

EUROPEAN DIALOGUE

Annual Report
May 2006 – August 2007

*Building human rights and social justice through community
engagement*

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Welcome to European Dialogue's Annual Report, covering the period from May 2006 – August 2007. Further information about our ongoing work can be found on our website: www.europeandialogue.org.

ED – a summary

European Dialogue is a **small** and **trusted** London-based organisation which works to **support ethnic minorities in the UK and across Europe**, in their struggle to combat **racism** and **discrimination**. ED has a committed staff, a network of civic partners representing minority interests across Europe, and a team of ‘hands-on’ consultants who know how to deliver change ‘on the ground’. Through innovative, **high-quality pilot projects**, **research** and **publications**, we support the genuine, sustainable empowerment of ethnic minority groups, in the interests of equality and diversity.

The UK and its neighbouring states in wider Europe are much valued for their rich mix of **diverse cultures** and **ethnic identities**. However, the ongoing racism faced by many ethnic minorities is a major contributor to their **frequent social exclusion** and poverty, **driving conflict** and creating **new social challenges**. Lacking the resources and skills to achieve their rights, ethnic minority groups are frequently **denied access to public services** and **fair treatment in the criminal justice system**. As a result they do not have the opportunity to play an active role in mainstream society.

In an age of increasing migration and ethnic diversity, European Dialogue supports ethnic minorities in the UK and wider Europe to combat discrimination and pursue their human rights.

European Dialogue - Four key models for change

European Dialogue pilots innovative models of good practice for the implementation of national social inclusion/cohesion policies across Europe. We have developed four key models for the integration of vulnerable groups:

1. Community Development and Integration at the Local Level

Conducted within an anti-discrimination framework, ED runs programmes for minority empowerment, to promote partnerships with public services. ED develops participatory, inclusive and multi-agency strategies aimed at minority community development.

2. Access to Legal Rights and Criminal Justice

Working with all levels of the criminal justice system and NGOs, ED supports institutional reform to address bias and unfair practices. ED exchanges experiences of models of good practice in order for non-EU states to satisfy the Copenhagen Criteria, and other international human rights and rule of law standards in the UK and across Europe. We offer models for community policing and community engagement; and address issues related to racially motivated crime.

3. Equal Access to Inclusive Education

ED works intensively with communities to promote better access to and achievement in mainstream education for excluded minority children. We work through the promotion of culturally sensitive curricula, trainings for educators, teaching assistants, parental involvement, and appropriate education resources.

4. Implementing Anti-Discrimination Law

ED aims to empower community members, NGOs and service providers with strategies to implement national and international anti-discrimination legislation.

Staff and Consultants 2006-7

Programme Staff

Jeanette Buirski, Programme Director
 Lyubomir Lazarov, Project Officer (until Dec 2006)
 Elizabeth Campling, Project Officer (until May 2007)
 Ruth Grove-White, Project Officer
 Romy Danflous, Project Officer
 Julia Breeze, Admin and Finance Assistant (until May 2007)

Finance Staff

Andy Roberts, Finance Manager
 Mary Ching'ang'a, Financial Assistant
 Rukiye Demir, Financial Assistant
 Panteha Khatibian, Financial Assistant

Additional Staff and Interns

Kimber Barcant, IT support
 Joe Buirski, Office and IT support
 Nancy Holden, Project support
 Alison Philips, Project support
 Bea Randall, Project support
 Ilona Pinter, Project development
 Renee Maltezou, Media / PR Assistant

Council Members

Michael Smart, Chair
 Alan Sealy, Secretary
 Michael Newman, Member
 Marija Anteric, Member

Board Members

Michael Smart, Director
 Michael Newman, Director
 Alan Sealy, Director
 Andy Roberts, Company Secretary

