slum directly.

vation ("telep" is the Hungarian collective word for such conditions). Such conditions can be found at the Roma hamlet near Monor; the infamous "Hell Tower", which is a vertical segregation in Veszprém (the town of the Queens); the Sólyom-telep in Sajókaza; Hétes-telep in Ózd; the villages in the Hevesi micro-region and György-telep near Pécs (Pécs was a European Capital of Culture in 2010), this latter settlement will be described in detail below. Similar work has been done in Sajókaza by the Dzsaj Bhím Community and in Ózd by the associates of Van Helyed Foundation (You Have a Place Foundation). The staff and managements of the different programmes have worked out an astonishingly supportive and close cooperation over the years. Their efforts are aptly illustrated by the two volumes of essays grasping the essence of the (social) work in the SLUMS written by 22 different authors, the field workers themselves, whose subjective and at the same time accurate and detailed reflections characterize the work carried out in collaboration with the people of the slums.[27, 28]

THE ACTIVITIES AND THE METHODS

The Presence Social Work Programme: Setting up and maintaining a steady, daily available, multi-service social work centre right within the slum providing for disadvantaged families. With non-controlling, professional helping relations (based on unfolding trust and solidarity), social workers stand by marginalized people and steadily assist them with their conflicts, decisions and actions for themselves. A dozen of different subprojects would cover the palette, if one listed all different activities and aspects of help.[29]

Workers in the Presence social work programme are ready to respond to everyday conflicts in the slum. Firstly, they are there and as part of the community they know what is happening. Secondly, parties of the conflict can share their interpretation of the dispute with the workers. Generally, conflicts within the slum affect the whole community, because of its size and the interconnectedness of households and families. Many times, they say, it is children's conflicts that spark off and blow up the conflict that escalates.

The Programme office has its opening hours and schedule. Certain hours in a day are dedicated to individual consultations with adults, while others are available for children's activities. This is an agreed system based on how workers see the local needs. Adults need privacy and secrecy to share their difficulties, problems and work out solutions or next steps. As for conflicts, adult residents of the slum can find a way of informally talking to the workers, if needed.

But with the children, it is different. Children and workers mostly spend time together in a more or less formal activity group setting. These activities naturally yield conflicts, which, in fact is the best scenario to show them alternative conflict resolution techniques, different from what is typical in the family homes, or in the streets of the slum or in the school.

THE PRESENCE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

This special programme connects well-off students from the city of Pécs with the disadvantaged slum community of Györgytelep, especially with the children from the slum. Besides enabling disadvantaged groups (minority), it turns the social environment (majority) more receptive and inclusive at the same time. 22 classes of middle-class students attending elite secondary schools in the city of Pécs (178 males, 396 females) participated over the years.

The programme was developed based on the results of a survey that showed that 22% of the students of elite high-schools have already done voluntary work and are ready to help others (Interestingly, the highest proportion (66%) claimed they would be ready to help children, while the lowest proportion (9%) would be ready to help Roma people.) Through the survey, the Maltese's team learned that students expect experience/adventure, community, acceptance, and affection from volunteering.

In the implementation phase, first a preparatory, interactive workshop and sensitising dialogues were held in the participating classes. The topics, talked through with the middle class and upper-middle class teenagers were poverty, exclusion and prejudice. After the session, almost 50% of the students felt that they were willing to undertake voluntary work. On the Saturdays of the following months, students were invited to join the children's club in Györgytelep in groups of 2-3, thus they were able to gain experiences and impressions personally and directly about the life in one of the segregated slums, which exist on the periphery of their city, only 1.5-3 miles away from their homes.

Later, by different initiatives, the schools organized local philanthropy actions and collections for the benefit of the slum's families: clothes, toys, different articles for personal use and non-perishable foodstuff, while individual students motivated their families and broader networks for the benefit of the children of the slum.

This part of the project is based on the assumption that the educated class and decision-makers of the future need to build a positive attitude towards disadvantaged people. In the early years of their studies, these youths realised, that "children living at the edge of the city in poverty have the same desires and dreams as they do, but possess less or different opportunities."[30] Middle class teenagers in the programme also understood through experience that children in the slums are not to blame for their present situation. Finally, they have evidence that they could act themselves to make the situation a little bit better in the future.

3. Conflict resolution aspect

The following features of alternative conflict transformation are captured in the practice.

[30] Csonkáné Utasi, K., Dusa Á. és Fehér, A. (2011) A város peremén. Civil Szemle. 2011/3. p. 97-113. VIII. évfolyam 3.szám.

- Conflict and disagreement can be resolved if talked about, not by fighting.
- If there is conflict, there is someone else (trusted third party) to help manage it.
- Both/all parties have the right to tell their own interpretation, not only one of them.
- Both parties' and the group's needs are seen as important, which may yield norms to follow.
- A restorative agreement may replace punishment.
- Peace can be reached after conflict.

RESULTS: CHANGE AND PROGRESS

The Maltese's Presence programme in Györgytelep contributed to the following in the light of the scenario described above: to stop indifference and neglecting people most in need; to provide quality and accessible social work and service-programmes in slum; to be present, stand by, enable in conflicts, struggles, decisions and to transform bias and build philantropy among volunteering elite (students and their families) for the people of slum (children and families).

The name of the community programme – presence – expresses its essence: the workers "breathe together" with the community. Workers do their work voluntarily and consciously under similar conditions as the living conditions of those they help, as two neighbouring holes have been united to build the first programme office.

A benevolent philosophy of helpfulness triumphs and integrated services top the specialization and chiselling of issues (which, workers admit, challenges the limits of competence and its concepts.

Over the years, the results were reached by 2-4 social workers and a handful of volunteers, often family members of the workers and many local residents. Activities belong to one of the following two programmes.

4. Conclusions and lessons learnt from the project
THE KEY FACTORS TO SUCCESS

The main success factors to underline with respect to the Presence programme are twofold: continual, available and predictable service responding to all local needs but in an empowering way.

- Devoted team of social workers are present in locality steadily every day, in all seasons, for 6 years. A colleague from the slum joined the workers' team.
- Schedules and an adequately planned rhythm of work maintain predictability and boundaries needed for sustainable social work, while supervision is provided regularly for workers.
- Presence Centre responds to and deals with a very wide range of tasks, needs and requests by locals in an enabling way (as opposed to a controlling way).

- Workers have been readily available on account of the centre's position right in the middle of the slum. Working conditions for social workers in the centre were similar to the average living conditions of the families they were helping: they were part of the slum.
- Middle class youngsters from elite high schools of the same city spend time – as volunteers – together with children from the slum after a thoughtful sensitising process led by the workers. Thus experience overwrites assumptions, while exposure activates learning and solidarity, even for the families of the program's participants.

CONCLUSION

The Presence programme is a very successful programme, worth to be valued and set as a model. The engine or the heart of the programme is the structural conditions needed in the slums: availably, predictably and continuously being present. However, the souls of this demanding programme are the workers themselves. The social workers' challenge to practice the art of being authentically present in the life of the slum, without burning out, without letting the work gobble up their full life. Working day by day in the slum is hard but reciprocally profitable, workers claim. The programme can only be sustainably successful if a dynamic balance is kept in the dimensions of personal involvement and professional maintenance of boundaries, and also in the dimensions of support and empowerment. The Hungarian Maltese Charity Service as an organization provides a stable background, the informal network of the several Slum programmes provides peer support and learning opportunities, which is complemented with ongoing professional supervision to allow the maintaining of balance between the workers' own life and that of the slums'.

3.2.3

Project title	**CONFLICT IN THE VILLAGE**
Delivering organisation	Foresee Research Group (mediator, facilitator) Szeged Police Station (directly affected, local primary client)
Partners involved	County Police Headquarters (referral agent) Local Government of the village (directly affected, initiator client) County Roma Minority Government (indirectly affected) Association of County Vigilante Organisations (indirectly affected)
Project duration	April 2011 – December 2011
Project scope	a settlement in Southern Hungary
Targeted problem, target group	A tense situation developed between the inhabitants and the vigilantes who served there on a voluntary basis, which was followed by increased police presence in response.
	The conciliatory intervention was a reaction after the recognition of the tense situation. The aim of the project was to release the stalemate, to help to reconcile the local inhabitants and set up the conditions of a sustainable coexistence by the dominant participants of the community.
Change/progress achieved	The intervention primarily worked by means of stimulating discussions and dialogue. As a result of that: an agreement and an action plan were established between the two local partners, which set a trend in the common tasks afterwards; Interactive forums were held concerning more locally relevant topics; The revision of the activity of the local vigilante organisation, its (self) restriction and reorganisation are in progress.

	One of the changes that took place as a result of the intervention is that discussion restarted between the dominant members of the community and the authorities/organisations about issues of higher public security; Following the agreement, the police made more long-term decisions – for instance they organised group meetings with leaders of the settlements on a regular basis, surveyed people's opinions about public security, on the base of which they organised further meetings in the settlement; Following the agreement, the police withdrew their increased forces and took steps to strengthen the role of the district police officer; In the settlement more public forums and a public security day eased the tension.
Means of achieving change / progress	• The clarification of the conditions of the assignment and cooperation with the mayor; • Preliminary telephone interviews;

	• The thematic and personal arrangement of the mediation meeting: topics, invited persons, competencies, tasks etc; • Mediation meeting, agreement; • Local follow-up: action plan, public meetings, crime prevention day. etc.; • Professional follow-up: telephone inquiries, local expert meeting.
Key success factors	The persons involved in the process consider it essentially successful, because: • The community teamed up during the conflict, discussed it and settled common prospective goals; • They understood the relations of their pledges; • The satisfaction and feedback of the mayor representing the assignors; • Resources were identified and linked with each other and with the options; • The guidelines of restoration prevailed: order and support;

- The participants met a new conflict resolution approach which was found successful and effective by them;
- Discussions were followed by actual measures;

The following were identified as key success factors:
- The commitment of Szeged Police Station (especially of its captain) to find a long-lasting solution and his continued public activity after the agreement;
- The directness of the mayor and the honesty they gave proof of during the process;
- The cooperative attitude of the persons involved, which helped to establish a common platform: order, support, tasks and cooperation;
- The comforting atmosphere of the mediation meeting, the agreement the partners arrived at and the fact that they meant it;

- The success of the meeting can be considered as a key event in the whole process, since that was the point of the partition and the measurement of the problems. This can be considered to be the starting-point of the following changes. That was the point at which passive fear turned into action.

| Overall budget of the project | Approximate amount of total budget provided: 400.000 HUF; Approximate amount of direct costs: 100.000 HUF (phone calls, travelling, professional assistance, accommodation). |

PUBLIC CONFLICT IN A VILLAGE

1. Presentation of the problem

The locality
The village has a population of fewer than 800 inhabitants, situated near Szeged (the county town of Csongrád). Among the inhabitants and the leaders of the community, the village is considered to be a decent neighbourhood. A small part of the area is built-up (72 ha of a total territory of 4.870 ha). It is not a bustling place, and therefore characteristically stays away from scandals and crimes. It administratively belongs to Szeged Police Station along with 21 other settlements. 9 minority governments (Ukrainian, Greek, Serbian, Polish, Croatian, Roma etc.) were registered in the city from the area, among which the Roma ethnic minority can be considered to be the most influential with approximately 5.000 people in the administrative area. The police are not permanently present in any of the settlements because crimes are quite rare and most of those are minor offences. Conflicts could be identified only as isolated phenomena, which characteristically took place between families. According to the judgement of the police the area is not especially "infected with crime."

The problems the project deal with
The conflict was tripartite, as there were disagreements (1) between the followers and representatives of the far-right party and movement and the police; (2) between the candidate of the party and the mayor of the village; (3) between the villagers getting zealous by attacks and the nomadic (prevalently) Roma people with integration issues. The major focus of the mediation project was the third conflict line (which occurred directly in the settlement), and the second disagreement received a secondary focus. To understand the process the actions and reactions of all the participants need to be examined.

1) A local MP of the far-right party together with one of their MPs from the county wrote an open letter to Csongrád Police Headquarters, with the title "Gipsy-protector police". This happened roughly in parallel with the racist demonstrations and actions aiming to draw attention to the difficulties of the Gipsy integration problems. The petition demanded to revise and reopen the unsolved cases of the area and pointed out that people were afraid, desperate and the police was inert. The police could not and did not want to disregard the problem. They analysed and considered the situation. The police reached their conclusions and established goals in connection with the affair. At this point they were exposed to the criticisms of the prominent members of the far-right movements in the county.
2) Later, the attention was turned to the mayor of the village. It was claimed that she was unauthorised to be a mayor, since the far-right candidate fell just a few votes behind the elected mayor who is currently in charge. The

losing candidate grew incensed and started to harass the elected mayor, the election office and the police. They intended to prove the inaptitude of the mayor (and other institutions) and to strengthen the public order in the village by the permanent presence of outside vigilantes.

3) The event that sparked off the conflict directly. Approximately 40 people (with 15 vehicles) intentionally trespassed on the property of a Roma family and intimidated them. The accused officially claimed that it was because of the increased inland water level. They were on their way to help a relative, when they stopped because they wanted to take firm steps against the family that meant a constant problem for the settlement. The police were aware of the fact and they were getting ready. Therefore the police went out to the location with large numbers following the report. The need for the presence of the police and the facts of the report were confirmed by the mayor as well.

4) Following the affair, the increased presence of the police continued in the settlement. During the whole process they examined the case of intimidation and kept control of the public order. The inhabitants felt aversion, because of the drastically growing number of the fines police kept imposing for minor offences (infringement and negligence of traffic regulations, expired papers) in the settlement.

These events led to the occurrence of a stalemate situation in the village. The police could have withdrawn the increased presence only on order. But its sustainable conditions had to be maintained.

2. Project description

The implementation of the project took place in the abating context of supposedly ethnic based conflicts of that year in 2011.

During the period of the local identification of the problem the psychologists of County Police Headquarters introduced the term "mediaton". By the negotiating partners it was defined as a sort of conflict management carried out with the help of outside contributors, prepared to use a working method that helps to alleviate delicate situations. The partners most concerned with resolving the conflict (Local Government, County Police Station) inquired about it and arrived at an agreement that was necessary to involve mediators as outside assistant partners.

The psychologist of the Police played a key role in the process, since having recognized the delicate balance of the situation, she acted as a "referral agent" and suggested mediation to the Police as a working method. They looked for help through the Hungarian Institute for Culture and Art, who proposed a non-governmental organisation as a specialist.

At that point the expressions were already integrated into the language use of the partners: the process was called "mediation" and the outside assistants as "mediators". The preparation for the key event and the event itself happened according to the standards of mediation (customized preparation, introduction, uninterrupted time, discussion, common points, the formulation of the agreement etc.).

The mediators, having acquainted themselves with the details of the assignment, recognized that the case was going to be special (for instance, the date of the meeting was already scheduled at the assignment). Furthermore, it turned out soon that more than two partners were going to be involved in the affair, and the interests could not be clearly identified. Later they realised that some of the participants who sparked off the conflict were not supposed to be invited to the meeting. The outsider experts having identified the potential effects and the results of their activity delineated their roles as a referral agent, a consultant and conciliator during their work and considered themselves to be facilitators at the key-meeting.

Participants

The interpretation of the conflict and the response to is best regarded as a one-shot intervention, reacting to an acute tense situation. The aim was to release the stalemate in the village, help to reconcile the local inhabitants and set up the conditions and the tasks of sustainable peaceful coexistence of the dominant members of the community. Thus, to make a move and start the process of restoration. The tension kept growing to the concern of the following parties:

• The inhabitants had had enough of the presence of the police at that rate and the fines they kept imposing – they took stand on a point that actually there was not such a big trouble, they wanted things to return to normal and live their peaceful life;

• Understanding the need of the inhabitants, the local government was under more and more pressure but because of the potential risk of a presumed ethnic conflict they did not dare ask for the withdrawal of the increased police forces;

• The police considered the increased presence completely unnecessary and they wanted to relieve themselves of the burden since their forces were needed somewhere else as well.

The action of the vigilante organisation started to blow up in their face, because they became the target of the vexation of the inhabitants. Therefore, from the popular protector status they were drifting into an undesirable role.

The case had multiple parallel storylines. The result of the agreement and the reconciliation was the result of the interplay of these events.

FEBRUARY

The development and the escalation of the conflicts of the community took place in more levels (the police, local government, local inhabitants and groups).

MARCH

The police were acting a pivotal role in the process due to the given criticisms and its contents (people are afraid, public security is poor in the area). They made their own survey to reveal the feelings of the inhabitants of the area about

public security. The results did not confirm the claims, and the police got precise statistics showing that there were not many unsolved cases in the area and people were not mostly afraid of becoming a victim. The police made a statement to the press but the press did not finish their work of building more trust between the police and the inhabitants.

During the same month, the police convened a meeting for the associations of vigilante organisations to discuss the situation of the settlements and the necessity of cooperation and its potential frameworks. The representative of the local vigilantes did not take part in this project. At the same time four mayors of the neighbouring settlements were informed about the situation in order to tackle the public conflicts and the possible ethnicity based or other tensions. As those settlements had not detected a similar problem, the police focused on the village from then on.

Next the police organised a meeting and informed the representatives and the inhabitants directly about the measures which were about to be taken in order to handle the situation. Approximately 30 people took part in the meeting. It was progress but the increased presence of the police in the area was still in force, moreover further policemen appeared as a result of a reaction to further suggestions (for instance the development of a direct emergency telephone system in the area (resources, implementation etc.) The affair also reached the national level. These seemed to be important measures but the problem was still not solved.

APRIL

Every local inhabitant was given a provocative informational letter with the title "The Reality – Long-needed Local News", which created an atmosphere that could no longer be tolerated. The captain of Szeged Police Station in cooperation with the mayor made a decision to organise a conciliatory meeting which had the potential of a promising agreement.

The preparation for the reconciliation and conflict resolution meeting took place with the help of outside experts (delegated by Foresee Research Group and the Hungarian Institute for Culture and Art). The mayor representing the assignors and the representative of the mediators agreed about the framework of the cooperation.

Following the agreement the mediators undertook the professional preparations for a meeting according to their own guidelines, namely the identification of the partners involved, preliminary discussions with the prospective participants, the drawing up of the schedule of the meeting, the methodological preparation for the facilitation of the meeting. The local group of stakeholders was responsible for making the actual arrangements (venue, invitations, devices etc.) on the spot.

The meeting took place in April, 2011 and was attended by 12 people. The meeting's agenda had three parts:

- Diagnosis: What is the exact situation, what seems to be the problem from their own point of view and how they relate to that (this period could be considered to be the equivalent of uninterrupted time);
- What could and should be done in order to improve the situation?
- What sort of measures could be taken and by whom to make progress in the outlined matters? (That is the period of pledges, on the basis of which the agreement was made).

As both the assignment and the local circumstances can be considered special in this case, that is why the success of the first meeting was essential. Being undesirable for every participant, the work was focused on resolving the local stalemate, therefore short-term and realistic pledges were made in order to come to an agreement.

During the final part of the meeting an agreement was reached, which had two major parts:

1. Common goals in order to improve the situation;
2. Personal/organisational pledges to make progress (tasks, deadlines, conditions).

At the end of the meeting the partners confirmed the agreement with their signatures.

Concerning the details of the agreement, it cannot be considered unique. Its aims and pledges would be appropriate in any settlement. They are significant not because of their uniqueness but because of the fact that those opinions could be said, stipulated and people joined forces with each other in order to put those ideas into practice under the given circumstances. That is, headway was made.

Follow-up to the Agreement, results, effects later in the same year

The mayor held a public forum in the settlement concerning public security at which the fact of the agreement and its plans were publicly described. For instance:

- There used to be one district police officer and another one was appointed. The inhabitants requested that at least one of them should live there. The police offered to find a person who was willing to move there, while the local government would have to provide rent-free accommodation as an incentive. n
- The police made a comprehensive study about offences highlighted as most frequent in the village. It was distributed by the members and vigilantes of Gipsy Minority Government walking from door to door.
- The chances and the costs of a direct emergency telephone system were surveyed so as to make further applications feasible.
- A public event, a 'Security day' was held during the Days of the Village, at which safe road traffic, regulations and the policeman career model were demonstrated.

- Public forums were organised to identify the problematic cases and to maintain communication on a regular basis.

The police had no experience in that sort of restorative model as they had not used it before. They evaluated the new experience as very useful as they regarded the agreement as a kind of "social contract" in which the inhabitants stated their expectations, and which they were therefore able to use as a guideline and continue the implementation of the pledges.

Following the meeting the increased police presence became unnecessary and one (later two) district police officers were able to handle the situation. The chief police officer himself personally took part in the process. Moreover, he showed a keen interest in it and he was satisfied with the "extraordinary" way of resolving a conflict. His arguments were generally the following:

- If it had taken place earlier, things would never have reached that point. Money, time and fear could be saved by the arrangement.
- The discussion was suitable for finding a long-term solution to the problem; restraining orders would be only provisional, since there was no chance of follow-up.

As a result of the events, demands of personal safety were surveyed among the people living in the village. Along with the survey, inhabitants were informed about the new services of the police: victims' support and the possibility to take part in crime prevention days.

Mediators identified the issues, based on which they could make their professional recommendations on what should have been done differently. For instance:

- The deadline, which was set before the assignment, was too short. At the time of the contract, the date of the meeting was already scheduled, which determined the further approach and the nature of the cooperation;
- The very person who sparked off the conflict not take part;
- The assignor partners were committed to the mediation but they did not want to permanently pledge themselves in order to fulfil the restoration process;
- The follow-up communication was neglected, which finally led to the incomplete realisation of the pledges.

The follow-up meeting that was supposed to be held after the events, where the pledges could have been revised, did not take place. We identified a number of possible reasons for this of which the tight schedule of the mayor and the failure of the mediators to communicate with the stakeholders appeared to have caused the most difficulties.

The pledges intended to restructure and improve the vigilante organisation were not fulfilled. The pledge was to unify and make the organisation non-political but this plan failed

for the time being. Currently the case is that the vigilante group is split into two: one is loyal to the mayor and the other one is loyal to far right movement.

3. The conflict resolution element

The process was found useful and important by everyone who took part in it. Conflict management took place during the period of polarisation, which is the most suitable time for making a change in a controlled process. The stalemate situation ruled out the chances of interest-based negotiations, since that was the one that put an end to those. For the sake of improvement everyone had to put a little more into it and voice their requirements instead of their positions. This turn drew the attention of the participants to the principal questions and eliminated the untenable intentions.

Aspects Determining the Effectiveness of the Mediation

- The directness, honesty and cooperative attitude of the mayor representing the assignors;
- During the preparations one of the pivotal questions was the extent of support on the part of participants, which proved to be significant in our project – that is, the majority of the participants were committed to finding a solution and to reconciliation;
- Mediators did not work strictly according to the schedule of mediation but all of their measures were consistently driven by the idea of restoration. In retrospect the work cannot be considered mediation because there were no labelled sides and the attendants were not adversaries;
- During the preparation the tension eased and at the meeting itself the participants were permanently released from the burden of having to deal with all the problems of the village. The schedule was drawn up, which made the participants more comfortable;
- Thanks to the fact that one of the main agitators was not present, those who were inclined to cooperate could grow stronger and come to a mutual agreement;
- The participants were open to cooperation and found common tasks and visions of the future.

4. Conclusion and learning from the project

The police representatives should have much closer connections with the participants of the public life even if there is no current conflict. Beyond the official representatives, the informal leaders of the community are also important, since both communication and activation are much more efficient with their help.

The project can be considered successful, because…

- The community teamed up during the conflict, discussed it and set common future goals;
- Stakeholders understood how their pledges related to one another;
- Resources were identified and linked with each other;
- The guidelines of restoration prevailed: order and support;
- The participants encountered a new conflict resolution approach, which was found successful and effective by them;
- Discussions were followed by actual measures;

Key success factors are the following:
- The commitment of Szeged Police Station (especially its captain) to find a long-lasting solution and his continued public activity after the agreement;
- The directness and honesty of the mayor in revealing the conflict;
- The cooperative attitude of the persons involved, which helped to establish a common platform: order, support, tasks and cooperation;
- The comforting atmosphere of the mediation meeting, the agreement the partners arrived at and the fact that they meant it;
- The success of the meeting can be considered to be the starting point at which passive fear turned into action.

3.2.4

Project title	**CITIZENS JURY IN TÖRÖKSZ-ENTMIKLÓS: INVOLVING LOCAL INHABITANTS IN DEVELOPING PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITY PLACES**
Delivering organisation	Cromo Foundation, Budapest, Hungary
Partners involved	Local Authority of Törökszentmiklós Way and Life Social Public Beneficial
Project duration	2 June 2011 – 16 February 2012
Project scope	Törökszentmiklós, Hungary
Targeted problem, target group	Local authority of Törökszentmiklós (population 23,145) successfully submitted an application to receive funding in the framework of "Integrated Developments of Settlements in Expansion of Functions." As part of the programme several public developments were realised all around the town. In order to allow local inhabitants' opinions and ideas to be heard the local authority requested the Cromo Foundation to organize and chair a series of meetings using the Citizen Jury meeting method to mobilize and involve local stakeholders.
Change/progress achieved	During the 12 meetings involving different target groups, altogether 148 participants brought up 521 different suggestions and ideas in response to the 5 main questions. This initiative was the first time that local people could contribute to the local authority's development plan in such large numbers. At the end of the meetings local NGOs decided to establish a Round Table or Council of NGOs.
Means of achieving change / progress	Preparation phase Project partners – local mayor, local organizer and Cromo Foundation facilitators – first declared the goals that were to be achieved, methods to be used, and rules of cooperation to be followed. Target groups and the discussed issues were identified in the form of a council meeting held at the beginning of June 2011.

Operation phase
Local organizer and Cromo facilitators invited local NGOs and mass media representatives to provide as much publicity and appearance as needed to mobilize the identified target groups. A timeline of the meetings was agreed on according to the needs and characteristics of the different target groups and some special needs were identified (e.g. meeting of parents with young children was organized in the afternoon by providing a playgroup service for the kids)
In order to provide good quality information to the inhabitants, experts and officials from the local authority were invited to answer the questions of the Citizen Jury Meeting's participants.

Follow up phase
Upon completing all the meetings with the local groups Cromo facilitators again organized a meeting with the local mayor and representatives of the local council as well as the local NGOs. All participants agreed that Citizen Jury Meeting is an appropriate method of gathering local people's ideas and opinions and of providing consultation for local authority in public issues.

Key success factors	Citizen Jury Meeting is a consensus-seeking and cooperative method to use in local decision making. This series of meetings could mobilize a number of people representing most of the stakeholders in the city. The method itself can be easily learned and used without any special qualifications.
Overall budget of the project	2.975.000 HUF (around 10.625 EUR)

1. 1. Presentation of the problem

Törökszentmiklós is located in the Northern Great Plain region, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County with a population of approximately 23.000 people. It is a characteristic small town in the plain with an agricultural-industrial profile. Cultivation of corn and fruits, breeding of cattle, pigs and poultry, processing of corn and design and repair of agricultural machinery play major roles in the town's economy. The town is the third largest settlement in the county and the centre of Törökszentmiklós Subregion. The name and the history of the town have become inseparable from the Almásy family, which in the 1700s settled a large number of countrymen in the area, which had been deserted until then. The character, social and cultural life of the town has been determined by that recent past up to the present day.

The settlement won a European Union tender, which was submitted with the title of "Integrated Developments of Settlements in Expansion of Functions". The problem was a matter of community planning: how could the developments be made more user-friendly? The local authority sought answers to the following five questions about the development of the town.

1. How the best use of the new community centre can be made, what sort of programmes would inhabitants like to attend?

2. How the mayor's office can be made more citizen-friendly?
3. What sort of programmes do inhabitants think would be appropriate on the main square of the locality?
4. Which roads would be the best for a bicycle path according to inhabitants?
5. How the best use of the open-air swimming pool and its neighbourhood?

As part of the programme several public developments were realised all around the town, such as renovating public places, renewing public squares, creating bicycle paths etc. In order to allow local inhabitants' opinions and ideas to be heard the local authority requested the Cromo Foundation to organize and chair a series of meetings using the Citizen Jury meeting method to mobilize and involve local stakeholders. The task was to collect and discuss the suggestions and comments related to the questions (directly or indirectly) pertaining to the five development points. This could not be done the traditional way through public forums and questionnaires but special methods adjusted to the targeted groups were needed.

2. Description of the project

Partners of the project

The inhabitants, whose opinion had paramount importance (opinion-leaders). They can be classified as: Members of the local council, representatives of local non-profit organizations and NGOs, representatives of the elderly, (formal or informal) leaders of the Roma community, representatives of large families, parents with young children, people living with disabilities, workers of cultural institutions, representatives of students from high schools, sport clubs and other representatives of communities working for the settlement. Cromo Foundation which was established in 2002 in order to contribute to the regional and subregional cooperation of civil, economic and governmental participants by its training programmes and development projects. Their aim is to establish a participation-based, active, democratic society in Hungary and in Europe. In this project they organized a series of 12 meetings under the name of "Citizens Jury Meeting" in order to explore and communicate the opinions and ideas of the inhabitants to the local authority.

The local authority considered it necessary to rigorously reveal the opinions of the inhabitants, in order to successfully carry out the development program. However, during the planning and the Citizens Jury Meeting they recognized that they could gain more from the process than just the support of the plan: for instance new ideas, resources, knowledge of hardships to be expected, i.e. a complete picture of the needs, demands and offerings of the inhabitants.

Way and Life Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation, the local professional partner of the programme, who organized the meetings and maintained interest between the meetings and established contacts with the target groups in order to

make the local opinion transparent.

The Project Structure and the Method: Citizens Jury

The Citizens Jury Meeting can be characterised along three different dimensions. The first is the classic consensus-seeking decision making, where the inhabitants gather to decide on an unsettled question and after listening to the experts they make a written offer for the leaders of the settlement. The second is basically the planning of the future, where the inhabitants work out the long-term strategy of the settlement with the help of professionals. The third is the dimension of opinion channelling, where the inhabitants share their thoughts and suggestions about a local development programme that is starting or is in progress. In our case the third function was the dominant one.

The meetings took place in the period between June 2011 and February 2012. The 12 meetings were held with different target groups.

The target groups were the following:

- Representatives of members of the local council
- Representatives of local non-profit organizations and civil initiatives
- Representatives of elderly people
- Representatives of Roma communities
- Representatives of parents with young children
- Representatives of people living with disabilities
- Representatives of people working in cultural institutions
- Representatives of students from secondary schools
- Representatives of sport clubs
- Representatives of other communities of inhabitants

During the preparation phase a pre-forum was held in order to clarify the frameworks and rules and to organize the recruitment process.

- The partners involved in the project – the local organizers and the helpers of Cromo Foundation – firstly identified the goals, for which they were going to work, decided on the methods they intended to apply and mutually accepted the rules of the cooperation.
- They made a suggestion about the professionals to be involved, i.e. which experts were supposed to be invited so that the participants of the Citizen Jury Meeting would be able to discuss the analysis of the situation with them and to objectively clarify the necessary questions.
- The Citizens Jury Meetings held between September and December 2011 took place in the following order: (1) People living with disabilities, (2) elderly people, (3) young people, (4) mothers of families, (5) Roma inhabitants.

Each of the Citizens Jury Meetings was conducted according

to the following schedule:
- Greetings, frameworks and the description of the method
- Introduction
- Collecting suggestions for the five development questions in small groups
- The introduction and overview of the collected suggestions together
- The closure of the forum and the assessment of the degree of satisfaction

The local organizers and the facilitators of Cromo Foundation invited the representatives of the local NGOs and the media on a number of occasions, so that they would also be able to get acquainted with, understand and support the process. The goal of these meetings was the interactive communication and the gathering of accurate information.
The results of each of the meetings were recorded in the minutes and shown to the representatives of the participant groups in an organized form at the final meeting. This document also became the reference work for the development programme.
At the end of the project, local NGOs also declared to establish a Round Table or Council of NGOs and to consult the local authority on issues and development plans affecting the local community.

3. The conflict resolution element

At the final meeting all the participants agreed that Citizens Jury Meetings could be an appropriate method of collecting the opinions and ideas of the local inhabitants; and of establishing continuous communication between the local decision-makers and the groups representing the inhabitants in the questions of the most important public matters.
148 persons took part in the meetings and 521 suggestions and ideas reflected on the original five questions. 24 NGOs attended the forums and 50 questionnaires were filled out. This initiative was the first public occasion in Törökszentmiklós where the local inhabitants were able to contribute to the development plans of the local authority to this high degree. In the final meeting more people suggested that these sorts of meetings should be also held in the future concerning further issues.
The elderly people were the most active group; their meeting was the most widely attended. The most complicated task was to involve the people living with disabilities, of whom mostly the representatives took part. The representatives of the Roma community found the time spent on the topic too short. They said that they missed the topic of conflict management in connection with the issue of coexistence of Roma and non-Roma inhabitants. They insisted on being in touch with the leaders of the community, which they envision in the form of some kind of round-table discussion.

It would have been important to obtain information on the opinions of the Roma people as well as of the members of the majority population on their problems and the kind of solutions they consider appropriate.

4. Conclusions and lessons learnt from the project

While public hearing is a very formal way of expressing views and opinions of the local inhabitants, Citizen Jury Meeting is a consensus-seeking and cooperative method to use in local decision making. It can gather a large number of suggestions, which can be taken into consideration in future decisions and development plans.

This series of meetings could mobilize a large number of people, trying to reach representatives of all the stakeholders in the city. In order to involve target groups to the largest extent, it would be necessary to take into account their characteristics, for instance accessibility difficulties in the case of people with disabilities and the elderly, the duration and the timing of the meetings in the case of students and families, and special circumstances which help to reach the target groups. For example, the opinions of the marginalized groups of inhabitants could be collected more effectively in their own neighbourhood, because it seemed unlikely that they would be willing to show up in any of the cultural institutions (or any other formal institutions where they were not frequent visitors.)

Each time a customized invitation was sent to the people involved, plus the meeting was advertised on posters both in print and through electronic media. The local partner relentlessly sought appropriate ways of involving the inhabitants, which was great help. Without their meticulous work the involvement of the target groups would have been impossible.

In the course of time, it became more and more difficult to mobilize participants. Generally, the inhabitants could afford to spend two hours at the meetings, thus between the introduction and the closure of the meeting the facilitators had one or at most one and a half hours for the actual work. They had to take that reality into account while planning the agenda and process.

The participants (initiators) of the process consider the project essentially successful, because a lot of information and opinions were revealed and made use of during and after the meetings. The fact that the people involved claimed that they intended to take part in further meetings in connection with other issues supports the feeling of success. It is true, though, that the methods of encouraging participation and enhancing the patience of the participants also have to be strengthened further.

The Citizens Jury method itself is relatively easy to learn and use without any special qualifications, therefore may also be an appropriate tool for gathering local people without employing external facilitators.

3.2.5

Project title	**NEW SPECTATOR – A RESTORATIVE THEATRE PROGRAM**
Delivering organisation	Káva Cultural Workshop
Partners involved	Krétakör, Anblokk Culture and Social Science Association, Retextil Foundation, Metaforum Film
Project duration	November 2009 – August 2010
Project scope	ÁrOktő and Szomolya, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county, Northern Hungary
Targeted problem, target group	The aim of the programme was to (re)create a communication between inhabitants and to establish local publicity. The objectives were to make clear and reinterpret local social phenomena and explore common public scenes which determine the usual roles and conditions for the inhabitants.
	The project sought answers for the focus question: how the theatre could create a new way to publicity or how the development of local publicity could be supported by the means of the modern theatre. The project locations were two small villages in Northern Hungary. The project intended to involve the whole of the communities.
Change/progress achieved	(1) Understanding that many of the local problems stem from the lack of local institutions of publicity. (2) Encouraging the inhabitants, communication began in the settlement about important issues like: • Family, relatives and personal relations. • Ethnic discrimination • Community/spectators, publicity • Social roles. Open discussion about these matters created an atmosphere in the settlements, which facilitated discussions about other (sometimes taboo) issues concerning the community.

Means of achieving change / progress	The leaders of the villages were aware of the intentions of the project partners and supported the community mobilizing actions. Relevant steps made to reach the goals: Know-how of theatre methodology (Theatre operation, Argument Theatre, Forum Theatre, "Cinema").Relevant topics chosen for each locality: "Wedding and fighting", "To stay or to go?", "No greeting", and the movie of the young people. Immediate effects: contact-making, mobilizing, self-expression, arguments, values, moral issues, mirror – feedback.
Key success factors	• Supporting mayors and community leaders; • Recruitments to reach as many people as possible locally by complex methods and determined contact-making; • Ten months of active preliminary work: research, conversations, diagnoses, topics, competences, tasks;

- Intensive theatre camps;
- Interactive public performances and conversations with the leaders of the community, experts and activists.
- Writing up blogs, articles, studies, and making photography and movies in order to share the experiences and the methods.

1. Presentation of the problem

The project, called New Spectator was an attempt in Hungary to provide publicity and public space for social conflicts by the means of interactive theatre. The two venues of the intervention in this pilot project were two small villages, Szomolya and Ároktő, in the region of Northern Hungary. The two settlements have similar areas and populations (the populations of Szomolya and Ároktő are 1.700 and 1.200 people, respectively.) They are located at a distance of about 50 km from each other; both are in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County. Their characters, however, are completely different due to their hierarchical relations and the different strategies they chose directly after the Change of the Regime. Roma population makes up approximately 15% of the whole population in Szomolya, while the corresponding ratio is almost 50% in Ároktő.

One of the most important objectives of the programme was to reconsider the frameworks of coexistence of the Roma and non-Roma communities, which has been an important issue at a national and at a local level as well in the past years.

According to the implementers' problem analysis, there was a need to encourage communication and interaction between local inhabitants and to establish publicity for community issues. The objectives were to clarify and re-interpret social phenomena and those common scenes which determine the usual roles and conditions for the inhabitants.

There are plenty of settlements where a group of occurrences is considered to be and labelled as a "Gipsy–Hungarian conflict", and eventually interpreted as a "Gipsy problem". Whereas, at the same time, a lot of common problems (e.g. that of public work, poverty, lack of trust) are ranked as personal and family issues, therefore they cannot be considered as a matter of public/community interest.

In Szomolya, the emphasis was first put on the social land programme currently taking place in the village, which used to be organised by the local Roma civil organisation without the approval of the leaders of the settlement, and achieved the result that the Roma families could move out of the cave houses and were able to get new homes.

The roles and the images of local schools also came into focus. These institutions are chosen usually by the parents of local Roma students, but also by other Roma families from other settlements whose children are said not to be willing to attend "mixed" schools. As a consequence, the non-Roma blame Roma people for not only the local confusion but for the deterioration of the image of the village, namely for turning Szomolya into a "Gipsy-village" in the eyes of others. This phenomenon can lead to the segregation of not only the schools but also of the settlements, generating new tensions among the inhabitants.

Ároktő, which is situated on the bank of the River Tisza, in (the one of the most disadvantaged) Mezőcsát subregion, has a very bad reputation among the neighbouring settlements. The unemployment rate is approximately 75% in the village. Jobs can be provided only by the local authority, but not for everybody at all. Ároktő has already been stigmatized to be "Gipsy-village", implying that stealing, crime and aggression would be frequent phenomena.

According to the project implementers' hypothesis, the reason for fierce or hostile feelings and potential discrimination may not primarily be the racism of the locals, but it is rather a consequence of the social processes taking place after the Change of the Regime.

Thus, the intervention seeks to (1) break down the stereotypes, at least partially; (2) put the idea of the family in a social context; (3) encourage the idea of thinking in social roles; (4) make the community come into sight. In Szomolya 5-7% of the population could be mobilized in the project, but the rate of the people who were aware of the programme was far higher. In Ároktő, approximately 15% of the population took part in the program.

2. Description of the project

Social theatre for the publicity of the communities

The public theatre programme – which was the most characteristic manifestation of the intervention – took place in August 2010 after a nearly 10-month-long preliminary preparation work. The action, which was supposed to be an experiment, used the means of the theatre to create an atmosphere that encouraged the collectively discussion and reinterpretation of the local social issues, such as ethnical tensions. In the focus of the programme were the theatre actions based on the participation of the audience.
The topics of these actions were always determined by the local needs and circumstances. Although the leaders of the two settlements had different motivations and commitments, they were all eager to participate in the programme with their villages. The action was accompanied by an action research.

The intervening groups attempted to contribute to the stimulation of social communication in the hope that the description of the actual social problems by the means of arts would make a strong effect on both the authors and audience. During the work they intended to establish theatre performances and actions, which all reflected on the problem of the local communities in a constructive way, and provided the audience with the opportunity to interpret the stories, phenomena and symbols their own way. The authors, drama teachers and social scientists hoped that the description of the actual social problems by the means of arts could create a common platform for the local inhabitants who became active participants. The theatre provided publicity, while the experts used the performances as a kind of social forum. These were potential social performances, which served as an experimental field for exploring the possible ways of social participation. It was assumed that performing and analyzing problematic decision situations could make an impact on the judgement and the self-interpretation of the individuals and communities as well.

In the project five organisations worked together as project partners. Káva Cultural Workshop was the leader of the intervention. This organisation regularly establishes educational theatre performances for young people which deal with complex social and/or moral topics. In the implementation of the project two other civil organisations from Budapest partnered up with Káva: Krétakör, a fa-

mous theatre company, and Anblokk from the field social science. The theatre-work was supported by the Krétakör hallmarked by Árpád Schilling, which had just redefined its function and mission and turned into a "production office" from a theatre group making all-embracing social performances. The social direction was set by Anblokk Cultural and Social Science Association, which employs sociologists and anthropologists. Its mission was to channel modern social science approaches and knowledge into activities and public debates. There were two more partners: Retexil Foundation and Metaforum film. They were responsible for art programmes, programs for children, and making two documentary films, respectively. The Mayor's offices also joined as project partners. Their main tasks in the project were local coordination, local communication, organizing, accommodation and meals, and providing assistance at the project sites. In both settlements, a number of local civil organisations helped with the organization and with recruiting the audience.

The process and the events
Research, recruitments, preparation (October 2009 – July 2010)

The New Spectator public theatre programme took place after a 10-month preparation work in the field, which included a two-week long intensive preparation phase in each settlement before the program. These phases focused on the preparation for the theatre actions: the participation of the audience and identifying the main themes (which were always determined by the local circumstances.) The targeted audience of performances were adults, but supplementary fine art and drama workshops were organised for local children at the same time. In the course of the project, movie-making and photography programs were carried out together with local young people.

News of the theatre programme was sent to practically everybody through different communication channels.

In the main period of implementation, two-weeks camps of theatre performances were organised and set up in each of the settlements, where every night a different theatre action like a new episode was performed. The statements below characterise the theatre actions of the New Spectator Programme:

- It created a public platform (forums, rituals);
- It drew attention in a fictional way to real problems concerning the communities ;
- It worked with roles – therefore it kept some distance between the personal stories (perhaps affronts) and the similar stories of the characters;
- It involved the participants in a game-like activity instead of enforcing a direct problem/conflict solving situation;

- It preferred and encouraged activity to conversation (managing the inequalities stemming from educational differences among the audience);
- It was based on common, comprehensible situations;
- It worked with topics which were believed to be important for all the inhabitants of the settlement;
- It supported the idea of various perspectives;
- It intended to involve marginal groups and individuals from the communities and was keen on taking their experiences and opinions into consideration.

The project was assisted by a research team, who helped to tackle the thematic and methodological issues and to examine and interpret the implementation of the project. Besides that, there was a documentary film group, which recorded the "werk": the cooperation and the personal stories as well. Eventually two 50-minute documentary films were shot about the project ("Lived happily ever after – Ároktő" directed by Gábor Péter Németh) and a series of photography exhibitions were created as the final part of the whole work. To help dissemination and increase national publicity, a website was also created for the project (www.ujnezo.hu).

3. The conflict resolution element

The project was meant to catalyze the local social processes and communication. Based on previous experience, taking part in an actual public event proved to have a positive effect on the need for and the result of the communication between participating people including organizations as well. The feedback from the participants involved in the project, the enthusiastic participation in the theatre performances and the local support for the project confirmed that the performances and their analyses made an impression on the individuals and the whole community in a positive way. The effects could be seen in the following areas:

- The identification and expression of the problems (instead of avoiding them),
- Establishing a personal relationship to the given problems thus overcoming apathy.
- Recognizing the fact that the personal relationships can be changed in spite of assumed or actual harm or divisions.

This communication-inducing, compromise-seeking programme can be regarded as a preparatory phase of a conflict transformation process, for example mediation.

Theatre in this project is meant to be a restorative process, a special dialogue in which language does not have a pivotal role. This feature can be significant help in the case of the tensions and conflicts with cultural aspects – this was one of the main findings of the two programmes.

The theatre performances triggered very different reactions in the two villages. The reason could be that there were different motivations and expectations at the two sites. In Árroktő, the local political elite supported the programme and they expected the affirmation and consolidation of the identity and the unity of the village (and to some extent their own power) from the project. In Szomolya, the intervention was meant to enhance internal communication, including encouraging marginal groups of the community to speak up. As the process progressed, it was causing some annoyance for the local leaders, which they had to endure.

Hence, While in Árroktő, the risk was that the local elite may monopolize the program; in Szomolya it happened that particularly the members of the marginal groups became the basis and constant audience of the theatre performances, while the elite had to make an effort to cope with the outcomes in a constructive way.

4. Conclusions and lessons learnt from the project

In terms of its local effects, the project definitely can be considered successful. The participants were enriched with knowledge, connections and the means of self-expression. In terms of making an open discourse about taboo topics and building a closer relationship between members of the communities, success can not be complete after one single intervention like that, but considerable progress was made. Women in the settlements were more inclined to take part in these conversations, their activity and participation was decisive. It is also important to note that the attitude of women (beyond the community life) determines the inside publicity of the family life as well.

However, participants' reflections express the significance of the project in the lives of the communities, as the quotes from evaluative discussions prove below:

"I am sure that this community – which has to face conflicts all the time – has never experienced such a good "live" theatre. I hope that it has started some big change, which is something that our little village needed very much."

"A wonderful thing happened to us, in our little village this week. It had incredible community-creating force!"

"The lesson of the last week for me is that a small team of strangers could work marvels in a foreign place. They can unify the people in an unknown village from the young to the elders. They can entertain them taking aside anger, hostility, troubles and everyday problems."

ROMANIA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Romania is one of the largest countries in Central and South-eastern Europe with over 19 million people and 7.1 million households. 17,2 million people speak Romanian (90%), 1,2 million speak Hungarian (6,7%), 247.058 speak Romani (1,3%) and the rest of the population speak other languages. Regarding religion, 85,9%of the population are Orthodox and 4,6 % are Roman Catholic. Other religions, Reformed, Penecostal, Greek-Catholic and so on are represented in very small percentages. Over 23.000 people declared to have no religion and 21.200 described themselves as atheists.[31]

The Black See, Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine, Moldova and Bulgaria border Romania. Romania has 238.400 sq. kms. territory and is therefore the ninth largest country of the European Union.

The modern history of Romania began in 1859 when Prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza united Moldova with Wallachia (Tara Romaneasca). In 1881 Carol I of Romania was crowned and Romania became a kingdom. In 1877, after the War of Independence, Romania gained full independence from the Ottoman Empire. After World War I, Transylvania, Bucovina and Bessarabia were united with Romania. After World War II, Romania lost parts of its territory in favour of the Soviet Union. The army of the Soviet Union stayed for a few years on Romanian territory and Romania became a Communist country.
After the revolution of 1989, Romania started the transition period towards democracy and market economy.

According to the UNDP country profile, the life expectancy at birth in 2010 was 74 years. The GNI per capita in the same year was 11.046 USD. The inequality HDI value is quite high – 0,683.[32]

Between 1990 and 1996 the socio-democratic parties governed Romania in different coalition governments. In 1996 the liberal democrat coalition acceded to power. In 2000 the socio-democrats returned to power until 2004 when they were replaced by the centre right wing liberal democrats. The alliance between socio-democrats and liberals acceded to power in 2013.

After joining EU, due to the socio-economic hardships a large proportion of Romanians emigrated to countries such as Spain, Italy, Ireland and so on. For instance, on 30 October 2012 about one million Romanians live and work in Italy.[33] Romanians are the largest minority in Italy. Altogether it is estimated that there are about 4 million Romanians living outside the Romanian borders.

[31] See http://www.insse.ro/cms/files%5Cstatistici%5Ccomunicate%-5Calte%5C2012%5CRPL_rezultate%20preliminare.pdf (accessed on 20 November 2012).

[32] See http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/ROU.html (accessed on 20 November 2012).

[33] See http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-diaspora-13554749-37-000-romani-afacere-italia-fondul-crizei-economice-prezenta-romanilor-peninsula-stabilizat-sub-milion.htm (accessed on 23 November 2012).
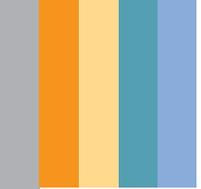
[34] See http://ec.europa.eu/romania/news/30072012_sondaj_eurobarometru_ro.htm (accessed on 24 November 2012).

[35] See http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-GL-12-003/EN/KS-GL-12-003-EN.PDF (accessed on 24 November 2012).

[36] In the National Census of 1992 only 409.723 people declared that they were Roma. In the nationa Census of 2002 only 535.140 people declareda that they were Roma. In 2011, it is estimated that 3,2% of the Romanian population are Roma.

[37] See Liegeois, J-P. and Gheorghe, N. (1995) Roma/Gypsis: A European minority, London: Minority Rights International.

[38] See Crowe, D. (1994) A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia, New York: St. Martin's Press; Fraser, A. M. (1992) The gypsies, Oxford: Blackwell; Stewart, M. (1997) The time of the Gypsies, Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press.

According to the last Eurobarometer,[34] Romanians believe that the most important issues facing Romania at the moment are the economic situation (45%), unemployment (33%), inflation (33%), crime (20%), health and social security (19%). About half of the Romanians tend to trust the European Union.

According to Eurostat[35] the GDP per capita in Romania is 5.800 Euro and the unemployment rate is 7,2 % in the general population and 23,7% among youth. Looking at the large numbers of social transfers Romania could be considered as a welfare state with a right wing orientation. For instance, social benefit is conditional on working for the community (welfare to work).

I. The general contextualization of the projects. Roma people in Romania and in EU

In the history books a lot of discussion can be found regarding the Roma or Gipsy people around Romania. The Roma population were divided into two categories: stable Roma, who live and work for the rulers, and nomad Roma, who travel around and with no fixed address. In 1856 Roma people were released from slavery and they have been free since that time. For a long time, they were invisible in public policies but came into public attention between the two world wars. After the World War II, they disappeared again from the public debates and returned after the Revolution in 1989. After 2000 the Romanian Government started to pay special attention to this ethnic group and adopted several policies in line with the European standards:

- National Plan for Combating Poverty and Promote Social Inclusion (2001),
- National Plan for development – 2007–2013,
- Strategy for improving the Roma situation in Romania 2001–2010.

In spite of these policies, Roma people are still at great risk of social exclusion with all the associated risks: lack of access to education and health services, poor employment opportunities, poor living conditions etc.

Although in the national census they do not represent a large proportion[36] of the Romanian population, some analysts[37] claim that the Roma population is around two million (about 10% of the national population). Based on this estimation one could say that Romania has the largest Roma population in Europe. Some of their socio-cultural characteristics are cause for concern in Europe: low educational level, few marketable social skills, lower standard of living etc.[38]

In Romania, some Roma live together in different parts of the cities or villages forming small Roma communities.