Consultants and Trainers

Dr Robin Oakley, Consultant on racial equality and minority issues
 Peter Mercer MBE, Chairman of East Anglian Gypsy Council and National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups
 Arthur Ivatts OBE, Former Chief Inspector of Education for Gypsy/Traveller children in UK
 Chris Taylor, Former Chief Inspector at the Metropolitan Police
 John Slater, Former Chief Inspector at the Metropolitan Police
 Rajinder Sohpal, Director, Reading Racial Equality Council
 Cllr Parvin Damani MBE; Public Health and Diversity Specialist (Southampton PCT)
 Alan Phillips, Independent Human Rights consultant & UK Expert to Council of Europe on national minorities.
 Dragoljub Ackovic, Vice President of World Roma Parliament
 Aleksandar Zivanovic, Human Rights Trainer
 Lavinia Olmazu, Roma Consultant and Trainer

And a special thanks to Alan Anstead, Head of Communications Directorate FCO & former Legal Advisor to European Roma Rights Centre, for his voluntary support.



Alan Sealy, Michael Smart,
Mike Newman



Mike Newman, Ruth Grove-White, Jeanette Buirski



Peter Mercer, Romy Danflous, Alan Anstead

ED AGM 2007

Partners & Donors 2006-7

Partners

European Dialogue would like to thank our Partners throughout 2006/2007:

Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group, UK
Devon Racial Equality Council, UK
East Anglian Gypsy Council, UK
Greenwich Racial Equality Council, UK
National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups, UK
Omladinski Resurcni Centar (ORC) Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Pavee Point, Ireland
Poradna - The Centre for Civil and Human Rights, Slovakia
Romani Baht Foundation, Bulgaria
Roma Lom Foundation, Bulgaria
Romani CRISS, Romania

Donors

European Dialogue would like to thank the following for supporting our work in 2006/2007:

Andrew Wainwright Reform Trust
AW60 Trust
Barrow Cadbury Trust
Big Lottery Fund
British Government Home Office
Communities and Local Government
Council of Europe
DG Social Affairs, Employment and Equal Opportunities (European Commission)
European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (European Commission)
Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)
Scurrah Wainwright Charity

Supporting European Dialogue

Supporters

European Dialogue has a small but loyal base of supporters, who are invited to our Annual General Meeting and other events organised by European Dialogue, as well as receiving a copy of European Dialogue's Annual Report. We will be conducting a Membership Review in early 2008, in order to assess our Membership system, and to see how we can increase the involvement of our Members and other Supporters in our work.

Internships

Over the years many people of all ages and backgrounds have volunteered for European Dialogue. We can offer relevant NGO and office based experience – including project support, fund-raising and events organisation. You will be working as part of a small team in a friendly environment. We prefer volunteers/interns to commit to at least one day per week, preferably two, and preferably for a minimum of three months. Travel (within London) and lunch expenses will be covered. If you are interested in volunteering please contact European Dialogue at info@europeandialogue.org

Donations and Legacies

In addition to grant-funding for specific projects, European Dialogue is very dependent on our supporters and friends for donations, both in response to targeted appeals and on an ad hoc basis. Legacy donations are also gratefully received.

Volunteering at music festivals

If you are interested in volunteering for a shorter period and have FUN! at the same time, then volunteering at music festivals may be for you. The Workers Beer Company (WBC) runs beer tents at music festivals during the summer, including Glastonbury, Homelands and Reading. The WBC recruits servers from the voluntary sector who donate their time in exchange for money for their organisation. The server has free entry to the festival, and is provided with free food and drink. We usually start recruiting from February as this is extremely popular, so if you are interested please contact romy@europeandialogue.org.

Programme Director's Report

Since 1990, European Dialogue has developed a good track record of implementation of projects to support human rights and democracy across Europe, with funding from a range of international and national donors. The period 2006-7 has seen the completion of a number of highly successful projects, and in terms of achieving project outcomes this has been a peak period for us. The PRIMER, TRAILER and Roma and Police projects (please see Section 2 of this report) were all challenging but delivered very positive results. There has also been an exciting move to working with British Gypsy and Traveller communities, the 'Federation', bringing our European experience back home to Britain.

In addition to the excellent publications developed within all of our projects, we have also been commissioned to prepare two new publications – a police guidance on relations with the Gypsy and Traveller communities in England and Wales funded by the Home Office and Local Communities and Government, and a booklet of international standards and best practice for Russian police for the Council of Europe.