The official response to the Roma situation was the creation of a Department for Roma within the Romanian Government in 1997. In 2004, this Department was upgraded into the National Agency for Roma. The Agency is the coordinator and the implementation body for the National Strategy of Inclusion of Roma
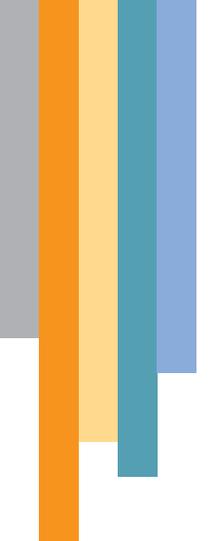
2012–2020, adopted by Governmental Decision no. 1221/2011. One of the most important programmes coordinated by the Agency is ROMED – The European Training Programme for Roma Mediators.[39] The main partners of the Agency are Roma NGOs, like: Romani CRISS, SASTIPEN – "Centrul romilor pentru politici de sanatate", etc. The general aim of the programme is to improve the quality and effectiveness of the work of schools, health, employment mediators with the view to supporting better communication and cooperation between Roma people and public institutions.

Under this programme a number of training sessions were organized for mediators. A European Code of Ethics for mediators was drafted and also a pool of trainers and a European networking were created.[40]

At the European level it seems that the Roma minority is the most numerous one. According to some estimations there are between 10-12 million Roma people in the EU. Although numerous national and European policies were put in place to fight discrimination against Roma people, they are still severely affected by this phenomenon. A survey conducted by the EU in 2009 demonstrated that 50% of the Roma people that participated in the study had been victims of discrimination in the past year and 20% had been victims of an attack of a racist nature.[41]

Since Romania is a country with a large diversity of religions, ethnic backgrounds and so on, some tensions between different communities evolved in time. As one of the Romanian politicians stated the solutions came as a "successive accumulation of small solutions".[42] Some Romanian leaders speak about a Romanian model of solving the ethnic conflicts.[43]

One of the most well known inter-ethnic conflict is the so called Hadareni case. In this case the European Human Rights Court in Strasbourg found Romania responsible for not being able to protect all of its citizens. More details about this case can be found in the next pages.

After 1989 the slow process of transition towards market economy started. This process was sometimes painful and produced a lot of disparities between different segments of society. Unfortunately, the price of transition was paid most of the time by the disadvantaged people such as the poor, the unemployed, the minorities and so on. Due to the fact that the state was unprepared to put in place effective social policies, different donors and NGOs took over this mission. One of the most active NGOs in this field was the Soros Foundation. The initial budget of this foundation was 1,4 million USD in 1990 but shortly this budget increased to 10 million USD in 1994. The mission of the foundation was to promote models for developing a society based on freedom, responsibility and respect for diversity. Since 1997 the foundation priorities have been: public administration, legal and juridical reform, primary and secondary education and public health.

[39] For more information: http://www.anr.gov.ro/docs/romed/EDROM_leaflet_EN.pdf.

[40] For more information, visit: http://www.anr.gov.ro/docs/romed/EDROM_leaflet_EN.pdf.

[41] ***EU-MIDIS, 2009, EU Minorities and Discrimination Survey. Main Results Report.

[42] Teodor Melescanu in „Relatii interetnice in Romania postcomunista", available at: http://www.edrc.ro/docs/docs/cartea-alba01.pdf (accessed on 25 November 2012).

[43] Mugur Isarescu, Petre Roman and others.
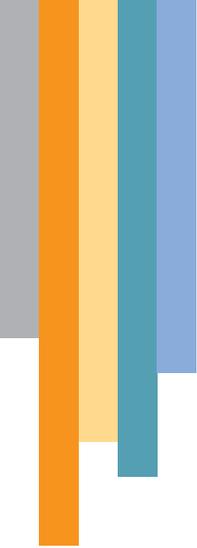
In 2000, the Soros Foundation turned its operational programmes into eleven separate NGOs and created a Soros Open Network. Two of these NGOs deal in particular with multiculturalism and Roma communities: Ethno-cultural Diversity Resource Centre and Resource Centre for Roma Communities.

Both centers have financed and coordinated numerous projects aiming to improve the Roma situation (e.g. Civic education for Roma, Journalism training for Roma, Training for community facilitators, Fighting discrimination).
The Resource Centre for Roma Communities organized with the support of the European Commission an interesting project where 30 representatives of Roma NGOs were trained to prevent and mediate conflicts.[44]
The other centre – Ethno-Cultural Diversity Resource Centre – coordinated numerous projects aimed at preventing and resolving the conflicts (e.g. Training for police staff in preventing and solving conflicts in multi-cultural communities; Minorities' rights in practice; Fighting marginalization). The centre also published a study – The Police and the Multicultural Communities in Romania – where 22 conflicts that took place between 1990–1994 between Roma people and the majority are described and explained.

After 2007 when Romania joined the EU, one of the main sectorial programmes was dedicated to social inclusion and therefore to the prevention of conflicts – Sectorial Operation-

al Programme Human Resources Development.
The main objectives of this programme are:
- Promoting quality initial and continuous education and training, including higher education and research;
- Promoting entrepreneurial culture and improving quality and productivity at work;
- Helping the young people and long term unemployed (re)enter the labour market;
- Developing a modern, flexible, inclusive labour market;
- Promoting (re)entry in the labour market of inactive people, including in rural areas;
- Improving public employment services;
- Facilitating access to education and to the labour market among the vulnerable groups.

Most of the projects financed under this theme aim to improve Roma access to employment (e.g. "Centres for counseling and mediation for Roma employment") to education (e.g. "Quality in education through mediation and restorative practices") or to health services (e.g. "The programme of health mediation: an opportunity to improve employment among Roma women").

To conclude this section, one could note that the nature of interventions and projects was defined according to the donor's priorities and not always based on local priorities and needs. When diversity and multiculturalism were seen as priorities by the funding bodies, projects related to these

[44] For more details: http://www.roma-center.ro/programe/index.php?page=11.
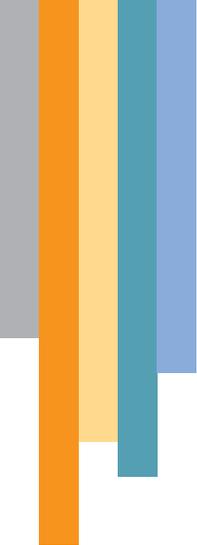
topics were numerous. Later when the priorities shifted towards employment and education, the former projects on multiculturalism and diversity disappeared and were replaced by projects on employment, education and health. At the same time the needs and the risks that the Roma population has to face are more and more complex and go beyond the Romanian borders.

II. Learning points

In order to be more accessible and easy to understand, the learning points are structured based on the projects selected in the country report:

III. 1. Hadareni case – a horizontal approach to conflict

1. Community conflicts should be defined and acted upon by the community itself – community partnership, local consultation etc.
2. Conflicts are sometimes symptoms of a wider problem – inter-ethnic conflicts might have different dimensions such as: discrimination, unequal access to resources (school, health services, jobs etc.), stereotypes etc. Often targeting all these aspects could lead to a resolution of the conflict.
3. Employing Roma police officers could lead to increased communication and better understanding of each other.
4. Perfect plans do not make perfect changes … unless there is a clear implementation plan and a real budget

available. Roma people in Hadareni are still acutely unemployed and waiting for the promised economy boost, the bricks factory.

III. 2. Mixed patrol

1. Solutions to crisis situations should fit or build upon the local traditions and cultures – patrols were common in the past but not necessarily involving the Roma.
2. Inclusion of a Roma leader in patrolling programme shows that petty crimes are taken seriously and nobody is ready to tolerate it.

III. 4. School mediator

1. The school mediator scheme seems to be effective in facilitating access to education for the ethnic minorities. They can better understand all the facets of the problem and are more able to identify relevant motivations for all parties to work together. The School mediator in Ramnicelu not only convinced the Roma parents that school could help their children to get their driving licence but also helped the school authorities to find ways to help children that missed school for a long time without stigmatizing them.
2. From the interviews, it appears to be important to explain to the community the role and the place of the school mediator. It also seems to be important that the school mediator should have a good status in the community that he or she represents in order to be more
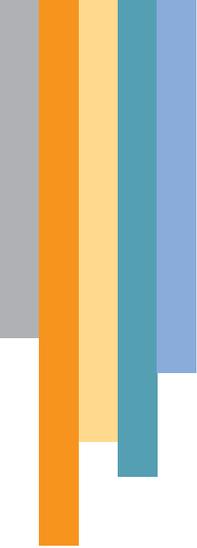
persuasive.

Sources:

Crowe, D. (1994) A History of the Gypsies of Eastern Europe and Russia, New York: St. Martin's Press.

Fraser, A. M. (1992) The gypsies, Oxford: Blackwell.

Liegeois, J-P. and Gheorghe, N. (1995) Roma/Gypsies: A European minority, London: Minority Rights International.

Stewart, M. (1997) The time of the Gypsies, Boulder and Oxford: Westview Press.

EU-MIDIS 2009, EU Minorities and Discrimination Survey. Main Results Report.

4.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS.
4.2.1

Project title:	1 HADARENI – A HORIZONTAL APPROACH TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION
Delivering organisation	Romanian Government – The National Agency for Roma In partnership with Roma and non-Roma NGOs
Partners involved	Started in 2006 and is still ongoing.
Project duration	Hadareni village, part of the Chetani commune, Mures County
Project scope	The problem was that local people had few opportunities for employment and cultural life. This problem was more acute for the Roma people. The target group was the population of this village with special focus on the Roma people.
Targeted problem, target group	The community centre has been completely renewed. The school has also been refurbished.
	Classes on multiculturalism and diversity are delivered in school. Seminars on inter-cultural communication were organized. Health workers were trained to fight discrimination. Local police staff was trained to negotiate and mediate conflicts. More police staff was employed. One police officer is from Roma background. The roads have been improved. The damaged houses have been rebuilt.
Change/progress achieved	• Local consultations, • Seminars and debates, • Classes on inter-cultural communication, • Concrete and practical help – refurbishing infrastructure and houses.
Means of achieving change / progress	• Targeting not only the symptoms of the problem (the conflicts) but also the wide context of the problem (low level of community development).

	• Involving local people together with Roma NGOs that can lobby for the local community. • Putting only one organization in charge of the coordination.
Key success factors	• The lack of political commitment to fully implement the project. • The failure to cover all parts of the community development plan – the absence of employment opportunities in Hadareni is still a major problem for locals. • The inconsistency of funding the implementation of the plan. The bricks factory is still to be constructed.
Overall budget of the project	The Romanian Government allocated initially 3,48 million RON for 2006–2008. It is almost impossible to estimate how much of this sum was actually spent.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Context

Hadareni is a small village belonging to commune Chetani, Mureș County. The village has about 870 inhabitants out of which 600 are Romanians, 147 Hungarians and 123 are Roma (14,1%).[46] The village is located along the European Road E 60.

The problem

The local conflict started on 20 September 1993 when three people started a fight (Gligor Chetan, Lacatus Rapa Lupian and Lacatus Aurel Pardailian). The conflict involved many Romanian and Roma people and ended with Craciun Chetan being killed by Lacatus Aurel Pupian. Local police tried to intervene but met with the refusal of Lacatus Aurel to surrender. Moreover he hid in one house and threatened to kill more people if they were not left in peace. Local people surrounded the house and started to throw stones at the house in order to make the offender get out. Shortly one local person threw a piece of paper in flames on the house and the building went on fire. The offender tried to escape but was captured by the local people and killed. In the context of old and unresolved conflicts between Roma on one hand and Romanians and Hungarians on the other, the crisis degenerated into a generalized conflict which ended with four people being killed, 14 houses being destroyed in fire and other four houses partially demolished.

After the conflict a lot of Roma people were forced to hide in the surrounding villages.

They filed a complaint to Prosecution and after many years the court convicted the perpetrators to between 1 to 7 years' imprisonment: 6 people were convicted for

46 http://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hădăreni_Mureş
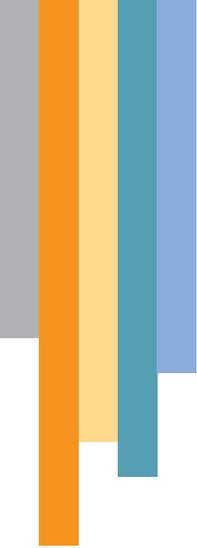
homicide and 12 people for other offences. In 1999 the Supreme Court finally settled the case. After being under investigation the local police force was not prosecuted considering that there were too few of them to stop the conflict. On the civil case, the court decided that the convicted perpetrators would have to pay compensation to the victims but the amount of compensation was not considered sufficient.

To conclude, the initial problem was the conflict between Roma people on one hand and the Hungarian and Romanian people on the other hand. At a latter stage, it was decided that the real problem in Hadareni is the lack of opportunities for the local people, especially for Roma. Apart from agriculture, Hadareni barely offers other employment opportunities. Furthermore, there is no forum where local people can get involved in resolving the local problems.

The project description
In 1993 and 1994 the Romanian Government allocated small funds for rebuilding the destroyed houses.
Due to the fact that the funds provided were not sufficient and the Roma people had to stay away from their houses for a long time, the case was brought before the European Court of Human Rights which found Romania guilty of not being able to guarantee its citizens the right of not being tortured or becoming the victim of ill treatment, the right to a fair trial, the right to private and family life and so on. Romania had to pay as compensation 262.000 EUR to the victims. At the same time the Romanian Government promised that some measures would be taken in order to prevent further escalations:

• to improve educational programmes that would prevent discrimination,
• to launch a public campaign to fight prejudice, stereotypes and other practices against the Roma people,
• to initiate some educational programmes to improve the Roma population's knowledge of law,
• to promote some community development programmes that will enhance the Roma people's chances of participating in the social, economic, cultural and political life,
• to improve housing in the region,
• to identify, prevent and solve local conflicts.

Indeed in 2006 the Romanian Government adopted the Governmental Decision no. 523/2006 that approved the community development programme for Hadareni. The project had a budget of 3.487.000 RON for 2006–2008. The National Agency for Roma was appointed as the head organization to implement this programme.

According to this normative act the following activities were meant to take place:

1. Partnership and community development:

A. Decisions
    a. setup of the local working group,
    b. setup of the county working group.

B. Projects
    a. organization of different activities to celebrate the local community – e.g. 8 April for the Roma days, 8 March – Mother's day etc.
    b. Roma participation at the decision making process – employment of a Roma counsellor at the village hall.
    c. organization of a local campaign about civic participation,
    d. preparation and distribution of different informative materials,
    e. organization of classes and meetings that facilitate communication between citizens and different public and private organizations,
    f. organization of classes for community development, partnership, strategic planning for solving local problems,
    g. organization of classes for negotiation and conflict management,
    h. organization of workshops on multiethnic communities,
    i. organization of classes on writing applications.
    j. organization of a community centre – seting up a centre with 3 employees.

2. Public campaign, civic education, prevention and fighting discrimination.

A. Decisions
    a. appointment of contact persons between Roma people and the local authorities,
    b. organization of mixed patrols with Roma, Hungarian and Romanian police officers,
    c. solving the problems of identity papers and the property documents.

B. Projects
    a. public campaign on citizens legislations,
    b. public campaign on reducing anti-social behaviour (information campaign, workshops on human rights, campaigns of preventing discrimination, workshops on democracy and its values, workshops for mass-media, classes for police officers on the relationship with the community, monitoring the application of the minorities legislation),
    c. juridical education and discrimination prevention (e.g. classes and workshops on human rights, discrimination and so on).

3. Education, Culture and Intercultural dialog.

A. Decisions
   a. appointment of a Roma mediator in the Hadareni School,
   b. introduction of Romani language in Hadareni School.

B. Projects
   a. setting up the Mother School in Hadareni,
   b. organization of preparatory class prior to year 1 in Hadareni,
   c. setting up a resource center for education,
   d. enhancement of professional and educational capacity in Hadareni School (to fight Roma discrimination),
   e. alphabetization and school assistance for underachieving children,
   f. refurbishment of the Hadareni School and Kindergarten,
   g. refurbishment of the Cultural Center in Hadareni.
   h. organization of classes and workshops on the history, religion and culture of Roma, Romanian and Hungarian people.

4. Economical Development

A. Clarification of the juridical situations of different real estates in Hadareni.

B. Projects
   a. vocational training (design of a market study on the local needs, organization of vocational trainings, organization of classes on entrepreneurial culture, workshops on fighting discrimination on the job market),
   b. local economical programme (organization of a centre for economical resources, feasibility study and funding of ideas with economical potential, organization of a traditional wood and metal workshop, organization of a vegetable summer house etc.).

5. Health and access to health services

A. Decisions
   a. organization of the consultative working-group on health issues.

B. Projects
   a. access to public health system (training and employment of health mediators from all the relevant ethnic backgrounds, organization of classes for mother and baby health, organization of local campaign for fighting discrimination in the health sector),
   b. training of health officials to fight discrimination.
   c. development of medical services at the Hadareni level (open a medical centre, employ and train nursery and medical staff).

6. Accommodation and infrastructure

A. Decisions
   a. refurbishment of the waste water system
   b. refurbishment of the street lightning system

B. Projects
   a. rehabilitatation of the roads in Haradeni,
   b. refurbishment of the local electricity, water and telephone systems,
   c. construction or restoration of houses (20 houses in plan),
   d. setting up public places (park and playground for children),
   e. construction of other buildings for public benefit (e.g. building a Pentecostal church and cemetery),
   f. development of local public transport (especially for children).

The total allocated budget was up to 982.000 EUR. The budget was divided between these dimensions and assumed co-financing from the local community.

In theory, if all these measures were implemented as planned, the general aim of the programme – to increase the standards of living in Hadareni and the level of mutual understanding among the inhabitants – would be likely to be achieved. Increasing the opportunities for the local people to find employment would decrease the pressure to seek illegitimate means of survival. Furthermore, if children in schools and adults in the community center knew more about each other, the representations of the other ethnic groups would cease to be the one specific to "the Others" and therefore violent acts would be less probable.

The reasons for not implementing the programme as planned are multiple and difficult to describe. First maybe the current political system does not encourage long term objectives. Once a new government is in place almost all the initiatives of the previous one are abandoned and the "real" reform starts. From the moment of conception till the moment of this evaluation at least four governments have been in power and the programme disappeared from the public agenda.

Another reason for not implementing the programme as planned could be that the Roma issue in Romania does not seem to be as important in real life as in the government rhetoric. There are neither consistent policies nor concrete plans for Roma inclusion. Probably the Roma issue becomes important only when European partners complain about Romanians (Roma) abroad, when they are accused of illegal acts, or when a European Court or Institution threatens Romania with sanctions. It is only then that the Romanian Government starts to talk about commissions, inter-ministerial groups and programmes that will change the Roma reality. Once the European pressure disappears we tend to go back to the "bussiness as usual" mode.

The methodology and the conflict resolution

The aim of this micro-study was to assess whether this way of approaching an inter-ethnic conflict is effective or not. In order to achieve this end, the researcher used the following methods and techniques of collecting data:

1. Documentation – desk research – in the Governmental documents and normative acts (e.g. Governmental Decision no. 523/2006 on approving the Plan for community development in Hadareni 2006–2008, Order no. 172/2006 on approving the Methodology for implementing the HG no. 523/2006; The report on the implementation of Hadareni Programme December 2006 etc.), third parties documents (e.g. Memorandum on the implementation of the general measures in the judgements of Moldovan and Others vs. Romania and other related cases from the European Roma Rights Centre), local mass media (e.g. 'Hadareni, the village of interethnic hard feelings' in Romania Libera, 6. Dec. 2006).
2. Field visit – 8-9 May 2012 – in Hadareni and in Mures.
3. Interviews with representatives of police (1 – with the Crime Prevention Department from the Mures County Police), of commune hall (1 – the secretary of the commune), of school (2) and local people (3). The questions addressed issues like: how was the situation before the conflict and how it is now, what has changed, what has not changed, why not, what should have been done differently and so on.

Conclusions and lessons learnt

From the field visit and different documents it can be concluded that the infrastructure work has been almost entirely realized: the community centre has been renewed and used (see Picture 1), the school and the road have also been restored (see Picture 2). The 36 dwellings (more than the estimated 20) have been repaired or re-constructed.

The industrial centre meant to provide Roma people with work – brick building – has not been completed. According to the community hall the local authorities will donate 2 hectares of land in order for this factory to be built. The state is expected to invest the funds needed for this piece of infrastructure. Meanwhile Roma people still have no work and no land to work on. Some of them immigrated to other European countries and came back to build impressive houses. Locals still complain about the fact that Roma people steal their agricultural products and animals they have around the household.

From the interviews with the police and school representatives it can be concluded that the authorities organized different local meetings and seminars on inter-cultural communication. Furthermore, local police was trained in how to engage with Roma communities. Health workers were also trained to fight against discrimination. In some of these events Romani Criss (a Roma NGO) was involved. Another NGO – Resource Centre for Roma Communities – was also involved in delivering public information campaigns: civic education, human rights, legal education and so on.

The local school also introduced classes on inter-cultural communication and displays posters raising awareness of how to live together. Although these classes are not offered any more, the school still seems aware of its mission. Around 17 Roma children attend the school on a regular basis and seem well integrated among others.

The police increased the number of police officers in Chetani commune from five to seven. The police also employed one police officer with Roma background who had the duty to work mainly in Hadareni.
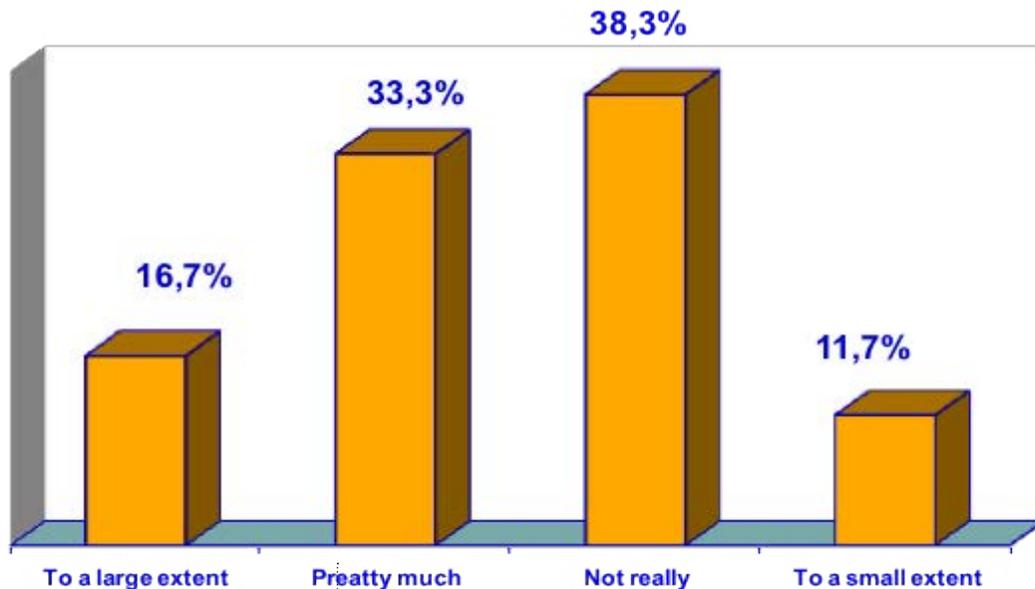
The village continues to be under observation by the police. In 2006 the Mures County Police organized a survey on public safety opinions in Hadareni and the result was mixed: 50% of the people stated that they felt safe and 50% stated that they felt unsafe.

Survey
Source: Survey on social safety in Hadareni, Mures County Police

Although this is perceived to be an improvement compared to 1993, the situation could be much better. The main difficulty that remains unsolved is the unavailability of jobs for Roma people. From what the two locals said it seems that the Roma people are still left without regular income and this creates a pressure towards illegal activities.

To conclude, it seems that an approach of conflict management based on community development principles contributes to the overall improvement of the social climate. However, a careful implementation of the measures and a real budget that the plan can rely on are crucial in order to achieve the aim. Unless the Government or the local authorities provide real jobs for the local people – especially for Roma – the dominant feeling is that the plan is only half implemented.

To a large extent	Preatty much	Not really	To a small extent
16,7%	33,3%	38,3%	11,7%

4.2.2

Project title	**MIXED PATROL**
Delivering organisation	Local people in Ramnicelu together with police.
Partners involved	Ramnicelu, Buzau County.
Project duration	In the 90s on an ad hoc basis.
Project scope	The problem was that Roma people had no access to employment or other forms of legitimate income and therefore stole the agriculture goods from the others.
Targeted problem, target group	Increased confidence between majority, Roma people and police force. A better social climate in the community.
Change/progress achieved	Organizing mixed patrols with Romanians, Roma people together with police officers in order to prevent theft from the fields.
Means of achieving change / progress	The mixed patrols idea was based on an old tradition specific to the rural areas in Buzau county.
	Therefore this idea was not a new one for the local community and was easy to accept as a way of action. It seems also important that the Roma people involved in the mixed patrol are people with high level of respect in the Roma community. As one of the interviewees said: "sometimes only knowing that CR was one of the people on duty discouraged others from going stealing."
Key success factors	By focusing only on combating conflicts and not providing constructive alternatives for solving local problems one can generate more conflicts. The real problem in Ramnicelu was the lack of employment for Roma people. Only focusing on defending the village fields possibly generated so called 'crime displacement' whereby thefts still took place, only not in Ramnicelu.
Overall budget of the project	All participants were volunteers and therefore were not paid.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT
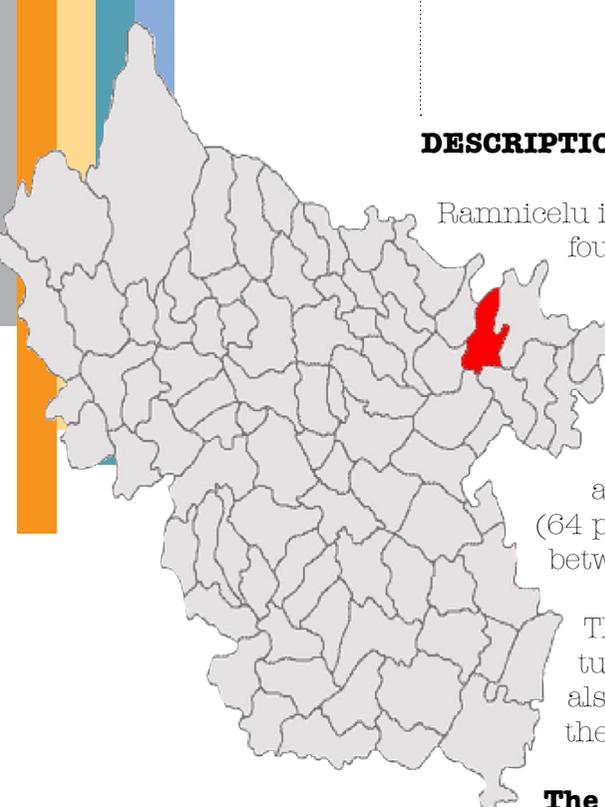
Ramnicelu is a commune in Buzău County that includes four different villages: Colibași, Fotin, Ramnicelu and Știubei. The commune is situated 20 km from Râmnicul Sărat. The total commune area is 48,54 sq. kms.. According to the census in 2002, the ethnic structure of Ramnicelu is 3.613 Romanians and 722 Roma. The two main religions in Ramnicelu are Orthodox (4.269 people) and Pentecostal (64 people). The majority of people are men, aged between 15-59 years (1.208).[46]

The main activity in the commune is agriculture. Apart from that, it seems that Roma people also buy agricultural products and sell them in the markets all around Romania.

The problem and the project

Due to the limited access to legitimate sources of income, Roma people were presumed to go stealing from the agricultural fields of other local people. This phenomenon was more acute in the autumn when the produce is ready to be collected.

At the beginning of the 90s, in order to reduce the incidence of petty crimes that took place in the commune, the local police took the initiative to create mixed patrols: one police officer and one representative of the Roma community. Sometimes representatives from the majority population were also involved in the patrolling.

The aim of this patrol was to discourage people from commiting crime and also to enhance the relationship between police and the local Roma community.[47]

Field visit and project description

On 17 September 2012 a visit to Ramnicelu was organised in order to see whether these mixed patrols are still maintained and with what kind of impact. The main questions were: why were these patrols organized, why did they also involve Roma people and not only police, were there improvements in the crime rate in the village and so on.

In order to plan this visit, meetings were organized with the County Police – Prevention Department (the head of this department) and – the prefect's counselor on the Roma issue. From these interviews, it was concluded that these mixed patrols were quite common in the area. They were called "on duty" (in Romanian "de gardă" or "de caraulă") and consisted in patrolling around the village together with the police officer. Every adult male in the village was called up once in a while to be "on duty". The counsellor remembers that they used to visit places that were more likely to be the targets for thieves. This could be considered as an incipient form of "hot spot" style.

[46] Available on: http://www.edrc.ro/recensamant.jsp?regiune_id=503&judet_id=548&localitate_id=609 (accesed on 18 September 2012)

[47] information available at: http://www.edrc.ro/docs/docs/politia/167-182.pdf (accessed on 4 July 2012).
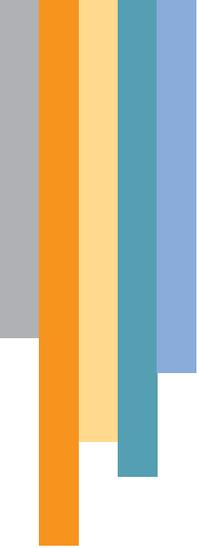
In Ramnicelu the researcher met with some local people, the director of School no. 1, the teachers in that school and the health assistant in the village of Ramnicelu.

Based on the interviews, it was concluded that these patrols were very useful at the beginning of the 90s, especially in reducing the frustration.

Conclusions and lessons learnt

The model used in Ramnicelu was to involve a Roma leader to accompany the police in patrolling in the Roma part of the village and by the fields. It seems that local patrols used to be a common practice in the past. From what they stated it seems that by doing so the Roma community stopped feeling that police is the "enemy" and started to co-operate more. At the same time the number of street incidents and thefts decreased and locals started to feel safer.

Since 2000 a new church has made its way into the village – The Pentecostal - and the vast majority of Roma decided to join in. This change also generated a routine transformation and Roma people abandoned the life style in which alcohol and partying played an important role. They now lead a more sober life and are more concerned with family and welfare.

All these changes in the local structure facilitated a safer community and constructive interactions between Roma people and Romanians. According to the Crime Prevention Department from the Buzău Police, Ramnicelu is now a village with no significant crime rate or a particular crime structure. The locals mentioned that back in those times mixed patrols were useful and a constructive way of building up trust between different communities. From what they say, it can be concluded that mixed patrols were not necessary anymore and that is why they ceased to exist. However it is not clear to what extent the safer community can be attributed to the mixed patrol or other contextual or structural changes.

4.2.3

Project title	**SCHOOL MEDIATOR**
Delivering organisation	School Inspectorate – School no. 1 Ramnicelu
Partners involved	
Project duration	Since 2008
Project scope	Ramnicelu, Buzau County.
Targeted problem, target group	The problem was that Roma people had no access to education.
Change/progress achieved	More Roma children attend school More Roma people stay in school after the 9th grade Roma community understand better why school is important for the children.
Means of achieving change / progress	Employment of a Roma person that is respected in the community. Explaining to the Roma community what are the immediate benefits of school for the children. The fact that only people with education can qualify for a driving licence was an important incentive for the Roma people.
Key success factors	Allowing the Roma mediator to advise the school on the best ways of supporting Roma children in school. Sometimes the school curricula and also teachers need to be flexible in order to sustain the motivation and the efforts to continue school. School is only one dimension of social inclusion. Other aspects should be also stressed in a more comprehensive strategy, such as: employment, housing, leisure time etc.
Overall budget of the project	Since the salary of the school mediator is very low, the budget is about 12.000 RON (around 2.800 EUR) per year.

Context

As Ramnicelu is an agriculture-based village, most of the people are involved in this economic sector. Roma people are mainly in charge of taking the agricultural produce from Ramnicelu and selling them all around Romania. Due to this custom most of the Roma people leave the village when the autumn comes and return back in December after they have sold their produce. When they leave to do their trade, they travel together with all the members of their family and
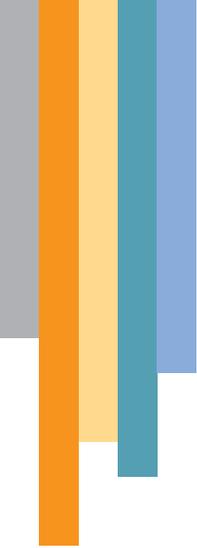
therefore children are not able to attend school. In December, upon their return, some children come back to school but others simply give up.

The problem

The problem as it was defined by the local people was the school dropping out rate among Roma children. When the teachers and the director of the school were asked how this position had been created, they stated that the drop-out rate was very high among Roma children because of their seasonal routines.

Together with the School Inspectorate of Buzau, the school proposed the establishment of a school mediator position in school.

The aim of this school mediator would be to assist Roma children in coming (back) to school.

Field research and project description

In order to understand better how the school mediator system works, on 18 September 2012 the researcher made a second visit to Ramnicelu. During this visit he met the director of School no. 1, the school mediator and two representatives of the Roma community who happened to be around the school.

The main questions were: what was the problem, who de-

fined this as a problem, who were the actors involved, what was the solution, what is different now, what are the limits of this solution etc.

The school employed a school mediator in 2008. Prior to that, he was trained together with other eight participants within a Phare project[48] to become a mediator. The training took one year to complete including both the theoretical and the practical components. The Phare programme was phase two of a multiyear Phare programme. This phase received one million EUR from the EU and another 2,3 million EUR from the Romanian Government. The aims of this programme were to improve pre-school education conditions, stimulate early enrolment, reduce drop-out rates and so on. The activities took place in 12 counties, with Buzau County being one of them. According to the school mediator, his main mission is to "convince" the Roma families that school is important for the children. In order to do that, he visits the families and speaks to them especially when their children are not coming to school. He also arranges discussions with the school representatives about flexible ways for the children to catch up after they missed school for a long time (when they accompany their parents around the country to sell their products). According to the school mediator, sometimes he needs to discuss particular situations with different teachers in order to help children to deal with the academic content. Sometimes teachers agree to hold afternoon classes for the children who missed school for

[48] Phare RO 2004/016-722.01.01.02 regarding the access to education for disadvantaged groups.
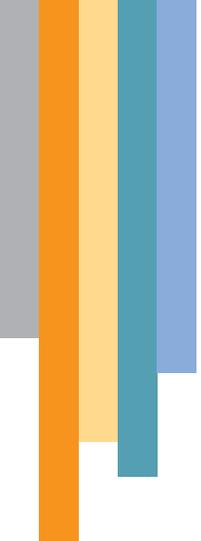
a long time. Some other times they can ask these children to do more homework in order to catch up with the others.

The school director appreciated his activity as positive, since there is a clear improvement in school attendance among Roma people. Although the director was not in the position to provide any comparative statistics, he stated that prior to the existence of the school mediator one could hardly see any Roma children in school. Eight Roma children are now registered in the Buzau high school (about 15 km away from Ramnicelu). It seems that some children are still committed to school even after they the construction work on the school in Ramnicelu is completed.

The Roma people who were interviewed stated that initially they did not fully understand what the role of the school mediator was. In time they started to grasp the fact that his role was "to bring children to school". They understand now that school is important for children. What seems to motivate them more is the fact that once the children finish their nine grades they can obtain a driving licence, which is so important in their lives. The school mediator made this point very clear to them and they see now the concrete benefit for their children to go to school.

Learning points and recommendations

The school mediator scheme seems to be effective in facilitating access to education for the ethnic minorities. They can better understand all the facets of the problem and are more able to identify relevant motivations for all parties to work together.

The School mediator in Ramnicelu not only convinced the Roma parents that school can help their children get the driving licence but also helped the school authorities find ways to help children who missed school for a long time without stigmatizing them.

From the interviews, it appears to be important to explain to the community the role and the place of the school mediator. It also seems to be important that the school mediator should have a good status in the community that he or she represents in order to be more persuasive.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

5.1 INTRODUCTION

"Conflict is a fundamental challenge for humanity. The fact that it can offer benefits to individuals, groups and nations, leads to the conclusion that conflicts are likely to continue." *(Mischnick, 2007)*

General information

Slovakia was part of Czechoslovakia from 1918 (except for a short period of the existence of an autonomous Slovak State during World War II) until the "velvet divorce" in January 1993. Previously, the territory of present day Slovakia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The clerofascist Slovak State existing in the period 1939–1945 left present day Slovaks with still unresolved heritage of painful relations between Slovakia and Slovak Jews and Roma in connection with persecutions and transports to concentration camps. This part of Slovak history is still awaiting the process of reconciliation, and until then, it will serve as an unnamed source of potential community tensions and conflicts in the country, unexpectedly showing and hiding its face. The post-1993 Czecho-Slovak "velvet divorce" subsequent independence years can be divided into several chapters. Chapter one revolved around frosty relations with the European Union and NATO combined with the rejection of economic reforms.

For the first five years of independence, there was growing international criticism of the lack of respect for minority rights and the democratic process. In October 1998 a string of coalition governments pursuing nationalist policies were replaced by an alliance of liberals, centrists, left-wingers and ethnic Hungarians. The year 1998 saw a change of direction, culminating in EU and NATO membership in 2004. During 1998–2006, Slovakia forged ahead with an economic reform programme and saw a boost in foreign investment. The economic reforms turned unpopular with voters, and a centre-left coalition ruled the country in the period 2006–2010, relying also on the support of the nationalist Slovak National Party. Slovakia joined the EU in 2004 and the Eurozone in 2009. As a Eurozone member, Slovakia has seen rapid economic growth, driven by exports of electronic goods and cars. Its forces have taken part in the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan, and in peacekeeping duties in Kosovo. Presently, again, the country is managed by the centre-left populist party with a history of connections with the nationalists, which won an unprecedentedly strong majority in the Parliament in the 2011 general elections, replacing a short rule of the wide centre-right coalition. Slovakia went through a public administration reform between 2001 and 2005, including decentralization and modification of relations and redistribution of competences between the state administration and regional and local self-governments. However, according to Transparency International Slovensko website, corruption on all levels of the state and local self-government management continues to be one of the main problems in
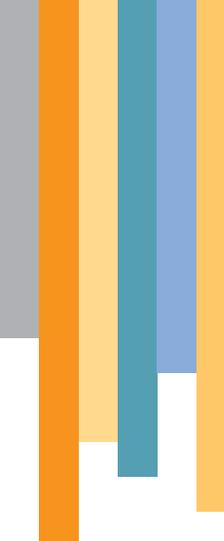
the country. The nongovernmental organization sector is well-developed. All major newspapers are privately-owned. The constitution guarantees free press. By June 2010 there were 4,1 million internet users (source: BBC).

Statistical information

Slovakia is a country with a population of 5,5 million (UN, 2011) living on 49.033 sq. kms. The main language is Slovak, major religion is Roman Catholic Christianity. Life expectancy at birth is 72 years for men, 80 years for women.

Gross domestic product is 73 EUR per capita, compared to an average of 100 EUR per capita within the EU in 2010 according to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. The number of unemployed in Slovakia grew by 131.500 people between the years 2008 and 2010. Thus, unemployment rate reached 14,4% in 2010 in Slovakia (compared to 9,6% in the EU). Compared to 2008, in 2010, the country's net income decreased by 3,3 EUR per person per month. In 2010, the average net income was 348,9 EUR per person per month. Between 2008 and 2010, expenditures on food dropped by about 3 EUR, spending on alcohol and tobacco increased by about 1 EUR per person per month, while spending on education dropped by 0,30 EUR.

The figures show regional differences within the country as follows: while in 2010 in the Bratislava region 20.900 people were unemployed, in the Central Banska Bystrica region the corresponding figure was 60.300 and in Eastern Presov region 72.000. The highest unemployment rate in the country is measured in the Eastern Slovakia reaching 18,5%, while in central Slovakia it is 16,5%, and 6,2% Bratislava region. Net income in the Bratislava region in 2010 was about 49 EUR higher than net expenditures, while in the Prešov region in Eastern Slovakia the positive difference was at 47 EUR.

Number of recorded crimes continuously declined between 2006 and 2010 in all regions.

Slovakia's ethnic Hungarian community constitutes about a tenth of the country's population. In connection with international politics, the status of this substantial minority has long been a source of tension between Slovakia and Hungary. In 2006 the Hungarians constituted 9,53% of the population and 9,44% (513.146 people) in 2010 as reported by the Slovak Statistical Office. During the years 2006 to 2010, the number of Slovak schools dropped from 1985 to 1932 and the number of Hungarian schools dropped from 252 to 242.

Slovakia also has a significant Roma population which in many localities suffers disproportionately high levels of poverty and social deprivation. According to the Slovak Statistical Office, citizens of Roma ethnicity made up 1,86% of the population in 2006; 1,92% in 2008 and 1,97% in 2010 (107.000 of people in 2010). However, according to the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma integration in 2020,
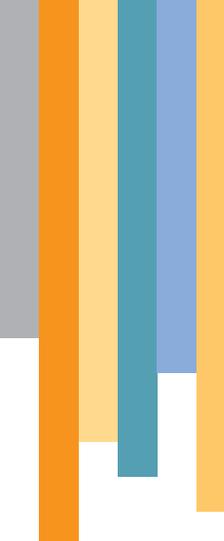
(approved by Government Resolution 1/2012 of 11 January 2012), ethnicity has been recorded on the basis of self-declaration in Slovakia since the census in 1991, which probably resulted in a significant statistical decrease in the size of the Roma population compared with field work estimates. This trend persisted in the census in 2001.

The results of the Census in 2011 are under evaluation. The actual number of Roma living in Slovakia according to the data collected by the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Roma Communities is 320,000 people. The estimate for Demographic Research Centre, however, is likely to say that 440.000 Roma were living in Slovakia in 2011, which is about 8% of the total population. The Roma are concentrated mostly in Eastern Prešov, Košice and Central Banská Bystrica Region. 1.575 settlements of different types inhabited by communities perceived as Roma have been identified. In 772 villages or towns, Roma live in integrated communities, scattered among the majority population. Segregated populations live in 149 settlements, situated on the outskirts of a village or town with no access to running water and with a high proportion of illegal dwellings. In other words, about 60% of Slovak Roma live integrated and scattered among majority inhabitants. According to the UNDP survey in 2010, more than half of all Roma households are living in separate brick houses; apartments in residential buildings are used by a total of 21% of households. The non-standard forms of dwelling are inhabited by 16% of Roma households, of which 10%

in huts and 5% in wooden houses or a non-standard type of dwelling. The density of inhabitants in these locations is sometimes around 6-10 times higher than in the under standard Slovak living conditions.

39% of dwellings have connection to the water supply. According to the above mentioned UNDP survey of 2010, the largest group of the Roma are in the reproductive age. This group, together represented 44% of the Roma population, of which 19% were children in compulsory education and 25% were young adults aged up to 25 years. In addition, 72% of Roma and 75% of Roma women in reproductive age are unemployed. In 2030, theRoma population will make up 10% of Slovakia's population and 16% of the population in reproductive or school age. While the share of non-Roma seniors will rise to 21% of the Slovak population, the proportion of elderly Roma will remain at 0,5%.

Conflict analysis of Slovakia

As a legacy of the still unprocessed past, the psychological profile of the country contains a feature that is crucial for conflict resolution: the expectations shown towards a higher authority to be protective and decision-making. In the subject-object self-perception scale, where both positions are relevant for any individual or group, the self-perception as an object, connected with association of powerlessness, seems to be significantly stronger among the Slovak public in general. It seems that a sudden request for self-responsibility and full self-respect that Slovaks recently openly need
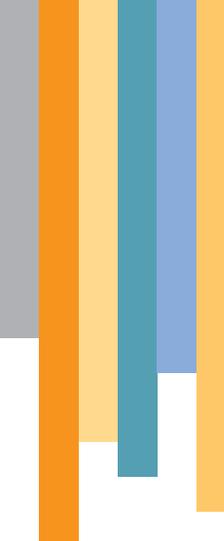
to face might be seen as threatening and therefore might trigger defensive reactions. However, the shift towards the balance to the stronger self-perception as a subject goes on in different social and ethnic groups simultaneously and with varied intensity.

The cultural associations of the word "conflict" have been rather negative in Slovakia. Behaviour connected to denying the conflict, probably to avoid the negative evaluation of failure from the broader social environment, has been observed. It is characteristic of our cultural region that conflicts usually stay hidden until a well developed stage.
To open up a hidden conflict at a latter stage can give rise to very negative, completely destructive parameters.[49]

One type of community conflicts in Slovakia arises around the dimension of social gaps, which are sometimes confused with or overlap with ethnic differences – especially in the situations of coexistence of Slovak Roma and non-Roma groups in ethnically mixed localities, where Roma live under the level of social standards minimally perceived in the country as acceptable. These tensions and reciprocal fears then tend to transfer also to other localities, where the social gap between Roma and non-Roma local inhabitants is not a reality. Applying the terminology of family systems theory into the country situation, the Slovak Roma seem to be taking over and are unconsciously expected to keep the role of "enfant terrible of the family" and tend to mirror or embody the social heritage and phenomena appearing within the broader majority society in an enlarged image.
Among the most visible symptoms of the frozen community conflicts of the type mentioned above are the relatively new phenomena of building walls separating the Roma and non-Roma settlement areas in several localities, genuinely segregated schools in some of the localities or radicalization of words used by the media and public arena.

The work with differences in the sets of beliefs, rules of behaviour and values is crucial in the area of community conflict management in ethnically mixed Roma-non-Roma localities. Conflicts concerning the moral differences tend to be long-lasting and are often driven by the assumption that the moral rule of the individual or group in question can not be wrong. Those who participate in the moral conflicts may even prolong the duration of the conflict, because they see the conflict necessary and moral. Any compromise concerning the values most important to them is considered to be a threat to their basic human needs and their sense of identity.[50] A conflict may thus turn into a legal dispute. Shifting the conflict into law gives the participants the space to require action by those who have a "duty" to recognize the legal claims. If the parties are not concerned about their legal rights against the rights of others in a broader context, the conflict is likely to become difficult to manage.[51]

[49] Ondrušek, D., Labáth, V. and Tordová, Z. (2004) Konflikt, zmierovanie, zmierovacie rady, PDCS, Bratislava, ISBN 80-968934-7-5.
[50] Ondrušek et al., 2004.
[51] Ibid.
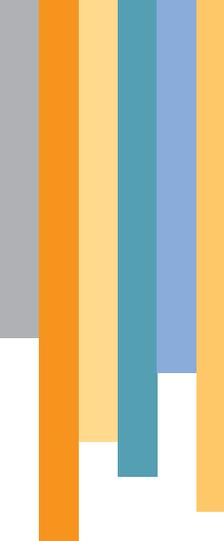
Specifically in the area of community conflict management in the localities described above, the three types of action – conflict management work, community building work and social work supporting the social rise of the most vulnerable members of the community – must operate in synergy.

Moreover, besides the tensions between groups and individuals in the community, a specific type of internal personal conflict may appear: a conflict between the loyalty to unwritten rules and values of original social group or class of an individual whose living conditions have improved and the value system of the new class environment. According to Ruby K. Payne, for an individual to move from poverty to the middle class, he or she must, at least temporarily, give up his or her personal relationships at the expense of the success.[52] The price for the social rise is loneliness.

Besides the combined ethnic and social tensions, another community conflict zone in Slovakia is the perception and the use of public spaces, administered by the state administration, local self-government bodies and former public spaces newly acquired by private entities. After 1990, the ambitions of private investors entered Slovakia in a situation, where the perception of the terms "public" and "private" had been deformed by decades of communist regime. The development of public management methods and ethics is an ongoing process. While in the early nineties of twentieth century the motivation of leaders and public figures to be trained and educated in alternative means of public management and conflict resolution was rather high, presently it is strongly reduced. At the same time, the activities of the "new third party" – the private investment entities in relations with local self-governments - are still not operated with transparent public management methods.

Speaking of motivations behind the community conflicts in Slovakia, the need for a feeling of safety and personal boundaries should be examined within the country in connection with community conflict management and prevention. The need to feel safe, the need to preserve one's own identity and the need for living space are universal human needs connected with the potential of positive motivations usable in conflict transformation. Moreover, the civil family disputes mediation practice brought knowledge of another possible motivation behind the types of frozen conflict that might deserve the attention of community conflict management experts: a motivation to preserve the conflict perceived as the only known means of preserving the relationship. Persistence of conflict and persistence of the relation overlap here in the subjective perception of individuals.

The most usual triggers of the local community conflicts in Slovakia appear to be coming either from external sources or from inside: media, economic crisis, dependence-recycling state social benefit system, political campaigns having short-term goals and relying on populist mobilization methods

[52] Payne, Ruby K. (2010) Mosty z chudoby, stratégie pre profesionálov a komunity, Equilibria s.r.o. Košice, ISBN 978-80-89284-53-5.
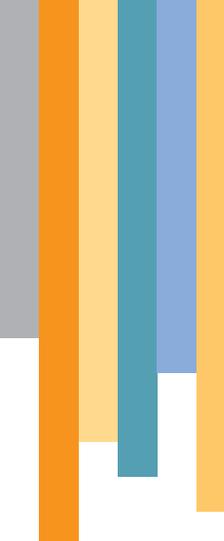
and elements of ethnic nationalism,[53] flow of private capital into the community, ineffective local self-government representatives, desire to ease the unbearable situation, power declaration, the will to apply the subjective beliefs to justice.

Following Johan Galtung's classification of dimensions of violence[54] as a consequence of conflict escalation or conflict freeze, in Slovakia the direct violent conflict behaviour is manifested mainly through words and declaratory acts (such as demonstrations and marches). Cultural violence can be seen through symbols and messages of mostly anonymous authors in public spaces. The structural violence is most visible in the area of execution within the school system and the labour market, enabling segregated and specialized schools for Roma children and enabling ongoing ratial discrimination in the selection of workers. However, as the Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma integration until the year 2020 states, in the case of delay in addressing the issues of marginalization and social inclusion of Roma communities, the threat of tensions between the majority population and the Roma will increase, which can escalate into open conflicts including physical violence.

Community conflict management in Slovakia: research, legislation and research

While the human rights, social system and partially also conflict resolution legislation are of a good standard, the executive system falls behind. The change of the legislative frame of the area of human rights and conflict resolution in Slovakia runs ahead in time of the actual application and change of internal attitudes of its inhabitants. Definitely, for future development in the area of community conflict management, Slovakia can lean on several door-opening laws and documents.

Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma integration until the year 2020 (approved by Government Resolution n. 1/2012 of 11 January 2012), a governmental document so far existing only on paper but in a valid form, confirms the public consensus on the need for the application of the principles of conflict management and prevention in Slovakia by the following statements: "The prevention of discrimination and conflict arising from the existence of unequal status in the community currently lacks the systematic use of mechanisms successfully used in other parts of the world. After attempts in the late '90s of the twentieth century, it is now virtually non-existent in Slovakia. Creating space to re-establish the community mediation and conciliation services requires a visible increase of tension and an urgent need to tackle the prevention of conflicts between the Roma and non-Roma population. This requires the creation of a network of intermediaries, mediators, facilitators, in a synergy of relevant state institutions, municipalities, NGOs, churches and individuals in the areas where there is an existing or potential conflict related to the coexistence of the Roma and non-Roma population. This measure aims to articulate and to open the

[53] Mesežnikov, G. (2009) National and Right-Wing Radicalism in the New Democracies: Slovakia, Paper for the workshop of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation on "Right-wing extremism and its impact on young democracies in the CEE countries", IVO, Bratislava.

[54] Mischnick, R. (2007) Nenásilná transformácia konfliktov, Manuál pre tréning trénerov, 1.vydanie, Bratislava: vydané konzorciom KURVE Wustrow, PDCS, CSDC, IFOR, PATRIR.
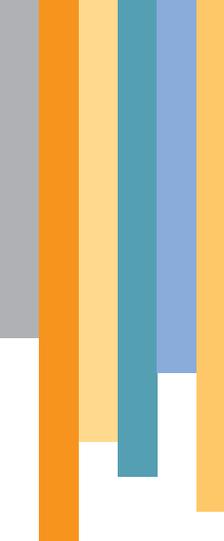
way to solving the problem of the emerging conflict before it escalates – which ultimately also reduces the costs of the conflict resolution. It also opens up the possibility of participatory involvement of interested parties in solutions, taking responsibility for what is happening in their community, while the dialogue itself positively helps to improve relations."

One of the global aims of the government's strategy has been formulated as follows:
• to put in place functioning mechanisms for the resolution and prevention of conflicts at the local level to deal with community problems in order to reduce the tension existing in mutual coexistence of Roma and non-Roma population and to reduce a feeling of resignation and insolvability of these conflicts,
• to create space and mechanisms for resolving and preventing conflicts between Roma and non-Roma,
• to create a stable system of community mediation in the areas of acute conflict,
• to provide conditions for the creation of a network of conciliation councils in regions and localities with a higher concentration of Roma, which has a role in early signalling of potential conflicts and in providing conflict resolution in the early stages of the conflict.

Positive work has been done in the field of alternative conflict resolution by creating and supporting the implementation of the Act on civil mediation that has come into effect in 2004. Nowadays, Slovakia has 660 registered mediators in the area of individual civil disputes. However, this type of training cannot completely replace the community mediation training. If this happens, the success score in resolving community conflicts might be low and the public evaluation of the effectiveness of community mediation might mistakenly deteriorate. The assumption of the equality of parties and the civil mediation system based on the principle or horizontal relations are of no use as such without respecting the differences in those communities and families where the internal decision making system is vertical and the country's general legal principle of full self-responsibility of an individual over 18 years of age is diluted by tradition. In order to work effectively, the actual status quo in these communities should be accepted.

By now, community mediation and conflict management and prevention are being realized rather informally in Slovakia, sometimes openly but mainly as a hidden agenda of the projects running under the donor-driven key words of integration, co-existence, civic dialogue etc. Significant educational and research work in the professional area of community conflict management has been done by the NGO Partners of democratic change (PDCS).

Another relevant research study has been published by Péter Hunčík and Sándor Bordás in 1999 with the title of "Tensions Anticipation System", presenting a system that allows the
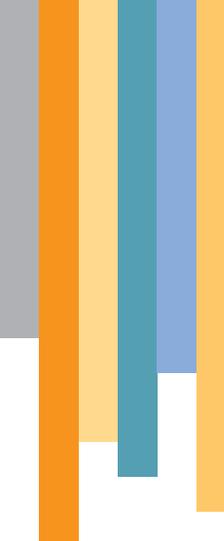
measurement and forecasting of ethnic tension between Slovaks and Hungarians in southern Slovakia by standard diagnostic methods used in psychology and psychiatry. This research was based on two hypotheses: Firstly, behavioural changes induced by social influences (primarily of ethnic character) can be measured by psychological, social and medical methods. Secondly, when we map the country based on a relatively small sample using these methods, we obtain relevant data to work with, which enables us to predict and prevent social disasters.[55]

Research work of both entities apparently served as a source for the formulation of the conflict management principle in the governmental document Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma integration until the year 2020.

In order to provide an accurate categorization of the conflict management work in each of the analysed projects, the basic dictionary of the different approaches to the work on community conflict from the Berghof handbook of conflict transformation cited in a publication issued and communicated by PDCS[56] is being used in this text:

- Conflict management – activities that lead to restriction, alleviation and suppression of open conflict. Specifically, the activity which is to manage the conflict and get it under control in order to limit the negative impacts to prevent vertical or horizontal (territorial expansion) escalation of existing violent conflict. The conflict management is being applied from the beginning of tension until the end of violent conflict and crisis situations.
- Conflict prevention – activities carried out in particularly vulnerable locations and times for short to medium period, their goal is to identify situations that could result in violent conflict, for to reduce manifested tensions, to prevent escalation of existing tensions and to remove sources of danger before they could lead to violence.
- Preventive peacekeeping are mainly activities carried out before the outbreak of open violent conflict.
- Conflict resolution – activities with the aim to overcome the deep-rooted causes of conflict, including structural, behavioural and subjective aspects of the conflict. The process focuses more on the relationship between the parties than on the contents of a particular outcome.
- Conflict settlement – an agreement between the conflicting parties, allowing them to end violent conflict, but that does not substantially change the underlying causes of conflict.
- Conflict transformation – a general and comprehensive term that refers to the activities and processes leading to changes in the various characteristics and symptoms of conflict by addressing the original sources of the given conflict for a longer time period. Its aim is to transform negative destructive conflict into a positive constructive conflict and addresse the structural, be-

[55] Hunčík, P. and Bordás, S. (1999) SPON – Systém prognózovania ohnísk napätia, Nadácia Sándora Maráiho.

[56] Mischnick, 2007.
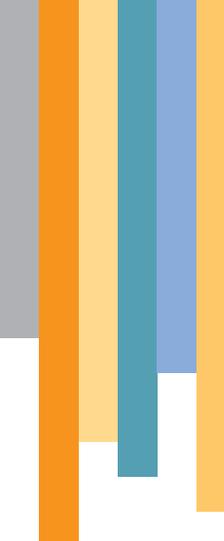
havioural and attitudinal aspects of conflict. The term covers either the process or its completion. As such it includes the terms conflict prevention and conflict resolution and goes beyond the scope of conflict settlement and conflict management.

- Peacebuilding – a general term covering all activities to support and promote peaceful relations and overcoming violence. The long-term process to positively alter structural contradictions, to improve relations between the conflicting parties and to promote overall constructive changes in attitudes. It may also apply to activities related to economic development, social justice, reconciliation, empowerment of disadvantaged, strategic parties and humanitarian support.

In fact, conflict reveals the existence of a problem and it is an engine of social learning.[57] However, before making the decision to initiate change, the step of accepting the status quo must be done. The transformative approach to conflict, working with the premise of a conflict as an opportunity for a positive change, has good chances of effectively overcoming the above mentioned fears of the members of the community and of supporting them in accepting the existence of the conflict as an opportunity.

Success stories

Within the stated criteria, five projects have been selected in Slovakia, where replicable success factors have been identified in the area of community conflict management: the projects in Podsádek, Sveržov, Malženice-Trakovice, Zvolen and the Conciliation Committees project.

The projects in Podsádek and Sveržov are conflict prevention projects, while in the Malženice-Trakovice project and the Conciliation Committees project the conflict management approach with the feature of conflict settlement has been applied. In the Zvolen project, the conflict prevention and conflict management features are combined. Moreover, the Zvolen project and the Malženice-Trakovice project clearly bear some characteristics of the conflict transformation approach. The Malženice-Trakovice and Zvolen projects are examples of success, where the initial vertical conflict driven negative "no" energy ("we against the external enemy") was successfully transformed into the horizontal constructive "yes" intra-community conflict prevention and management activities. The medium of this change has been the corrective experience of succes and empowerment based on unification around a common interest. The Sveržov project and the Podsádek project are two projects working with Roma–non-Roma interethnic tensions, where a principle of support and initiation of individual personal contacts and relations was successfully applied. The Conciliation committees project is – in Slovakia – a unique case of direct and conscious application of community mediation tools with the ambition of sustainable long-term community conflict prevention and conciliation

[57] Ondrušek et al., 2004.
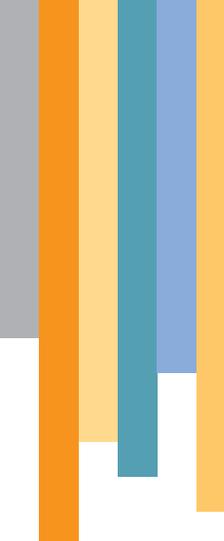
work across several regions in Slovakia. All of the selected projects, with the exception of the Malženice-Trakovice project, started as top-down activities.

Present and future

The field research in Slovakia yielded the following recurring success factors within the analyzed community conflict management projects:

1. Synergy of projects and services

The success factor in the community conflict management, especially in the cases of escalated or frozen conflicts, is based on synergy: it is basically not possible to name one specific project that would lead to the success in isolation. The success is usually based on a synergy of long-term community building work, short-term conflict management interventions, where the local self-government representatives, the mayor, the community workers, social workers and mediators continuously communicate. While community work characterizes itself as continuous, open, wide and non-limited in time; mediation is a process where the stakeholders have a chance to formulate and limit the process to a specific problem to be targeted and to achieve a number of smaller successes.

2. Focus on building personal relationships

While the de-personalized media has been reported as frequent trigger of the community conflict escalation, personal contacts and personal relationships are the cornerstones of the community conflict prevention and management. According to some opinions, the size of the actual and functioning community usually does not exceed the ability to mutually learn the names and faces of its members. The concept of the personal contact as a conflict prevention factor is supported also by some psychological observations stating that a personal interaction through eye contact or touch does not allow the parties to continue a verbal fight between two individuals.[58] In the area of community conflict management this can be translated into a suggestion to nourish regular personal relationships and contacts both horizontally between community members, and vertically, between the community members and their public representatives and authorities – e.g. mayor, city council figures, policemen, teachers etc.

3. Individual corrective experience as a foundation of change

Corrective experience via discovery of an alternative to the destructive win-loose type of dealing with conflict and the consequent change of attitude was reported to be a highly appreciated gain for both the personal and the professional

[58] Satirová, V. (2006) Kniha o rodině, 2. vyd., Praha: Práh, p. 81-83, ISBN 80-7252.
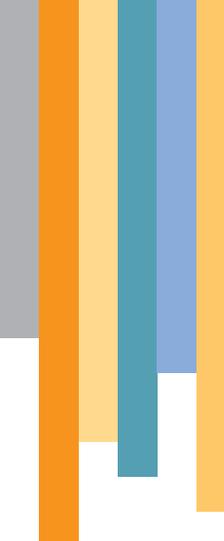
sphere of the project participants, who then voluntarily disseminated new information and initiated change in attitudes to conflict in their environments, even though the original project had already been closed.

Therefore, community mediators might be encouraged to target small, specific, limited problems and make use of a number of small experiences of success in resolving them. This set of small corrective experiences can then serve as a foundation if a heavier and larger community conflict occurs influenced by wider environmental factors.

The following are some suggestions for the future development of the conflict management work in Slovakia:

1. Institutionalisation

In order to ensure long-term access for the communities to community mediation services, permanent local structures need to be created, either in the form of institutions, which should be made sustainable with support from public finances or from public – private schemes, or in a form of long-term honorary work of certain community authorities in permanent conflict resolution bodies.

2. Public spaces regeneration

Public spaces in the villages and city quarters with escalated community tensions often serve as the "showrooms" of clashes of living space interests. De-ethnicization of the physical public spaces and a clear consensus on the precise spatial area of the common space would "neutralize" the public space and open the possibility of hosting dialogue. Each community needs a common safe space as a "silent zone" for relaxation and contemplation; and one as a "noisy zone" for abreaction, opinion exchange, and safe anger ventilation for all community members. Parks, table tennis and chess tables, community theatre events, open "hyde park" forums are some of the examples already in place in Europe.

3. Status quo acceptance

Prior to the work for change, a process of mapping and non-judgemental accepting of the community status quo is inevitable. The community mediator needs to prepare for the mediation process through learning about the verbal and non-verbal, written and non written interactional rules and patterns of the community. However, those community members who have a desire for change need themselves to non-judgementally accept the status quo of the authentic community rules and patterns before initiating the change. This includes acceptance of the existence of different codices of behaviour within one community without prioritizing any of them. A further process of identifying a common minimal set of rules of behaviour, or local micro-constitutions on issues, where the answer is cannot be found in a country-wide legal system, may follow.
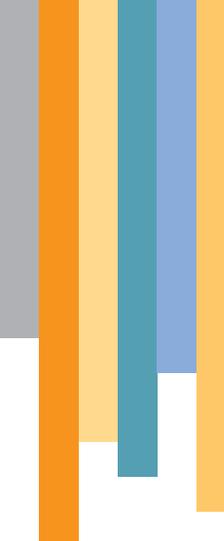
Words and reality

As added value to the approaches and methodology of the successful conflict management projects, the field and desk research in Slovakia brought to light an urgent need to revisit the usual definitions of some of the key terms and words used in the area of conflict management in line with current reality. The use of the following words is suggested to be discussed: community, community centre, crisis management, conflict management and prevention, mediator, community mediator.

The community
The word community has been presented and described as denoting a homogenous, stable and clearly separated group of people. However, if we speak about a group of people living in physical or mental proximity, sharing a common geographical, physical or mental territory who are interconnected by a net of relationships, then we describe an image of a rather dynamic phenomenon with constantly ongoing changes. A community is not a group – it is a group living over time. Its members rarely describe its identity in similar ways. A community consists of individuals, relations between them, the subgroups and the whole group. None of these components alone creates a community. Community is a group experience through all these different levels. If you overlook any of these levels, the general health of the community may suffer.[59]

The community centre
Recently, the term community centre has been invoking an associative image of an institution intended to assist the one socially weaker subgroup of the community. The majority of the community centres in Slovakia in ethnically mixed areas started their activities as centres for the delivery of social services and leisure-time education for the socially vulnerable Roma citizens. Up to now, the vast majority of these community centres have not served as common spaces for the whole community. Interestingly enough, this situation reflects two wider phenomena:

1. In many ethnically mixed localities, the existence of one common community is questionable, due to the rare direct interethnic relationships. Two separated communities inhabit a territory identified under the same name in the territorially-administrative system of the country. The social differences between these two neighbouring communities are rampant and therefore, the community centres serve as a balancing entity to improve the conditions of the weaker of the two subgroups.

2. In community centres in ethnically mixed localities the two different types of services, social work and community work, have been overlapping in both personal and operational scopes.

[59] Diamond, J. and Summers, G. (1994) Facilitation and Multi-leveled Interventions in Community Building. The Journal of Process Oriented Psychology, Vol. 6, No. 1: Extreme States of Consciousness.
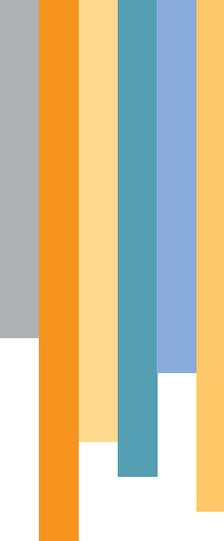
Clear and publicly transparent decisions about the orientation of the work either towards minority integration, or towards the coexistence of the different groups in the locality may complement the positive results and credibility of the helping professionals in the eyes of local public.

While social work strictly requires loyalty to client, the primary client of the community worker is not any specific individual from any part of the community but the community itself. If these two roles, the social workers' and the community workers', are embodied in one professional, there might be a problem of loyalty and conflicts of interests might occure. While community workers are ideal partners for community mediators in dealing with the conflict, social workers effectively have the role of constructive speakers for their clients. However, both the community worker and the social worker work to multiply (material, cultural, educational, informational, other) resources for the community – sufficiency of the resources in itself serves as a conflict prevention factor. If there are a lot of resources in the community, then everyone just takes what they need and no conflict will break out.[60]
In the field of mediation and conflict resolution in general, the ethics of justice and the ethics of helping overlap. A clear personal division between the roles of the social worker and the community worker may diminish the risk of the conflict of interest and encourage multiprofessional synergy, and support the community work with all parts of the community regardless of the type and scope of social problems.

Crisis management, conflict management, conflict prevention
The separation of the processes of crisis management of a specific, escalated community conflict and the processes of abating tension within conflict-preventive activities heightens professionals' ability to find the appropriate method for the given situation and locality. As an example, while in the open concrete conflict situation, involvement of a strong external independent neutral facilitator tends to bring results; within the scope of conflict prevention, other tools (such as empowering the members of the community to take on active facilitation roles or facilitation of the group process in an open forum enabling expression of tensions, emotions, forgotten questions) have been proven to work. Moreover, when a post crisis community service is needed, specific reconciliation methods are at disposal (as for example identifying, discussing and distinguishing of factual, personal narrative, social and regenerative truths or giving safe space for revealing anger and regret). In the areas where the conflict tensions are high, or the conflict has already escalated, it seems practical to divide and run the two different procedures: complex crisis conflict management and preventive community tensions management dealing with smaller conflicts are more likely to be successfully solved on a shorter term.

[60] Ondrušek et al., 2004.

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Mediator and community mediator
The basic skills and principles of the performance of individual civil conflicts mediation and community mediation are eclipsing and usable both ways. However, the community mediator needs to work more in depth with the community in the preparatory phase, learning the internal interaction patterns and rules and processing the selection of authentic community representatives before even the first mediation meeting. Specific methods concerning time management, process structuring and work with coalitions operate in community mediation. The community conflict facilitator bears several eclipsing roles that are activated and de-activated according to the actual needs of the facilitation process. Diamond and Summers name these as roles of a therapist, organisational consultant, activist, networker and elder. At the same time, they suggest the redefinition of the requirement of "neutrality" of the community conflict facilitator by shifting from detachment and restriction of emotional attitudes towards the ability to stay empathically open to and to follow different positions and experiences at the same time.[61]

"On the self-organizing level (of the group), there are some topics that are considered to be problems. In fact, these are attempts of the system to bring itself into equilibrium."
(Max Schupbach, "Punks, police, and people addicted to alcohol or drugs open forum in Zurich", Worldwork in town meetings, Switzerland)

[61] Diamond and Summers, 1994.

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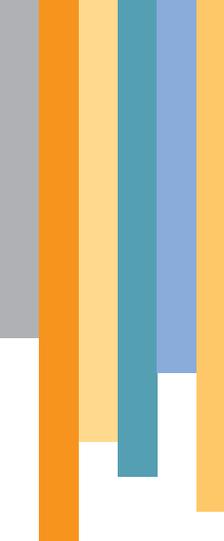
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Strategy of the Slovak Republic for Roma integration in 2020, (approved by Government Resolution 1/2012 of 11 January 2012)

Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

5.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS
5.2.1

Project title	Podsádek: Mentoring project
Delivering organisation	Civic Association ETP Slovakia - Centre for Sustainable Development, NGO
Partners involved	
Project duration	2009–2012
Project scope	12 community centres involved, 67 mentors trained, 67 mentor–protégé tandems initiated
Targeted problem, target group	• existence of generational poverty in Slovakia • potential to help the people stuck in generational poverty through the mentoring process based on the support of the meetings of mentors • members of the middle class and protégés from the groups of generational poverty
Change/progress achieved	• participants' transformation • models of life quality upgrade experienced • interethnic personal relationships created, potentially present as a safety net in case of a community conflict escalation • decline of the recycling of the ethnic and social stereotypes in the community • conflict prevention and ethnic tension prevention aspect as an unnamed side effect, benefit
Means of achieving change /progress	The project was based on the methods formulated in Ruby K. Payne's book "Bridges out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities" and in "16 rules of mentoring" (see below)
Key success factors	Any success shift in the life of the protégés is based primarily on the existence of the personal relationship itself. Conscious motivation and learning processes are useful, but seem to have only a secondary function.
Overall budget of the project	

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

The mentoring project in Podsadek coordinated by ETP Slovakia NGO attempts to tackle the problem of missing models for the young Roma, i.e. people who would be able to support and inspire the young people to wish to rise socially out of the poor living conditions in the Roma settlement towards the middle class life style. Moreover, the community gained a crucial conflict prevention benefit: the project gave rise to unprecedented long-standing personal connections between the Roma and non-Roma community members.

The community

The locality of Podsádek was formerly a village, nowadays a part of the town Stará Ľubovňa, an East-Slovakian town inhabited by 16.550 people living on 31 sq. kms. The city quarter Podsadek has 1.400 inhabitants, 1.000 of whom are living in a separated Roma settlement.

The community centre in Podsádek runs under the joint management of ETP and field social workers employed by the mayor's office. It resides in the culture hall that was built by the city around the year 1970 for the use of the whole community. Presently, the community centre serves only the Roma part of the Podsádek area. In the town of Stará Lubovna itself with 16.550 inhabitants, of which Podsádek is a part, approximately another 900 Roma people live.

The Roma settlement in Podsádek is a typical low living standard settlement with huts, poor to missing infrastructure, alarmingly high density of inhabitants and low to alarming health conditions. The non-Roma part of Podsádek live in average living standards and this part of the community is aging. Podsádek is a typical example of a paradox observable in many ethnically mixed localities in Slovakia: while the Roma population is a minority in the entire country, it prevails as a majority in given localities.

The community centre in Podsádek provides social counselling daily for 5 clients on average. Besides, it organizes synergic community activities for local Roma: preschool preparation, young mothers' tutoring, cultural and artistic events, school children's tutoring, adult education. The community centre serves solely the majority Roma population and is perceived as an advocate for one part of the community.

The community centre in Podsádek started its activities as an operational point for the delivery of social services for the socially vulnerable Roma population and by now does not have functional relations with the non-Roma population in Podsadek.

COMMUNITY CONFLICT ANALYSIS

The community conflict in Podsádek corresponds to the typical Roma–non-Roma settlement situation in Slovakia as described in the introduction to the Slovakia country report. The typical features include:

- the community tension grows out of the social gap, which is connected to ethnic differences,

- there is not a common public space perceived as accessible to both parts of the community,
- the two parts of the community live separated from each other,
- the collective guilt concept is being applied, the reciprocal stereotypes recycle in families,
- both parts of the community deal with the lack of experiencing feeling of security,
- other primary needs on the side of Roma inhabitants are present: living space, water, heating, food, access to employment,
- other unfulfilled needs on the side of non-Roma inhabitants are present: self-dignity, involvement, justice,
- the Roma people involved in social integration projects deal with an internal conflict between loyalty towards their original value system and environment and the expectations associated with an upgrade in living standards.

In Podsádek, similarly to other Roma settlements, the danger of escalation of the tension into violence is present. The triggers most likely to heighten the tension are: media, economic crisis, political campaigns with short-term goals before general elections, individual crime events, desire to ease the unbearable situation, power declaration, and the will to apply one's subjective belief of what is just.

Due to the position of the community centre as an advocate for the Roma part of the community, the social and community workers in the community centre in Podsádek see their role in a potential escalated community conflict not as arbiters, but rather as those supporting the Roma part of the community in not responding to triggers aggressively. Typologically, the conflict moves along the scale from aversion–aversion to appetency–aversion. The conflict winds around the themes of resources, value systems and living space.

THE ORGANISATION DELIVERING THE PROJECT

Civic Association ETP Slovakia – Centre for Sustainable Development is a non-profit consulting and training organization that was established as a direct successor of the Environmental Training Project for Central and Eastern Europe in 1995. Since its establishment, ETP Slovakia has cooperated with the local government and businesses as well as with NGOs in programmes that increase the sustainability of local development and improve the environment as well as provide assistance to disadvantaged individuals and families. Presently its work is focused on marginalized and disadvantaged Roma and immigrants granted asylum and subsidiary protection.

ETP is currently active in Eastern Slovakia in Roma settlements and works on the principle of synergy of different project approaches: as community centres, integrated counselling, financial management education, housing microloans etc. In all of its projects it focuses exclusively on Roma population or on other professionals working with Roma, except for the pilot mentoring project running within the integrated social services programme that is working directly with both Roma and non-Roma parts of the com-

munity. ETP coordinates 12 community centres in localities with Roma settlements across Eastern Slovakia. One of the localities where the mentoring project was realized was the district of Podsádek.
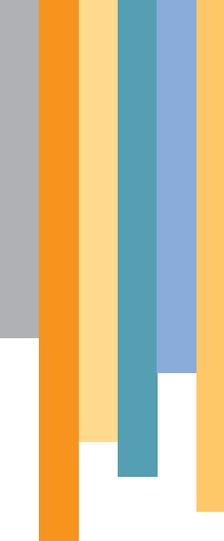
DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The project has been oriented towards the participants' transformation rather than towards a structural change or towards leaders. The type of conflict work in the project is mostly in the form of conflict prevention with secondary potential use in conflict settlement.

The mentoring project has been a top-down initiative of ETP. It entered the community at a stage of ethnic tension and segregation, empowered by the alarming social status of the people living in a separated Roma settlement and by the subjective feelings of injustice and powerlessness of the actual minority non-Roma part of Podsádek, where the community centre serves and supports only the Roma citizens. The main idea of the project was to organise meetings with mentors – members of the middle class and protégés from the groups living in generational poverty across social (not ethnic) lines, where the mentor should be someone who is willing to sacrifice some of their time and energy to help someone else to upgrade their life. It is a one to one relationship where the mentor tries to avoid ineffective or destructive patterns of behaviour of their protégé.

Conflict prevention and ethnic tension prevention aspects have been present in this project as an unintentional or unnamed, but still relevant positive side-effect – benefit – as it has been with several other community-building and socially-oriented projects in Slovakia.

The target group of the mentoring project led by ETP Slovakia in 2009-2012 consisted of individuals from families experiencing generational poverty, partly from the Roma community. Training was conducted in 12 community centres. The aim of the first project phase was to select and train mentors who will assist individuals and families who desire to free themselves from dependence on welfare, wishing to improve their lives and get support in employment and education. The initial screening and selection of mentors was conducted by community social workers based on applicants' CVs and brief cover letters. The final selection was made by the coordinator of social integration and the project manager. The training part concentrated on participants' familiarization with the concept of generational poverty and social classes dynamics, on discussions of typical stereotypes and prejudices connected to the Roma, and they learnt about the mentor–protégé relationship cycle, 16 rules of mentoring, goals setting and commitment issues. In the second phase, the mentor–protégé meetings started, and so did supervision for mentors. In the period 2009–2010, 67 mentors were trained and actively working with protégés under this project.

In Podsádek, seven mentors were trained to work with individuals from families at risk of poverty, four protégés were from the Roma part of the local community. Mentors and
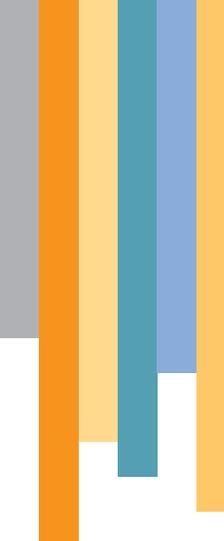
protégés were meeting over a period of one year starting in April of 2010. The group of seven protégés in Podsádek had four Roma and three non-Roma individuals.

Some of the selected mentors in Podsádek were community centre social workers and the rest were other laypersons from the non-Roma community. None of the mentors was living in the non-Roma part of Podsádek. Some of the protégés were residents in the Roma settlement in Podsádek. During 2010 and 2011, the meetings of the mentor–protégé pairs and supervision for mentors were running with a frequency of approximately 4 times a month, each time for 2 hours. There were two types of goals for the pairs' meetings: either just informally showing a different way of life to the socially weak protégé; or fulfilling a pre-stated goal commonly agreed on at the beginning of the meetings. Mentors were paid for their time spent with the protégé. After closing the project in 2012, some of the mentors were still in irregular contact with their protégés, even if this became a solely voluntary activity.

For example, one of the mentors, who had professional experience in addictology, was in contact with a protégé who had a problem with alcoholism and in part thanks to the mentor's contribution, she decided to start a psychiatric anti-alcoholic treatment. One social worker served as a mentor for a young girl who had problems with her foster care mother. A university student was meeting as a mentor with a younger student for talks and mutual visits. The pilot mentoring project of ETP Slovakia was based on the methodology formulated in Ruby K. Payne's book "Bridges out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities".[62] A mentor can be a neighbour, a relative, a teacher, a social worker, a policeman, a probation officer or a colleague. Some mentoring programmes focus specifically on finding mentors, who are non-professionals and are members of the community in which the protégé lives. The mentoring can be formalized (regular meetings, stated goals, written reports) or informal, depending on the needs of individual protégés. The time-scale of meetings can vary: short-term, long-term, or ad-hoc. The primary mentor works with the protégé on a wide range of themes, while the secondary mentor provides counselling in a specific area (employment, finances, education, health management etc.) The mentoring programme coordinators can also choose between active mentoring and passive mentoring (where mentors are not active, but available in case of the protégé's need).

Mentoring is a process profitable for both sides: not only for the protégé but also for the mentor. Payne formulates the following possibilities of profiting from the mentoring relationship on the side of the mentor:

- satisfaction associated with making a contribution to the society and for the benefit of future generations by supporting things that outlast the individual over 40 years of age (referring to Erik Erikson's psychosocial development stage of middle-aged to elderly people who face the option of guiding the next generation versus stagnation),

[62] Ruby K. Payne Equilibria s.r.o. Košice 2010, Mosty z chudoby, stratégie pre profesionálov a komunity, ISBN 978-80-89284-53-5

• opportunity to revisit and review the mentor's own goals and directions in life and possibility to use advice given to the protégé in the mentors own life.

The protégé's success in making use of the mentoring program depends on his/her own internal and external resources, on their level of motivation and self-discipline. In her book, Payne quotes results from the studies mapping the success factors of the mentoring programmes showing a high percentage (98%) graduation and employment among young people in mentoring programmes in California. Another study observes a correlation between career success and participation in mentoring programmes among those completing economic studies in Belgium in 1993.

Payne quotes 16 rules of mentoring, as tested in practice:
1. positive environment (sufficient time and space for development of the mentor–protégé relationship),
2. personal development (including debates on values and attitudes, not only practical goals),
3. independence (clear identification of the limits of availability on the part of the mentor at the beginning of the contact),
4. limited responsibility (mentor does not take over protégé's responsibility for his/her decisions and respect them whatever they are),
5. sharing mistakes (mentor shares with the protégés not only his/her successes, but he/she admits the mistakes and failures as well),
6. planning of goals (concrete, measurable and time-scheduled goals for the mentor–protégé pair),
7. control (monitoring and constructive criticism is a part of the mentor's role as well as appreciation of achievements),
8. strict love (mentor takes responsibility for a intervention when it is needed, and leaves the protégé without intervention when it is appropriate),
9. small successes,
10. subjectivity (mentors should speak revealing their subjectivity, using "I think", and questions),
11. realizing risks (the mentor–protégé relationship is bi-directional, the protégé's failure can be reflected in mentors life),
12. mutual respect of privacy,
13. reciprocity and balance in communication,
14. personal commitment,
15. life change,
16. fun and humour.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FACTORS
Several success factors in terms of community conflict management and prevention can be stated within this project:
• The mentoring project created interethnic personal relationships for 14 people connected to or living in Podsádek,
• At least 4 of these contacts are still alive or at standing by in the case of need. Mentors were paid for the time spent with the protégé. In 2012 some of the mentors
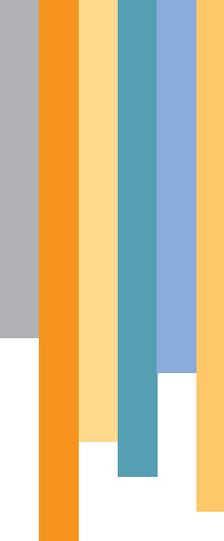
were still in irregular contact with their protégés, even if this became a solely voluntary activity,

- Within both the conflict management and the prevention area, these relationships can serve as a safety net in case of an escalated interethnic conflict or unusual tension through mentors as non-Roma public attitude transformers and through protégés as Roma public attitude transformers,
- Another conflict prevention aspect is related to the fact that the direct connection between two human beings tends to exclude the possibility of fight and violence (violence needs anonymity and dissociation of the aggressor from the victim),
- The conflict transformation aspect in the mentoring project can be seen in the use of opportunity for a mentor, originally seen as a one-way adviser for a "problematic" neighbour, to gain personal development benefits from the mentor–protégé process originally initiated in response to a problem,
- The communication of project participants showed a clear decline in the recycling of ethnic and social stereotypes, which might function as conflict triggers.

An analysis based on interviews with mentors and the project coordinator in Podsádek has led to several recommendations for a possible future replication of the successes of the mentors project:

- The mentors project itself did not create friendships with typical equal, horizontal and enduring character, but rather vertical teacher–student type relationships mirroring the lower status of the Roma population – the majority of protégés – in the social hierarchy. It is worth communicating this aspect openly and either consciously replicating the scheme, or consciously making modifications to the project to bring horizontality and reciprocity into the mentor–protégé relations,
- If a vertical mentor–protégé relationshipis preferred to a horizontal one, it is necessary to take into account the age difference and mentors' authentic ability to serve as a model of a different way of life.
- In the vertical mentor–protégé relationships the mentors that are not from the community tend to be more successful in serving as models.
- During the phase of the mentors' preparation and supervision, it is worth working more on the theme of expectations of gratefulness from the protégés, with the theme of power in vertical helping activities and the themes of responsibility limits and the time factor,
- One type of effective mentor selection is to ask potential protégés about people who have already been informally or unknowingly functioning as mentors in the community,
- Any shift in success in the life of the protégés is based primarily on the existence of the relationship itself. Motivation and learning seem to play just secondary or tertiary roles.

5.2.2

Project title	Sveržov: Interethnic dialogue project
Delivering organisation	People in Peril, NGO
Partners involved	
Project duration	18 months, 2012–2013
Project scope	• 4 community centers / 4 localities involved, • the project analysis is based on one • the Sveržov locality, • Sveržov locality: 30 to 9 young activists periodically involved in inter-ethnic communication and community building.
Targeted problem, target group	• to support the establishment of social connections that would be able to prevent conflicts fuelled by politically potent extremist groups intent on recruiting large numbers of alienated young people in rural, multi-ethnic and economically struggling communities of Eastern Slovakia • creating models of multi-ethnic civic engagement • the main aim is to create space for and to support cross-ethnic connections among young people aged 16-21 in small, ethnically mixed communities.
Change/progress achieved	• Sveržov: start-up of a sustainable community initiative called IMRO "Iniciatívna mládež pre rozvoj obce" ("Initiative youth for the village development"). • Kecerovce locality: start-up of a youth club in the Roma settlement • greeting and open contact between Roma and non-Roma young participants in public spaces • decline of verbal aggressiveness connected with ethnic stereotypes among non-Roma young participants
Means of achieving change / progress	• multi-phase approach, focused on generating individual skills development, • issue-based advocacy

	• development of the projects that can be replicated over time to build positive interaction between ethnic groups. • approach is based on a theory of change contending that if skilled and informed individuals of different ethnicities collectively engage in community affairs, they can produce positive outcomes that create opportunities to reduce ethnic tension. • best practices, participatory learning, participant input through surveys, interactive workshops, and forums were used in training.
Key success factors	• existence of the combined housing-educational project, which preceded the interethnic dialogue project, • synergy with the mayor's office • professional approach • long-term operation of community center in the locality
Overall budget of the project	

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

The idea of the project was to support the establishment of social connections that would be able to prevent conflicts fuelled by politically potent extremist groups intent on recruiting large numbers of alienated young people in rural, multi-ethnic and economically struggling communities of Eastern Slovakia. Bridging the division between majority and minority groups and creating models of multi-ethnic civic engagement are the main outcomes the project attempted to achieve.

THE COMMUNITY

Sveržov is a village of 511 citizens, 78 of which are Roma. Sveržov lays 12 km northwest of the city of Bardejov.

The Roma community in the village live in municipal rental flats built in 2006 with a fully equipped infrastructure (water, electricity, heating with solid fuel). In the village, there is a kindergarten, an elementary school and a school club operating without ethnically segregated classes. The new Roma settlement is spatially separated from the non-Roma part of the village - the football playground lies between the two and serves as a potential common communication space and a distributed space at the same time.
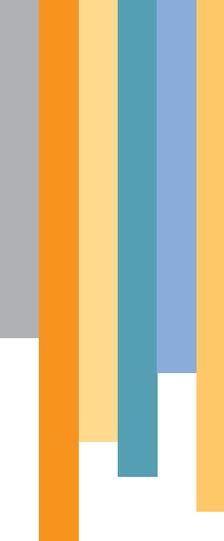
One significant problem is the high rate of unemployment in the community, which is 100 percent among the Roma population. The reasons are not only social exclusion in the broader context combined with the overall high rate of unemployment in the region, but also the low educational attainment or lack of training of individual Roma citizens.

The community centre in Sveržov was founded by the NGO People in Need in June 2009 in cooperation with local authorities in Sveržov. The aim of its activities is to develop and implement programmes that would lead to social inclusion of individuals and groups, and also help promote cooperation and co-existence between all the communities that live in the village. Given the high level of support of the mayor's office and cooperation with the business community, the community centre focuses on low-threshold activities, career guidance and support for youth work. The collaboration also allows some activities in the catchment area of the primary school in Gaboltove such as group career counselling. The community centre in Sveržov still serves mainly the Roma part of the village population. However, the intention to open it to all the village citizens and to place its management in the hands of the local people is the key ambition of its current maintainers.

COMMUNITY CONFLICT ANALYSIS

Prior to the building of the social housing complexes and establishment of the community centre, community conflicts in Sveržov mirrored the typical Roma settlement situation with its typical features already described in the sections above (see parts of the Introduction, Podsádek: Mentoring project). Nowadays, the conflict potential moves toward the risks connected with the transition from the present state of support and nurturing attitude of the community workers and the mayor towards independence of the Roma community driven by their gradually strengthening wish to become less dependent on the support received. The move of the Roma citizens from the status of socially disadvantaged members of the community to social equality has just started and might bring with it a period during which the sensitivity to the conflict triggers can be temporarily intensified.
The general conflict prevention success story in Sveržov is related to the project of preventing the gross decline of social status and living standards among the Roma part of the community through a synergy of the previously blended housing and educational project of the city council and the subsequent activities of the community centre, including the interethnic dialogue project. To give a clear picture of conflict prevention programmes in the Sveržov locality, and to show how the interethnic project works in synergy with other activities, the earlier housing-educational project managed by the mayor's office needs to be described:
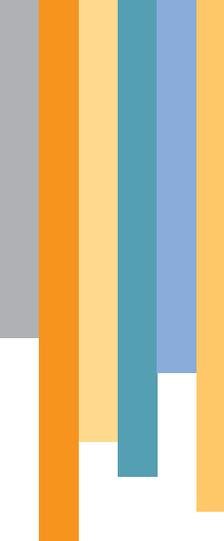
The combined housing-educational project, that preceded the interethnic dialogue project, ran under the management of the mayor's office in 2005–2007 and included activities such as building the social housing block for non-Roma citizens, a preparation phase via pilot saving and financial management education and post-construction activities such as garbage management and house-keeping education. It brought the following conflict prevention results:

- elimination of the typical slum-type Roma settlement as a potential future conflict trigger and a source of the deepening social gap based on ethnical segregation,
- building of the social housing in the village for socially vulnerable citizens regardless of ethnicity, with labour contribution by the future tenants on the construction site,
- stopping the escalation of the social lapse of the Roma part of community.

The triggers most likely to exacerbate the tension are similar to those generally observed elsewhere in the country: media, economic crisis, political campaigns with short term goals during general elections, individual crime events, feeling of the non-Roma members of the community that the support is not equally distributed within the community, etc.
In order to maintain the long-term sustainability of the status of conflict-free coexistence of Roma and non-Roma in Sveržov, the local self-government representatives and community workers might work proactively to avert the following risks associated with triggering conflicts:

- risk of the tension escalation in the event of replacement of the mayor (the interethnic balance in the village is strongly connected to the person of the mayor),
- risk of the tension escalation in the transitional phase from the present status of dependence on support and nurturing of the public workers towards independence of the Roma community driven by their gradually strengthening wish or need to become less dependent on the support received,
- risk of the tension escalation between the Roma community and the community workers in the event of cultural and value system conflicts with the members of Roma community participating in living standard upgrade programmes (e.g. different cultural approaches to underage marriages among young Roma female students),
- risk of the tension escalation through stereotyping messages recurring in the media, and the recurring principle of collective guilt.

THE ORGANISATION DELIVERING THE PROJECT

The NGO People in Need was founded in 1992 in the Czech Republic as a humanitarian organization to help people in crisis and to foster respect for human rights worldwide. It provides humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and wars, builds schools, hospitals, water supplies, supports human rights in countries with undemocratic
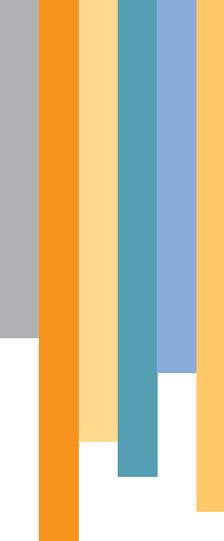
regimes. Humanitarian and development assistance is now provided in 18 countries. The organisation is also active in Slovakia mainly in outreach programmes aimed at addressing the situation of socially excluded localities - extreme poverty, long-term unemployment and low education levels. People in Need runs four community centres in the Eastern part of Slovakia, adhering to the principle of comprehensive services including life situations counselling, training and tutoring, and drop-in centres for children, youth and families. One of these centres is in Sveržov.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Similarly to the Podsádek mentoring project, the type of conflict work in this project is mostly related to conflict prevention with a secondary potential use in conflict settlement. The interethnic dialogue project is a top-down initiative coordinated by the community centre. It builds on previous work done in synergy with the mayor's office. The project indirectly relies on the aversion of risks associated with conflict arousal as was mentioned above. Besides Sveržov, the project actually runs in several other community centres in Eastern Slovakia. Its main aim is to create space for and to support cross-ethnic connections between young people aged 16-21 in small ethnically mixed communities.
The programme approach is defined as a multi-phase approach focused on encouraging individual skills development, dissemination of information, issue-based advocacy

and the development of projects that can be repeated over time to build positive interactions between ethnic groups. The proposed approach is based on a theory of change contending that if skilled and informed individuals of different ethnicities collectively engage in community affairs, they can produce positive outcomes that create opportunities to reduce ethnic tensions.
The best practices, participatory learning, participant input through surveys, interactive workshops, and forums were used in training.

The program's target group was defined as youths most susceptible to extremism (aged 16 to 21 years) in rural, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised communities. The 18-month programme is divided into a number of phases starting with the recruitment and training of coordinators (2 months), surveying, selection and primary training of participants (4 months). The most promising participants are invited to participate in internships in municipal councils, NGOs, and other governmental institutions and maintain contact through monthly workshops, which would include debate tournaments and a local government simulation exercise (7 months). In the next phase, participants would implement their community advocacy/outreach projects (such as informal civics courses for high school students, public "town hall" discussions on local issues, or community advocacy initiatives), linking the internship experience with real-life action, and fostering interaction between citizens and local
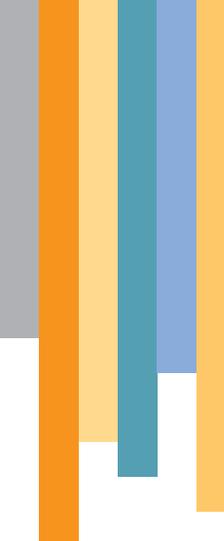
officials (3 months). In their description of the project plans, the authors of the project deemed it necessary to organise preparatory conflict resolution training sessions for the project filed-coordinators.

When selecting and recruiting the project participants, the community workers in Sveržov used exclusively personal door-to-door contact to invite young people to the introductory meeting, in which 30 people participated. Consequently, a group of 13 non-Roma and 2 Roma young people formed a stable group, taking part together in the educational phase of the programme, working on topics such as community building, project management, and civic education. In the next phase, the group, reduced to 9 people, worked at a project. The group in Sveržov created and successfully launched an initiative called IMRO – "Iniciatívna mládež pre rozvoj obce"("Initiative youth for the village development"). The initiative was supported by the sum of 500 EUR for material and for introductory events. In the first months of IMRO's existence, it organized a table tennis match, a scrabble competition, and a community market, where young people from both ethnic groups participated. At the public events, the community workers observed that the personal presence of the Roma member of IMRO was gradually changing the usual aggressive vocabulary of non-Roma village citizens replacing it with a more respectful linguistic behaviour even when speaking about minor interethnic conflicts occurring in the village. Another new development is that when Roma and non-Roma young participants meet on the street, they openly greet each other, even if they are with other friends or relatives from their sections of the community. Another activity of IMRO is the initiation and coordination of the periodical meetings of the civic organisations from the Bardejov region or thematic discussions.

In the nearby community centre in the village of Kecerovce with a Roma settlement of 3000 people, a group of young people who got to know each other through the project runs a youth club.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FACTORS

According to the interviews with the community workers and the mayor, the following potentially replicable success factors can be listed in general:

- non-ethnic definition of the target group for the social housing project: two blocks of social houses were built on the two sides of the village, one of these for Roma citizens, one for non-Roma citizens
- the size of the village allowing prompt communication with the public,
- the ratio of the Roma to the non-Roma citizens,
- long-serving mayor (being in office over 5 election periods enabled the mayor to start the project and see its results),
- frequent personal contact between the mayor and non-Roma and Roma citizens,

- personal involvement of the mayor in the construction and the educational part of the project,
- the use of the legal facilities of the mayor's office to act as a special deputy recipient of social benefit payments as a way of allowing the financial contribution of the future tenants to the construction costs,
- personal involvement of the mayor in cases when it was suggested that relatives and new families should move into the social housing built for a specific number of people,
- labour contribution of the future tenants on the construction site,
- one year preparatory testing activities on finance management and long-term responsibility before starting the housing project,
- one-year post-construction field work of the three field workers and the mayor himself: support and education for the new tenants in financial management, material care, garbage management etc.

In addition, the following local community activities and approaches may a potential to be replicated in the area of conflict management and prevention:

- declared orientation of the community centre towards non-Roma citizens as well,
- frequent community activities for specifically non-Roma citizens as well and for the whole village ("The village days"),

- functional day-to-day tuned synergy between the mayor's office and the NGO running the community centre,
- clear contract between the mayor's office and the community centre about the division of work and competences,
- clear division between the social work (for socially vulnerable, mainly Roma citizens) and community services work (for all citizens) within the community centre team,
- ongoing creation of neutral public spaces for initiating and development of interethnic relationships among children and youngsters,
- organizing regular preventive citizens' meetings for gathering information and personal interaction with the mayor ("Coffee with the mayor").

An analysis of interviews with community workers and the mayor in Sveržov has led to several recommendations for a possible future replication of the successes of the interethnic dialogue project:

- While selecting the young participants for the project activities, it is crucial to form groups of people with approximately the same level of education. If that is not possible, it is best to form smaller, educationally homogeneous groups than one mixed group,
- The learning process must be based on "doing" and "immediate practice" rather than on "theory and practice parts",
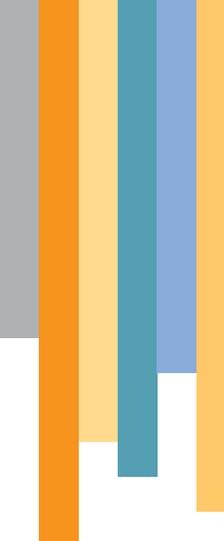
- In the first phase of forming the interethnic group, when the members of different ethnicities still are not used to mutual direct communication and have different communication styles, the tension and feelings of distrust are high and conflict might arise. As a possible solution, the topic of tension, when it occurs, might be openly brought up, legitimized, appreciated as an opportunity and included as one of the facilitated discussion themes during the educational phase,
- The project coordinators should be able to formulate realistic expectations. An expectation that after the successful forming of an interethnic youth initiative group the Roma–non-Roma segregation will slowly disappear within the group, does not seem realistic. However, the project itself can still be successful,
- Community work targeting specifically the non-Roma part of the multiethnic locality brings benefits for the community and also for the work with the Roma citizens.

5.2.3

Project title	**Zvolen: Community organizing project**
Delivering organisation	Centre for Community Organizing, NGO
Partners involved	
Project duration	1997 – ongoing
Project scope	Long term community work in an urban settlement of approx. 13.000 residents
Targeted problem, target group	• danger of community conflict escalation in isolated urban districts of housing blocks • existence of a community as conflict prevention in itself • passive or disconnected citizens make room for public power manipulation at the cost of the local inhabitants.
Change/progress achieved	• a community organizing centre has been given lasting power allowing it to influence key decision-makers • conflict transformation work has been done through transformation of the negative energy of vertical conflicts into a greater ability to process the community's horizontal problems and connections
Means of achieving change / progress	Community organizing: • a system established in the USA on the basis of the work of sociologist Saul Alinsky • the community organizers are identifying, recruiting and training citizens to become local leaders • community organiser is not a community worker – he/she focuses on the process rather than on results • the activities are executed by empowered local activists

Key success factors	• constant presence of the community organizer • skills gained during smaller-scale problems are a foundation for effective solutions of more complex problems and conflicts. • political independence of the community leaders • ongoing communication with citizens after the one specific problem has been solved, • small meeting points within the public spaces • community organizer does only what people are not able to do by themselves
Overall budget of the project	

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

The project was based on a hypothesis that in isolated urban districts of housing blocks in Slovak cities, which are lacking local history, church, public spaces or old settlers, a danger of community conflict escalation may arise. The existence of a community serves as conflict prevention in itself. Therefore, community building work should be done in dense localities where there are no functioning communities. Moreover, passive or disconnected citizens make room for public power manipulation at the cost of the local inhabitants.

THE COMMUNITY

The high-rise housing block settlement Zvolen-Západ is an urban part of the city of Zvolen built around the years 1960–70 on former agricultural land. Nowadays, around 13.000 people live in the district. Zvolen-Západ is separated from the rest of the town by the river Hron. It is a typical social urban housing block settlement built on the fields with a high density of people in the blocks, and with very little attention given to the public spaces in the original urbanism of the city district. The settlement does not have a visible socially excluded group within the community. The community organizers from the NGO Centre for community organizing based in Banska Bystrica first came to Zvolen-Západ in 1996. Nowadays, the neighbours in the different blocks create special communities each of which contributes to community life in a different way.

The city of Zvolen itself has around 43.500 thousands inhabitants living on 98,7 sq. kms. On average, 440 people live in an area of one sq. km.
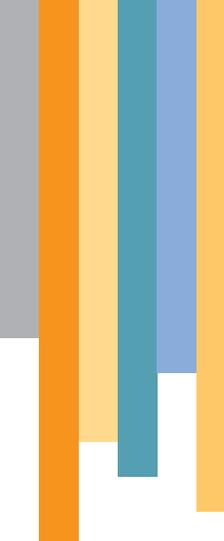
COMMUNITY CONFLICT ANALYSIS

The community deals with two types of conflicts, which, if constructively managed, have the potential to bring benefits for the whole community: vertical conflicts (private investment for the construction of an apartment buildings and a car-wash business; constructing the pavements around the kindergarten) and horizontal conflicts (parking, dogs' faeces, garbage management). Additionally, the skills gained and the corrective experience of success in dealing with less destructive conflicts of a smaller scale is believed to serve as a prevention and conflict management basis if a conflict of a bigger scale occurs.

In the cases of the vertical conflicts, the power imbalance between the two sides of the conflict is typical. One of the party's need for healthy living conditions is in conflict with the other party's interest to run a profitable business. The structural problem behind this type of recurring conflict may also be complicated by the circumstance that in actual fact a third party also participates in the conflict: the city council as an official representative of the interests of the local people and of the whole city at the same time. This situation occurs when the opinion and priorities of one conflict party (the local citizens), and the opinion of its representatives (the city hall) do not overlap. A non-judgemental analysis of the interests and needs of all parties of the conflict might be helpful if a consensus is desired. These conflicts typically fall in the appetency–aversion category.

In the cases of horizontal community conflicts, also occurring in Zvolen-Západ, the power equality of the parties is the key characteristic. The need in the centre of the above mentioned conflicts is mostly a need for living space in a high-density settlement. This type of conflict tends to occur in connection with new phenomena where no rules have yet been agreed on at either a legislative or habit level, as for example a one-child or childless families' problem with increased car ownership or increased dog ownership. These conflicts are typically in the appetency–appetency category.

During the 15 years of operation of community organizing in the area, conflict transformation work has been done through the transformation of the negative energy of initial vertical conflicts with the city hall or private developers into a greater ability to process the inter-community horizontal problems and into an increased level of inter-community relations.

THE ORGANISATION DELIVERING THE PROJECT

Centre for Community Organizing is an NGO that has been delivering its programmes in Slovakia since 1996. Its aims are to support the active participation of citizens in the public decision making processes, to help citizens to formulate and advocate their natural interests and to create the space for effective cooperation between citizens, the government and the business sector in the complete development of the
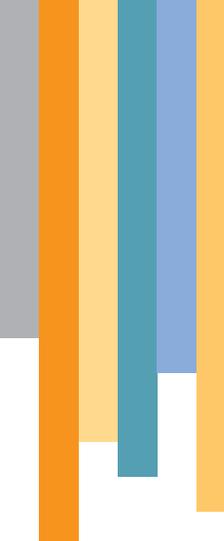
communities. Centre for Community Organizing provides assistance to activists of civic initiatives to better ensure that they become a part of the decision making of local governments. The work with citizens is focused on fostering the feeling of responsibility for the development of their neighbourhood and city. The organization is primarily oriented toward vertical relations between the citizens and their public representatives in the local administration and local self-government, and between citizens and dominant local private institutions. Its aims are to support the establishment of permanent positions of people who counteract the vertical power imbalances in the community, and to transform individuals and communities making them mutually respectful co-creators of public life rather than passive objects of decisions made by others.

The organization generally refers to a system of community organizing developed in the USA in '40s of the twentieth century on the basis of the work of sociologist Saul Alinsky. Community organizing is a process where people who live in proximity to each other come together to form an organization that advocates their shared self-interest. A core goal of community organizing is to generate durable power for an organization representing the community, allowing it to influence key decision-makers in a range of issues over time through being a part of the dialogue before important decisions are made. Community organizers work with local leaders, facilitating coalitions and assisting in the develop-

ment of campaigns. The methods of community organizing include constant attention to building membership; leadership grown from the membership; attention to relationships; analysis of community problems and power; willingness to confront authority; at least one staff organizer; and local fundraising capacity.

The community organizers identify, recruit and train citizens to become more active and effective in their communities, and they then provide extensive leadership training programs. Once the local leaders are active, the community organizers offer assistance on developing strategy on issues, and provide opportunities for leaders and staff to meet and exchange ideas. A community organiser is not a community worker – since he/she focuses on the process rather than on the results of the community work. The activities are executed not by the community organizer directly, but by empowered local activists, whose own interests are at stake. The main principle of the community organizing is that "never do for people what they can do for themselves" or "do only what people are not able to do by themselves". Another rule is that the community organizer cannot be part of the community – the exceptions require frequent supervision. The active citizens become community leaders, while the community organizer stays in the background with the processes. Community organizing works with the assumption that in a sample of hundred people there are always a few natural leaders with an ambition to work for change. However, the community leaders' group is constantly changing and
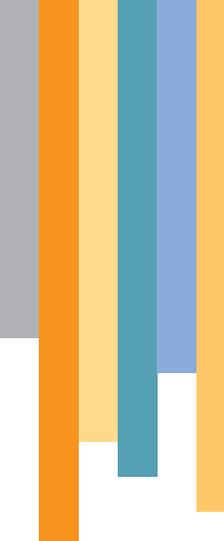
the community organizer is therefore needed continuously. "The community leaders' group is like a house built out of sand – without the community organizer it will fall apart", a community organizer said.

A community organizer shares with a mediator the duty to resist the temptation of deciding instead of the client/the citizen. In day-to-day community organizing life this refers for example to a situation where a community organizer agrees to meet with the media without community leaders (instead of offering to the community leaders a preparatory session on how to speak to media). To be able to work with bigger groups of people at the citizens' forums, the community leaders are also trained in conflict de-escalation in a situations of escalated aggressiveness in a crowd.

The activist groups in the high-rise neighbourhoods work on diagnoses of the neighbourhood environment, mapping its development trends, involvement of citizens in the decision making process, creation of partnerships among its citizens, the local government and the business sector, creation of visions for the future and implementation of the plans for the sustainable development of communities.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The initiation of the community organizing project in Zvolen-Západ high-rise urban settlement was a top-down activity. The locality had been selected due to the assumption that a settlement without history, church, or lively public spaces, where neighbours tend to live in isolation without having relationships typical to living in a community, is a potential seed for power imbalance manipulations and tensions.

The community organizer started his work in Zvolen-Západ in 1997 by conducting 180 door-to-door interviews, mapping the problems and conflict spots in the settlement. Besides smaller problems such as walking dogs and cutting trees, one bigger issue was identified, which was related to building the pavements around the kindergarten.

Consequently, a public meeting of citizens was organized, where the following facilitation method was applied: Major complicated problems were excluded from the list of pre-elected problems collected in door-to-door interviews. From the reduced list of problems the community selected those which were most urgent. Then the facilitation question was asked: Which of these problems can we start to solve now? The first public meeting in Zvolen-Západ took place on the initiative of the mayor in February 1997. Few years after the fall of the communist regime the prevailing attitude was still paternalistic: The expectations were that somebody else would solve the problems for the people. During the following community meetings, primarily the issue of building the pavement around the kindergarten was dealt with. The distribution of roles in the facilitation of the meetings was important to assure, following the principle that the more people from the community joined the process actively, the better. Attention has been given to differentiating between the roles of moderator, goals definer, the
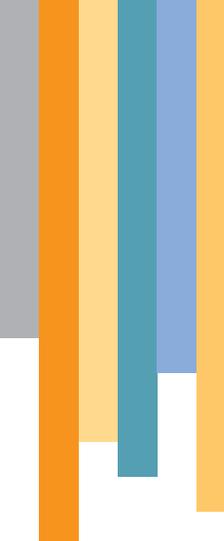
person ensuring that people did not stray from the topic, the person responsible for giving equal time to speakers, the person keeping minutes, etc. The conflict was of smaller scale, but vertical: to build the pavements, it was necessary to involve and persuade the city council. The primary aim of the community organizing in this phase was that the local people should experience the process rather than just watch the pavements built. The first experience was successful: the pavement around the kindergarten was built, the civic initiative Zvolen-Západ was formed and the community meetings continued.

Around the year 2010 the community encountered the first bigger vertical conflict with a private construction development investor. This conflict arouse because of the abandoned construction site of a kindergarten, which was left unfinished for several years due to the claimed financial problems of the city council related to the high costs of both completing the construction and of demolishing the site. The lot was then sold to a private investor, who proposed a plan to build tall apartment blocks with 200 low-budget flats. The project however did not include a solution concerning parking. The open conflict emerged in 2010 with a petition of the citizens stating that consent to the investment should be given only on condition of solving the parking problem. A series of facilitated meetings between the investor and the local community leaders followed, where selected local people cooperated as co-facilitators. The meetings resulted in the modification of the project proposal turning it into a project of building a multifunctional centre. The investor then directly addressed the community organizers with a request to include the communication of the citizens' needs in the project modification details. The well-running process was temporarily frozen by a change of management at the investment company.

The next bigger community conflict facilitation experienced by the community was the project of the car-wash business, which was to be built against the will of the majority of people living in the area because the construction would require cutting down several trees in the area. The civic initiative Zvolen-Západ started a public campaign and also initiated communication with the regional building authority. After several months of efforts, the regional building authority cancelled the original decision on construction permission. In 2009, the civic initiative started to work on two other campaigns – security and construction of a park area, – where cooperation with the students of architecture was initiated. The latter problems, moving towards the category of horizontal inter-community conflicts, arose in 2012 concerning the use of the public spaces between the houses: the parking lots conflicts and dogs' faeces bin management. Multiple individual conflicts took place including hassling and physical attacks on the streets as well as two cases of dog poisoning. The organization team was set up. The team contacted the dog owners' association in Zvolen, vets and po-

lice professionals from among the local people in the search for possible solutions and ideas. These were debated on a wider citizens' forum, where the steps of the process and roles of delivery were agreed on. This resulted in educational activities such as training led by informed adult dog owners for local children, and in constructive cooperation with the local police force.
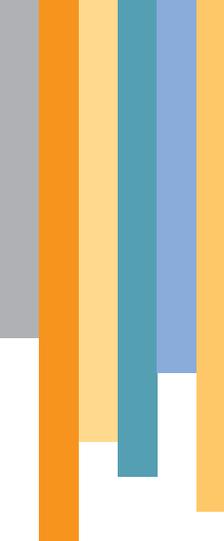
Nowadays, one community organizer works in the Zvolen-Západ locality with a team of local community leaders. They maintain a website and a web forum, and once a year they organize a preventive facilitated gathering of citizens in the hall of the local school, using a method of creating of a list problems and voting about the order of priorities.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FACTORS

The following success factors were identified within the project:

- The community organizers see the main conflict escalation prevention effect in the existence of a community itself,
- The skills gained in smaller-scale problem solving are a potential foundation for effective solutions in the cases of more complex problems and conflicts.

"The point is that if the people learn how to successfully cooperate while solving the problem of a ruptured water supply pipe, they have the same skills in the case of the conflict", the community organizer said.

An analysis of interviews with community organizers in Zvolen-Západ brought led to recommendations for a possible future replication of the successes of the community organizing project:

- In order to secure the success of the process, it is necessary to make clear that all the meeting participants (mainly organizations and company representatives) have full authority to speak and make decisions for the entities they represent.
- The community leaders are trained and supervised to remain politically independent. Community organizing is clearly a political activity in a broader sense, but it never represents the interests of any specific political party. If the community organizing team or an individual community leader receives a proposal of support from a political party, the community leader's team, supported by the community organizer, debate this option through brainstorming and work towards a team consensus for the benefit of the communit.
- It is necessary to maintain communication with citizens after the one specific problem has been solved.
- It is advisable to build small meeting points within the public spaces: table tennis table, fixed chess-table, small sandpit with a bench serving as small public forum areas for abreaction, information and exchange of ideas.
- It is effective to maintain contact with associations already existing in the community: seniors' club, hunters' club, school club of parents.
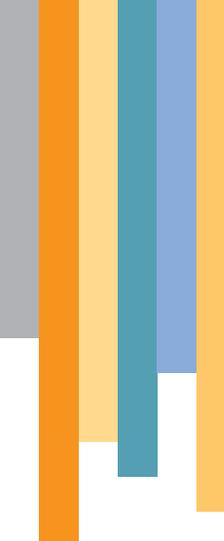
- As evidenced by the cases described above, the system of community organizing work is mostly reactive. A possible innovation would be to add community debates and educational activities on the possible causes of the problems.

"Conflict often has a significant benefit to group cohesion. It can help to create boundaries in the group, when individuals can realize common interests. The conflict thus can offer stability and serve as a unifying force. While it helps individuals to realize their common interest, the conflict may contribute to the development of their identity. The identity of the individual is important for maintaining self-respect."
(Ondrušek et al., 2004)

5.2.4

Project title	**Malženice-Trakovice: Round-tables project**
Delivering organisation	Partners for Democratic Change, NGO
Partners involved	IFOK, consultation company
Project duration	2008–2010
Project scope	• public life of two villages directly or indirectly influenced
Targeted problem, target group	• the conflict arouse between the private investor and the two villages in connection with the construction of a power plant station • the conflict was constructively managed through a conflict management roundtable process, facilitated by neutral facilitators
Change/progress achieved	• new conflict management skills used by the community representatives and local government representatives for their further work. • corrective experience of constructive community dialogue • empowered citizens
Means of achieving change / progress	• the original vertical conflict was transformed into improved long-term horizontal relations between the two villages and the power plant owner • the methodology of round-tables • focus given to widely targeted preparatory interviews and participation motivation • information about the organizational frame and rules in a form of "offer" in advance • information about the position of the facilitators in advance
Key success factors	• a professional neutral facilitator not living in the community • if one of the parties hires and pays the facilitator, it is necessary to reveal this information openly and to be prepared for a long trust-gaining period • selection of the representatives of citizens • choosing a stable substitute by each participant

	• organizing large public gatherings that tend to function as an interactive platform for exchanging information and ideas, where no specific conflict has escalated yet, not a platform for conflict resolution
Overall budget of the project	

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

The original conflict arose between the private investor and the two villages in connection with the construction of a power plant station. The conflict was constructively managed through a conflict management roundtable process facilitated by neutral facilitators. The facilitators were invited to lead the mediation process by one of the conflict parties.

THE COMMUNITY

Trakovice village lies 8 kilometres to the west of Hlohovec city. The population density in the area is 110 people per sq. km. The size of the Trakovice population was 1.508 people in January 2012. Malženice is a nearby village, lying at a 3 km distance from Trakovice, administratively belonging to another, Trnava city region. Its population is 1.391 people.

Both villages lie close to Jaslovké Bohunice, a large nuclear power plant. The populations of both are almost homogenously Roman Catholic and Slovak nationality.

COMMUNITY CONFLICT ANALYSIS

The conflict arose around the project of the construction of a small power plant planned to be built on the border of the cadastral areas of two neighbouring villages, Trakovice and Malženice. The private investment power plant was commissioned by the government. The project of a small gas-based power plant was proposed to both villages in order to gain the obligatory consent of the local self-government representatives as a part of regular administrative procedures of construction approval.

The power plant was planned to be erected on the border of the cadastral areas of two neighbouring villages but administratively assigned to the Trakovice area. However, spatially the construction was to be at an almost 2 km distance from Trakovice village without direct traffic connection, and around 500 meters away from Malženice settlement with the driveway connecting it directly to Malženice village. The unusual placement was determined by key technical parameters and could not be changed. The power plant would therefore be a good source of income via local taxes and fees for Trakovice village, while Malženice village would be directly affected by the existence of the plant close to the settlement
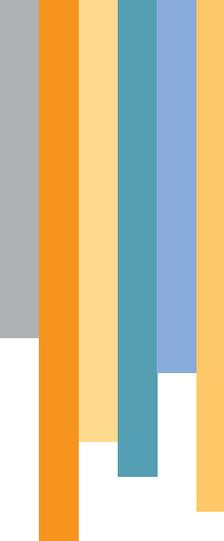
without having access to the benefits from the power plant as a local tax payer. The Malženice citizens initiated a petition against the project. In addition, the citizens of both villages were similarly anxious about possible anticipated negative effects of the power plant such as the danger of explosion, air and water pollution and noise. On the other hand, some of both villages' inhabitants saw the investment project as an opportunity for the creation of new jobs primarily in the power plant itself, and secondarily through related services, especially in Malženice due to its physical closeness and the transport connection to the power plant area. After a period of escalating tensions, the private investor invited two facilitation companies to take care of the negotiation process.

A three-fold conflict tension arose: one of the vertical character between the local inhabitants of the two villages and the investor; the second between the two villages; and the third between the citizens supporting and the ones opposing the project.

Within the vertical layer of the conflict, there was a factual power imbalance between the sides of the conflict. Therefore, facilitators functioned, besides other functions, as an entity counteracting the power imbalance through placing the common interests of local citizens face to face with the interest of a big and influential private company. Moreover, a structural problem behind this conflict could be seen: In actual fact, another party was present in the conflict situation besides those transparently participating, with its own interests and with wider obligations. In this case, this was the government of the Slovak Republic and the original owner of the lot where the power plant was to be built. Assuming that the government primarily defends country-wide interests and needs, those interests and needs could clash with the local inhabitants' interests and needs in specific cases. Another deeper structural problem behind this conflict reached into the sphere of intra-personal conflict: A historically conditioned attitude rooted in the collective mentality in the country to respect the decision of the authority stood in conflict with expectations towards the representatives of both villages to act as fully-fledged democratic local self-government units.

In this case, the need of safety and healthy living conditions of one conflict party was juxtaposed with the interests to gain business profits of another party and with the need to secure the prosperity of the country as an entity of the third conflict party. This conflict was of apetency–aversion type.

THE ORGANISATION DELIVERING THE PROJECT

Two facilitation companies were invited by the private investor's organisation to take care of the negotiation process. Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia (PDCS) is a non-profit NGO. It was created in 1991. Nowadays it is a part of a network of similar institutions in 16 countries Partners for Democratic Change International. The mission of PDCS is to help develop
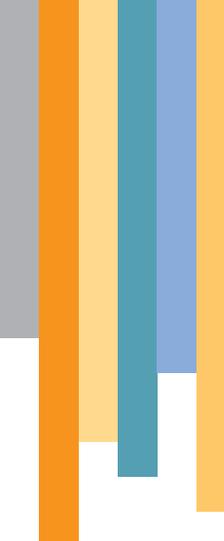
and promote the culture of democracy, expand democratic approaches and mechanisms for dialogue and conflict prevention. PDCS operates in the following programme areas: training of trainers, conflict transformation, development cooperation, minorities and tolerance, organisational development, public participation, social responsibility and social entrepreneurship. PDCS provides training, facilitation, evaluation and consultancy services in Slovakia and abroad. Currently, the organization employs an internal staff of 13 people and works with several external contractual partners and volunteers.

IFOK is an international private consulting company specialising in the areas of energy, the environment, sustainability, science, education, employment and corporate responsibility.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The conflict management process was initiated by the main investor, whose interest was the implementation of the power plant project, and who hired the facilitation organisations PDCS and IFOK. This project is therefore one of the rare examples of the initiative coming from the the community conflict management area in Slovakia. The investor contacted the facilitators with a request to facilitate dialogue with citizens of both villages. In September 2008, after the preparatory phase was accomplished and all the conflict parties agreed to participate in the process, the round table series started. The round tables continued at 2-3 months intervals and the

process was closed in 2010. The meeting place rotated between Malženice and Trakovice, the last meeting took place in the office spaces of the investor's company.

The conflict management process resulted in an agreement based on following:

- The villages agreed to the construction of the power plant
- The investor/power plant owner will be contributing to the development of both communities via financial and material support for the projects of community activities such as building the school, replacement of the trees cut out because of the construction.
- The investor/power plant owner will be actively informing the citizens about the effects of the power plant's operation on the environment.

The agreement never turned into a formally written document, but, according to the statements given by both current mayors, it is being respected by all parties.

Thanks to the existence of the power plant, the village of Trakovice receives significant amounts of money per year via the tax system. One of the regular community building events supported by the private investment company is the annual "Malženice 13 – Energy run" – a 13-km running event combined with a festival. In September 2012, Malženice village opened a new kindergarten, where the power plant investor was the key sponsor.
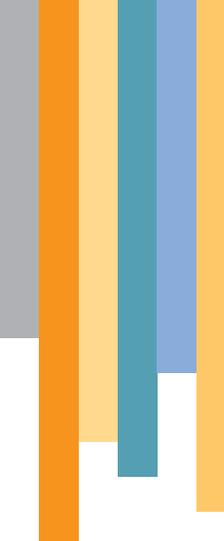
The facilitators used the methodology of round tables. In the preparatory phase in May and June 2008, the facilitators conducted interviews with stakeholders in both villages and in the broader region with people from local self-government structures, civic organisations, environmental and nature protection organisations, and the church. The interviews were conducted in a non-formal atmosphere, the aim was to map the range of opinions on the issue in the locality and to identify the stakeholders interested in participating in the dialogue process at the round table meetings. Prior to the first round table meeting, an "offer of the round table" was sent to the meeting participants, describing what the meeting will offer: information, space for a systematic clarification of disputed points, space for open opinion exchange, space for searching for mutually satisfying solutions. Simultaneously, the internal organizational frame and rules of the round table meetings (confidentiality, rotation of the place of the meeting, times, recording scope and rules) and the rules of informing the public were proposed.

The facilitators, hired by one of the conflict parties, defined their position prior to the first meeting by the following characteristics:
- neutral intermediary in the dialogue,
- responsible for organisation of the round table meetings,
- responsible for following the content of the round table meetings,
- process management, no advocacy for either of the parties,
- open to criticism,
- support for open communication and discussion of fears, expectations, solutions.

The aims proposed for the first round table meeting were:
- to build a common informational base (list of the discussion topics, clarification of the priority topics, common comprehension of the technical context),
- to clarify positions and interests,
- to create and assert common solutions,
- to maintain the common solutions.

In the first meeting's schedule there were also points such as the date and time of the next meeting and the creation of a list of regular participants and their substitutes.
Part of the first meeting's schedule was collection and recording of the participants' expectations and questions as a way of listing priority themes:
- to obtain basic information about the power plant parameters,
- to learn about the economical, environmental, social and cultural impact of the power plant on both villages,
- to obtain information on how the power plant is comparable with other gas-steam plants in other regions,
- to voice citizens' opinions that are not yet known to the mayors,
- personal contact with the private investor's representatives.
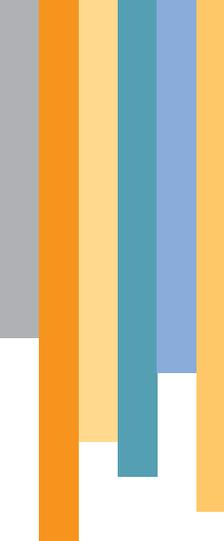
The discussion topics collected during the first meeting were then divided into groups of "priority" and "others", and the order in which those would be discussed was agreed on. The topics were discussed in the following order:

- providing the affected region (villages and the wider region) with information on the impact of the construction process,
- mapping possibilities of involvement of the local people in the construction process and benefits from the construction process for the localities,
- mapping possibilities of involvement of the investor in the community life of Malženice and Trakovice (What are citizens' needs and interests? What are investor's needs and interests? What support for both communities is realistic and possible from the investor?)
- safety, risk of accident,
- water consumption of the power plant and its effects on the local river,
- system of regular information on emissions from the power plant towards the public,
- discussion of whether there is a need to continue round table meetings during and after the power plant construction.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FACTORS

An analysis of the interviews with several round table participants led to recommendations for a possible future replication of the successes of the project:

- The professional neutral facilitator, who does not live in the community is crucial for this type of mediation of an open conflict,
- A facilitator who has a formal relationship with any of these parties is not credible (e.g. a facilitator who is a direct employee of the investors company),
- If one of the parties hires and pays the facilitator, it is necessary to reveal this information openly, in detail and from the beginning of the process and to expect a longer trust-gaining period. The primary contract between the facilitator and the clients needs to be formulated with special care in this aspect. In fact, some of the participants still refer to the facilitators as the "investor's employees" rather than as neutral facilitators.
- Selection of the representatives of citizens to participate in the round table talks is crucial. The proposal of the facilitators to find a permanent substitute selected in advance for each participant was evaluated as very effective in minimising factors hindering or blocking the process.
- Selecting community representatives rather than starting with a wide public forum works better at the initial phases of the process. Organizing big public gatherings tends to function later on, as an interactive platform for the exchange of information and ideas, or it might be an effective starting activity in cases where no concrete conflict has escalated yet.
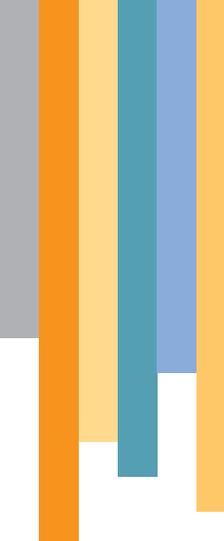
- The personal experience of the feasibility of solving conflicts constructively and the new skills acquired in the process are being used by the community representatives and local government representatives in their further work.
- The participants highlighted the importance of a common neutral space and the importance of a certain level of formality and agreed rules within the process,
- Some of the participants thought that the fact that the process gave them time to gain information and specialized technical advice was a more important benefit of their successful participation than the actual work of the facilitators,
- The round table process was initiated early enough to prevent conflict escalation – even before the administrative procedure of construction permission was closed.

5.2.5

Project title	**Conciliation committees project**
Delivering organisation	• Partners for Democratic Change, NGO
Partners involved	
Project duration	1998–2006
Project scope	• five ethnically mixed localities across Slovakia: Kežmarok, Prešov, Rimavská Sobota, Levice and Nové Zámky • in the first phase, 60 representatives from diverse social, professional, and ethnic groups were contacted and offered an opportunity to participate in a series of training sessions
Targeted problem, target group	• deteriorating economic conditions in the ethnically mixed regions tend to escalate tension • the main goal of the project was to support setting up of permanent local civic structures of conflict management • conciliation committees • the work for the conciliation committee was planned to be of long-term on voluntary, honorary and non-fee bases.
Change/progress achieved	• the quantity and quality of individual corrective experiences of the project participants on alternatives to fighting or to compromises in the conflict • effective microregional networking • the project helped to create new civic groups and initiatives • a publication: Ondrušek, D., Labáth V., Tordová Z., "Konflikt, zmierovanie, zmierovacie rady" • in attempts to establish permanent civic structures, the voluntary or honorary principle seems not to have functioned
Means of achieving change / progress	• conciliation is a specific type of mediation, where in a dispute between two or more stakeholders the third neutral participant is a collective body • a conciliation committee consists of 5-11 local people and the informal authorities, who are professionally prepared to intervene in the conflict • the conciliation committee must represent all the significant minorities in the community

	• each conciliation committee member should have a qualification minimum agreed in advance
Key success factors	• the project participants transferred the conflict management techniques and mediation attitudes into their professions • some of the conciliation committees activists became non-formal mediators or conflict management advisors to local decision makers • the sustainable role of the conciliation committee coordinator is crucial for the operation of the committee. • timing is a key success factor in setting up the conciliation committee • regularly informing those community members who do not participate in the community committees' work and constant communication with the media • periodical training offered to future potential conciliation committee members and supervision meetings for operating members
Overall budget of the project	

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM ADDRESSED BY THE PROJECT

The project worked with the hypothesis that deteriorating economic conditions in the targeted ethnically mixed regions, including a higher level of unemployment than the national average, tend to escalate tension, while the local governments rarely intervened effectively. The main goal of the project was to support setting up of permanent local civic structures of conflict management – conciliation committees – to deliver conflict management and mediation services for citizens and counselling to the local government representatives in the cases of conflicts. The work of the conciliation committee was planned to be of long term on voluntary, honorary and non-fee bases.

THE COMMUNITY

The conciliation committees project was delivered in five ethnically mixed localities across Slovakia, some of which lie in Eastern and some in Western and Central Slovakia: Kežmarok, Prešov, Rimavská Sobota, Levice and Nové Zámky. In the data collection phase of this conflict management project, two localities were visited on-site, where stakeholders were interviewed: the town of Kežmarok in the Prešov County in Eastern Slovakia and the town of Nové Zámky in Nové Zámky County in Western Slovakia.
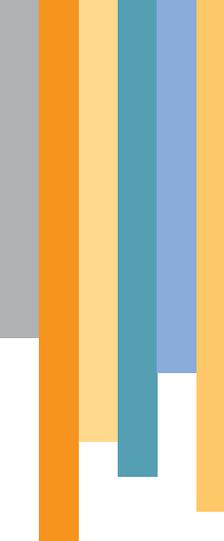
According to the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, in the town of Nové Zámky 40.094 people were living in 2010. In the 2001 census, which will be discussed below 69,67% of Nové Zámky inhabitants reported having Slovak nationality, 27,52% Hungarian, 0,57% Roma, and 0,77% Czech or Moravian nationality. The size of the biggest Hungarian minority in Nové Zámky declined by almost 4% in the period 1991–2001. The majority of inhabitants reported having Roman Catholic religion (71,7%), while 3,36% Evangelical religion and 17,75% not to belong to any denomination.

Kežmarok had a population of 16.789 people in 2010. The majority nationality is Slovak (95%), with the biggest minority being Roma (1,59) according to the census in 2001. The main religions are Roman Catholic (77,5% of people), Evangelical (4,8%) and Greek Catholic (2,6%), while 10,9% of inhabitants reported not to belong to any denomination.

In both localities, the census statistics about the citizens of Roma nationality are questioned. In the census, ethnicity was recorded on the basis of self-declaration, which probably resulted in a significant statistical decrease in the size of the Roma population compared to field work number estimates.

COMMUNITY CONFLICT ANALYSIS

While the project idea was originally based on the prevention of the escalation of interethnic conflicts, the conciliation committees were set up to facilitate mainly neighbourhood conflicts, school environment conflicts, family and labour disputes. The nature of the dispute depended also on the professional environment of the given conciliation committee members where the idea of the conciliation had been disseminated.

The following are some reported examples of cases solved by conciliation committees:
• conflicts between the Roma and non-Roma elementary school pupils' parents,
• conflicts between the community social worker and the mayor of the village,
• family conflict on finances management,
• neighbourhood conflict on garbage management,
• conflict between a debtor and a creditor on the repayment schedule,
• inheritance dispute.

These conflicts are apparently mostly horizontal, the parties are individuals.

THE ORGANISATION DELIVERING THE PROJECT

Partners for Democratic Change Slovakia (PDCS) is a nonprofit NGO. It was created in 1991. Nowadays, it is part of a network of similar institutions in 16 countries, Partners for Democratic Change International. The mission of PDCS is to
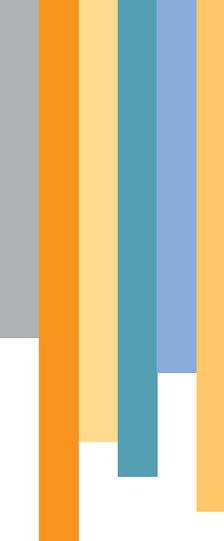
help develop and promote the culture of democracy, expand democratic approaches and mechanisms for dialogue and conflict prevention. PDCS operates in the following programme areas: training of trainers, conflict transformation, development cooperation, minorities and tolerance, organisational development, public participation and social responsibility and social entrepreneurship. PDCS provides training, facilitation, evaluation and consultancy services in Slovakia and abroad. Currently, the organization employs an internal staff of 13 people and works with several external contractual partners and volunteers.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The main long-term aim of the conciliation committees project was to establish mechanisms of building positive relationships between minority and majority groups through conciliation commissions. Five localities were chosen where higher interethnic tension was predicted, either in the Roma–non-Roma division, or the Slovak–Hungarian ethnic division. The project was a top-down initiative. The conciliation committees were planned to be established as permanent civic structures, recognized by local statutes and composed of mediators representing the ethnic diversity of the community. The main functions of conciliation committees were planned as follows: To prevent and manage disputes by monitoring majority-minority relations, to conduct educational outreach to local groups, to mediate disputes relating to ethnic and minority issues and to facilitate dialogues on issues of local concern. The project activities were running during the period between 1998 and 2006, with different durations and with different sustainability potential, depending on the given locality. In the first phase, 60 representatives from diverse social, professional, and ethnic groups were contacted and offered an opportunity to take part in a series of training sessions and focus group meetings. These participants were trained in effective communication, negotiation and mediation skills, as well as in multiculturalism and the history and traditions of Roma, in order to prepare them as future volunteer workers in the commissions. Consequently, the participants worked on the formation of the commissions as the key project objective and prepared them to start delivering services for the community – with varied results differing from location to location.

As an added project result, the assistance of commission services and networking helped to create new civic groups, such as Verbum pro Futura, Council for Advising in Social Work, and Romano Lile. In Levice, civil society representatives organised a meeting to convene the city's leaders in order to more effectively coordinate their programmes and increase their focus on multicultural coexistence. Other activities that resulted from the commissions' work included the participation of Roma musicians in the Festival of Tolerance in Nové Zámky, Roma clubs for children and youth, a new group of Alcoholics Anonymous and a series of discussions in schools.
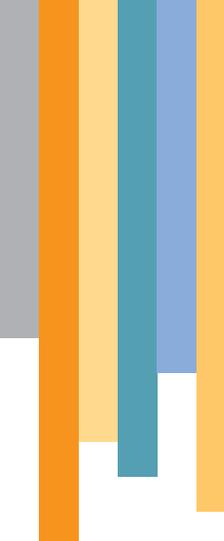
As the final result, the delivering organisation issued a publication analysing and summarizing the conciliation committees' work (Ondrušek, D., Labáth V., Tordová Z., "Konflikt, zmierovanie, zmierovacie rady").

Based on the interviews with local members of the conciliation committees, the conciliation committee in Nové Zámky was active for about one year in 1998, following the educational phase of the project. The committee office supported by the city council was open once a week, the services were for free. It dealt with a handful of family conflicts and also with several chronic complainants and unemployment social counselling cases. The conciliation committee in Kežmarok never actually started to operate in practice. Despite the failure in establishing permanent civic structures for community mediation on a voluntary basis, the project yielded several crucial success aspects described below.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The publication issued by the delivering organization in the framework of the project[63] is a unique and complex resource on community conflicts mediation approach and methods in Slovakia. It describes the methodology used in the conciliation committees project as follows below.

Under conciliation we mean a specific type of mediation where in a dispute between two or more stakeholders the third neutral participant is a collective body. A conciliation committee consists of 5-11 local people and the informal authorities who are professionally prepared to intervene in the conflict, understand the local context and are close to one or another group of citizens in the dispute in terms of external characteristics (language, origin, nationality, social status, demographic characteristics).

The conciliation committee must clearly represent all the significant minorities in the community (e.g. women, Roma, farmers, etc.). Working for a conciliation committee is usually voluntary. A conciliation committee member should have the following qualification minimum: basic training in mediation, negotiation and communication built around the five main skill areas (active listening, facts search, identification of points of dispute, reformulating of the points of dispute, agreement facilitation); knowledge on rules and principles of the conciliation committees and personality requirements (a stable, moral, respectful, socially skilled personality).

Conciliation and the civil disputes mediation process differ in the following points:

1. Participants:
   Many multilateral conciliations require the presence of representatives of the groups and not just individuals who negotiate on their own behalf. It is important not only to decide which groups should be represented, but also to help these groups to choose a suitable representative to attend the discussions with a strong

[63] Ondrušek, D., Labáth V., Tordová Z., Konflikt, zmierovanie, zmierovacie rady, PDCS, 2004, Bratislava, ISBN 80-968934-7-5
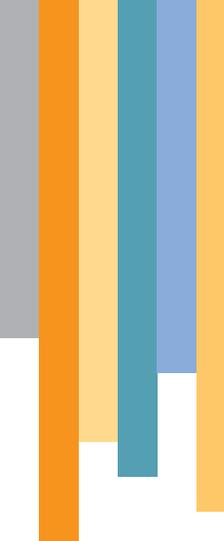
mandate from the group. When considering which group should attend, it is important to consider also who might eventually block the implementation of the agreement. If possible, all such groups should be asked to participate too.

2. Preparatory work before the conciliation session:
A conflict analysis and preparatory meetings with each process participant separately should precede the first session. The aim of these meetings is not only to map the situation and the expectations of the parties, but also to informally learn about the possible outcomes of the process of reconciliation.

3. Building coalitions:
The multilateral conflict conciliation process usually leads to a situation whereby participants form coalitions and opinion subgroups.

4. Reaching agreement:
Due to the more complicated dynamics of reconciliation of groups compared to individuals, the procedures are more formalized and sometimes more structured.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SUCCESS FACTORS

Lessons learned from the project:
• The original plan that the established conciliation committees would remain in operation as voluntary civic structures after the starting activities proved to be wrong. The conciliation committees themselves mostly did not survive until the end of the project's top-down support. The question of long-term sustainability should be revised.

• The main long-term benefits of the project seem to be two-fold: Firstly, the quantity and quality of individual corrective experiences of the project participants on the feasibility of alternatives to fighting or to compromises in the conflict; and secondly, effective microregional networking.

An analysis of the interviews with conciliation committee activists and the coordinator tracking the potentially replicable success aspects of the project, yielded the following information:

• Even if conciliation committees themselves did not outlive the end of the project support, the project participants transferred the conflict management techniques and mediation attitudes into their professions. The targeted conflict management training for selected professions with key relevancy to community life, without the aim to create a conciliation committee, might be one of the possible project innovations.
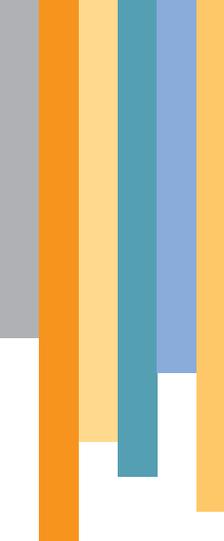
- If the project was to be replicated, an effective innovation would be to invest more support and attention in the long-term sustainability of the project through institutionalization and long-term financial support from the local administration budget or state budget, or through education on other financial self-sustainability solutions in the non-governmental sector. The minimum need seems to be a salary for a conciliation committee coordinator.

- The networking between the public figures and mediators within the community outlived the end of the project support; the conciliation committees' activists became non-formal mediators or conflict management advisors to the city council and other local decision makers. For example, one of the participants in Nové Zámky successfully facilitated a recent conflict between the city council and the local dog shelter.

- Other ideas for the functional enhancement of this project would be to pay more attention to the informing, training and education of the local self-government and local administration representatives, local police etc. on how the community and its representatives could benefit from the existence of the conciliation committee in the town. A shift from conflict resolution to the conflict transformation approach in the educational part of future projects might have better potential to bring results.

- The sustainable role of the conciliation committee coordinator, acceptable for all community subgroups, is crucial for the operation of the committee.

- Timing is a key success factor in setting up the conciliation committee – the first half of the local self-government representative election period seems to be suitable.

- Regularly informing those community members who do not participate in the community committees' work and constant communication with the media are underestimated but crucial success factors.

- Periodical training offered to future potential conciliation committee members and supervision meetings for operating members can add to the sustainability of the committee.
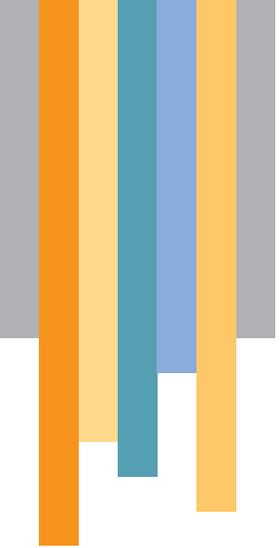
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. FOR ALL OF US WORKING IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION

- The differences between the localities could be significant, which should be taken into account when adapting any model of conflict prevention or management.
- Conflicts are sometimes symptoms of a wider problem – inter-ethnic conflicts might have different dimensions such as: discrimination, unequal access to resources (education, health services, jobs etc.), stereotypes etc. Targeting these aspects could trigger new ways of solving the conflict. Therefore the dimensions of the conflicts should be carefully studied and identified.
- Three types of action – conflict management, community building and social work – support the social improvement of the most vulnerable members of the community. These must operate in synergy.
- To ensure the political will at local level, it is necessary to mitigate or overcome system-barriers at central level. In other words, policymakers and experts at central level must take a closer look at the local situation and conditions, showing full respect to the local actors.
- The solution should not require local authorities to completely reassess and reject their current systems. (For example, if they have enough experiences and there is a relevant NGO's structure, existing concepts should be further processed, developed, or interlinked.)
- The local authorities, i.e. town councils, are the major drivers of the change and mobility-based processes. A systematic, complex and long-term solution is not possible without their political commitment, will and true interest in reversing the exclusion into a process of gradual social inclusion and renewal of localities based on their specific features. (Regardless of the available resources and experience, the commitment of the local authorities, municipality representatives and citizens must be the drivers of the mobility-based change.)
- In this regard, it is appropriate to highlight the fundamental role of NGOs in the entire process. (Considering their mostly positive impact on development in the localities, supporting NGO capability development, education of NGO personnel, prevention of the burnout syndrome, enhanced sustainability of the non-profit sector through information sharing, establishment of an advice body, cooperation with NGOs and sharing of best practices are to be highlighted.)
- The transformative approach to conflict (the premise: „Conflict is an opportunity for a positive change") should be disseminated.
- Beneficiaries and attracting prestigious leaders should be involved in solving the local problems.
- Services should be provided in an empowering and sustainable way.
- Conflict management should be organic, practices shall be started on small scale, tested, and then let grow.
- Work shall be done with the whole community, not only with those directly involved in the conflict.

- Awareness of the cultural context is necessary: there is historically based expectancy towards a higher authority to be protective and decision-making, while the citizen is the object of decision-making.
- Negative cultural associations to the word "conflict" shall be kept in mind.
- It should be kept in mind that there is not just one "right" code of behavior in the country.

2. FOR PLANNERS AND PROJECT MANAGERS

- Provision of timely and detailed information to local authorities and the general public is a necessary precondition for change policy initiation. (E.g. providing information on the existing integration tools, their operation and distributing the best practices. A targeted information campaign shall form an integral part of the process at the central level.)
- Political initiation of the change process must be followed by local development plan based on a thorough survey of each locality, including a specific analysis, qualified design of tools and programmes, and calculation of resources and capacities.
- The local plan will not be trustworthy and politically reliable unless the public believes that the target level of inclusion can be achieved. (Only when this trust has been earned, will the local plan be perceived as beneficial to the public and not as a privileged favour to the special target group.)

- The projects will require finances not only because they cover a wide scope of necessary tools and stakeholders, but also to prepare their capabilities.
- Awareness raising campaigns on conflict management should be periodically organised for local stakeholders and local state administration.
- Money is not enough – although the prospect of (for example) ESF financing may serve as an incentive attracting the interest, it must be explicitly declared that non-financial prerequisites are even more important than financial resources for the change policy. (Not until there is a plan in place stipulating how and where the change is to be directed, it is worth of thinking about necessary resources.)
- Attitudes and prejudices among all representatives of community shall not be neglected.
- National and EU level plans and strategies should be built on.
- A good relationship with NGOs and public private partnership should be emphasized.
- Partnership with young people, even if they are not directly involved, shall be considered.
- Public debate should be encouraged on the issues connected to community conflict management.
- Effective national policy on dissemination of project funding possibilities shall be found.
- The importance of preliminary research of previous projects should not be underestimated.
- Take time. Build trust. Get to know the community.

- Place shall be made for the unexpected and for plans for changes and alterations to the plans shall be allowed.
- The role of the dynamics of the different phases of the project shall not be underestimated in terms of their intensity and structure.
- Solutions to crisis situations should fit or be built on the local traditions and cultures.
- Social work (for the weakest), community work (for everybody) and mediation (for concrete conflicts) should not be mixed up.
- Teaching people to orientate in the media messages shall be a part of conflict prevention work in present society.
- Quantity of small size corrective experiences of success works.
- Sustainability means nothing less than local institutionalization of the conflict management services.

3. FOR IMPLEMENTERS AND COLLEAGUES IN FIELD

- Perfect plans do not make perfect changes unless there is a clear implementation plan and a real budget available.
- The projects must be continuously monitored not only to search for possible corrections or to follow-up results, but also to be able to monitor the use of gained experiences and findings connected to processes, methods and policies by newcomers.
- In public/private conflicts: open involvement of all sides of the conflict (private companies, citizens, local government/State) is necessary.

- Concentration on building personal relationships (making anonymisation of violence excluded) is essential.
- Taking the possibility of plan B, C, D etc. is highly recommended.
- Human needs and positive motivations should be searched for behind the community conflicts.
- Everybody is „us", nobody is „them": it shall not be forgotten to include everybody in conflict management procedure, also those who are against the resolution.
- There is no conflict management without at least one neutral public space on the local level.
- Be precise with methodology: wide forums are for gathering ideas; mediation process needs community subgroups' representatives.
- Small talk makes the difference: if people start speaking only after the conflict has escalated, it might be too late.
- It takes time: conflict management works in the contexts of social and personal histories. Each small success is worth celebration.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DONORS

- Open communication about values shall be allowed.
- Effective monitoring process and observations should be carried out during the entire duration of the project.
- Operation shall be monitored by appointing responsible professionals, who know and understand the programmes.

- A necessary level of flexibility shall be allowed for successful community conflict projects.
- Interest for implementation shall be expressed, partners should be trusted and risks should be taken.
- Conflict management work has been a rather hidden agenda in projects built on other key words defined by funding priorities. There is work to be built on...

MODEL PROJECT PLAN
THE COMMUNITY CENTRE PROJECT

Delivering organisation	Public organization
Partners involved	Any relevant institutions, organizations and bodies (as NGOs, social care centres, police, government etc.)
Project duration	2-4 years
Project scope	• To establish/develop centre for the whole community. • Activities: trainings, community projects, sports events, art clubs, joint excursions, and exchange programmes with other community centres. • The centre will also operate as a consulting and communication forum.

	• The centre will serve as a neutral safe space for community conflict management
Targeted problem, target group	Juveniles and adults interested in getting involved in the wellbeing of the community.
Overall budget of the project	300.000 -500.000 EUR

Model Project Plan

When reading the country reports based on the projects, which were carefully selected and thoroughly researched by experts from five European countries, it seems reasonable to present the model project as well. If there are well organised and functioning projects, there should also be one, which explains the principle of the organisation and implementation as such. For this reason the following lines are going to describe a project, which is entirely hypothetical but which includes the most effective and universal strategies.

The core of the model project is the establishment of a community centre or the improvement of the operation of an already existing one. The main functions of the community centre are the following:

- Provision of a platform for active participation of children and youth (organising sports events, art clubs, field trips etc.).
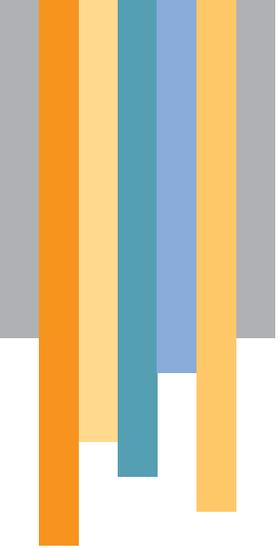
- Giving space for constructive and open debates among all community members, including official authorities.
- Serving as a centre for inter-generation and inter-cultural exchange.
- Serving as a contact point with the private sector to find ways for better funding on the basis of projects and also with regard to the long term sustainability of the community centre itself.

The lesson learnt from the Bulgarian projects helps us to understand the importance of organising art, sport or other spare time activities for young people. These projects presented an effective method of avoiding the social marginalisation of young people, as well as of eliminating prevailing social stereotypes. Children from diverse ethnic, cultural and social environment can not only influence each other, but they can also influence their teachers. This would certainly set a very positive example for others to follow. Moreover, children represent a connection point for parents and teachers. Consequently, any exchange programme would help create a mutual understanding among those, who would otherwise never meet. This is also very clearly indicated in the Czech project. Another important aspect is the willingness to cooperate among adults. As the projects proved it could be accomplished with various tools. One of them is the establishing of so-called citizen's jury, which settles the public affairs (such as a construction of a new public park, new playground, or an infrastructural development). Such form of a public debate seems more effective than public hearings (Hungarian project). Furthermore, there can be special forums in the community centre, which are organised by the most respected figures in the community and public hearings or negotiations enabling the members of the community to ask questions and share problems (Czech project). It is important for these initiatives to address real problems of the community as the members of the community define them (Romanian project as well).

In general, there can be various types of events organised in such community centre, such as interactive social theatre performances presented by the Hungarian projects (Presence Programme, Avas Communities and New Spectator), by which issues relevant for the entire community can be dealt with.

The public art gallery presents another suitable option, which can, apart from other events, offer photographic exhibitions of successfully finished projects and other public accomplishments. A very successful tool in several projects proved to be the creation or broadening of local publicity: channels of local media and communication. For example, newsletters, websites, community radio, which collects and presents up-to-date relevant information for the entire community (Hungarian projects).

Moreover, with the help of the community centre, several types of training courses or workshops can be introduced, such as an active involvement of Roma minority in the police forces (Romanian and Bulgarian project), creative workshop for children, discussion and study circles around various topics for adults. It could be also a practical workshop for teachers or members of other minorities concerning their rights as citizens or even community planning, with the help of the Citizen's Jury method, for instance.

The community centre, as proved by presented projects, plays

an important role in reducing unemployment since it offers a few new job opportunities as well as counselling special training courses to increase the chances of finding a job in specific locations with specific job market. The centre's activities will also lean on the settlement tradition, enhancing solidarity between groups of local civil society.

Last but not least, the community centre has a capacity to collaborate with various civic organisations and volunteers, who are able to function as mentors and supporters (Slovakian project). They can also provide the education guidelines and the personnel, which would take part in school mentor programmes. The Romanian project also proved the importance of receiving peer to peer support (i.e. older children take care of younger ones at school).

Concerning crime prevention strategy, besides all the above measures, the Crime Prevention Assistant (Czech project) appears to be the way forward.

Should the community centre serve as a space for conflict prevention and conflict management, it is important to keep the fulfillment of the following professional activities personally divided (and thus prevent the occurrence of any conflict of interests): social work (provided for the weakest), community work (provided for everybody) and mediation (addressing concrete conflicts). In order to serve as a centre for the whole community, the space should be neutral and safe for all subgroups of the community. The community workers should only provide help with what local people cannot do themselves. Also, it is important to be precise with methodology: wide forums function for gathering ideas; while mediation process needs appropriate representation of community subgroups and a neutral (external) facilitator (see the Slovakian Sveržov, Podsádek and Zvolen projects).

The projects, which were used as basis to create the model project plan:

BG
The Family Starts with the Children
Start for communication and work in multi-ethnic environment

RO
School mediators Ramnicelu
Mixed patrol Ramnicelu

CZ
Crime prevention assistant
Meeting with citizens

SK
Mentoring Project –Podsadec
Intercultural dialogue project – Sveržov
Community organizing project – Zvolen

HU
New Spectator – a restorative theatre programme
Presence programme, Pécs
AVAS Communities, Miskolc
Citizen's Jury

ESTIMATED BUDGET for THE COMMUNITY CENTRE PROJECT (Newly established for the first 2 years)		
1) Staff Costs	Nb of units	Nb of month
Director of the Center (1 person)	1	17
Organizational and oprerational manager (1 person)	1	17
Financial manager (1 person)	1	17
Secretary/Mentor (1 person)	1	17
Maintenance staff (1 person)	1	17
Social workers/Trainers (1 persons)	1	17
Crime prevention assistant/mentor (1 person)	1	17
Community worker (1 person)	1	17
External neutral mediator (1 person)	2 hour	17

2) Set up - Maintainance	Nb of units	Nb of month
House rental (min. 500 m²)	1	20
Purchasing computers	8	1
Purchasing a car	1	1
Purchasing mobiles	8	1
Purchasing technical equipment (TV, Fax, Printer, Copy machine)	1	1
Purchasing furniture	1	1
Offices Supplies (paper, cartridges, envelopes, pens, folders etc.)	1	17
Maintenance costs (water, electricity, heating, cleaning etc.)	1	20
3) Programmes and activities	Nb of units	Nb of month
Meals, equipment rental, printing, publicity	1	17
Total Estimated *	300.000 - 500.000 €	

*The costs are estimated on the basis of international statistics and other relevant sources, may differ upon the place, date and the local circumstances of the implementation.

The community centers project
First 2 years timetable

Fundraising for the next years

| Submission of the project | House rental | Purchasing Equipment, furniture, car | Selecting and contracting the staff | Implementation of the project activities (trainings, sport events, social theater, citizen's jury, mentor programs, conferences, mediation and community facilitation/conflict management meeting etc.) | Finalization of the project |

Jan 〉 Feb 〉 Mar 〉 Apr 〉 May 〉 Jun 〉 Jul 〉 Aug 〉 Sept 〉 Oct 〉 Nov 〉 Dec 〉 Jan 〉 Feb 〉 Mar 〉 Apr 〉 May 〉 Jun 〉 Jul 〉 Aug 〉 Sept 〉 Oct 〉 Nov 〉 Dec 〉

1st Year

2st Year

PROJECT PHOTOS
BULGARIA

The family starts with the children - Picture 1

The family starts with the children - Picture 2

Different together in football, in one team, in one school

CZECH REPUBLIC

Daybreak - Picture 1

Daybreak - Picture 2

Crime prevention assistant- Picture 2

Crime prevention assistant- Picture 1

Meeting with citizens

HUNGARY

Communities of Avas neighbourhood

On the margin of the city – presence programme - Picture 2

On the margin of the city – presence programme - Picture 1

Conflict in a village – dóc

Citizens jury in törökszentmiklós

New spectator – a restorative theatre program

ROMANIA

Hadareni case – Community Center

Hadareni case – The road

SLOVAK REPUBLIC
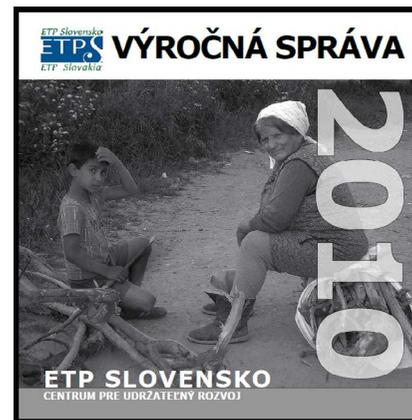
Annual report 2010 of ETP Slovakia – front page

Konflikt_zmierovanie:
Publication summarizing the Concilliation Commitees project- front page (Ondrušek, D., Labáth V., Tordová Z., Konflikt, zmierovanie, zmierovacie rady, PDCS, 2004, Bratislava, ISBN 80-968934-7-5)

Občasník :
Periodical informational paper of the local civic innitiative
in Zvolen – Západ within the Community organizing project

**Good Practices of Community
Conflict Management in the
Central Eastern European Region**

2013

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR
HUNGARY

Eucpn

The project was delivered as part of the Work programme of the European Crime Prvention Network