This last year or so has presented challenges. In general, ED now finds itself operating in a different political and very challenging funding environment. The Strategic Review undertaken between 2005 – 06 (funded by Barrow Cadbury), indicated that there were opportunities for ED to extend into new European regions, but also highlighted the difficulties which lay ahead and the need to move ED to a more sustainable future. The excellent news (in September 2007) that we have received charitable status offers greater opportunities for funding both from UK sources and internationally.

I have been Programme Director of European Dialogue since its launch in 1990. For personal reasons (mainly to do with advancing years!), I will be standing back from the position from the beginning of 2008 - I will continue as a non-executive Director throughout 2008, offering advice and helping our core members of staff in whatever way I can. I will seek to set up an Advisory Board to support the new era of ED's work.

In response to the changes 'at the top' and the new funding environment, we have already taken fundamental steps to restructure ED. We have downsized our office and moved into the Young Foundation – a very positive move into a social enterprise and community based Foundation. Two younger members of staff, Ruth Grove White and Romy Danflous, are now office-based and are bringing valuable skills and competencies to European Dialogue. Ruth is fulfilling a Programme Manager role, Romy is co-ordinating the on-going projects in the UK, and offering her expertise and language skills in the policing and minorities work across Europe. They are assisted by Rukiye Demir and Pany Khatabian on finances and administration.

The greatest challenge to survival for European Dialogue within the changed development environment is its size - a small, hands-on, civil society NGO, certainly not 'big business'. As a priority, ED aims to continue to work within strategic partnerships with like-minded groups, to strengthen its project delivery, and to improve access to funding.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our Directors/Trustees for their commitment, hard work and professionalism. Many thanks to our team of consultants who have often offered their services way beyond the call of duty, and to our loyal supporters and volunteers for their vital work in supporting ED. Our accountants, Barcant Beardon Ltd also deserve our thanks for their excellent advice and services.

Recommendations

Over the next year, I recommend that ED should, in order to build on its proven track record, continue to extend its experience and expertise within the UK, extending the work with Gypsies and Travellers and exploring work with Roma migrant communities. Additionally, the wider Europe programming should continue, in order that we can extend ED's four primary models for combating discrimination in community development, education, within the criminal justice system, and across the broad spectrum of equalities based upon EU and other international standards.

- Jeanette Buirskei, October 2007

European Dialogue Strategic Review 2004-6

European Dialogue, since its foundation in 1990, has worked consistently at the cutting edge of European integration. We have worked to raise awareness about, and support the rights of, the threatened, disenfranchised or excluded people in Europe, and in so doing, learnt many vital lessons. So we were extremely grateful to the Barrow Cadbury Trust for acknowledging these achievements, and awarding us a 2-year development grant at the end of 2004 to step back, take stock and plan for the future.

On an institutional level, this capacity building grant has enabled us to improve our financial and administrative procedures; for example, we developed a new and efficient computer-based accounting system. We have given training in financial management and project management to key staff, and developed an exciting and communicative website. We applied for charitable status and succeeded – all part of this process of streamlining our organisation to become more effective.

The major theme of the Strategic Review was to look critically at ED's strengths and weaknesses, and together with a stakeholder analysis and review of political changes and funding directions, develop a strategy for the coming years. We would very much like to thank Alan Phillips, independent consultant and ex-Director of the Minority Rights Group, for his positive and professional input into this process. With his advice and guidance we have produced an over-arching strategic direction for ED in the post- EU enlargement phase of our work. The full European Dialogue Strategy 2007-10 can be downloaded from our website.

The ED Strategic Review was funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust



European Dialogue Strategic Objectives

1. We will develop stronger programming to address the problems of access to rights for migrants, and in particular, Roma migrants from Central and Eastern Europe. This will enable ED to bring its extensive experience in Europe 'back home' to the UK.
2. ED will build upon its work with British-based Gypsies and Travellers, working with their representatives to raise awareness and offer relevant skills to enable the Gypsy and Traveller communities themselves to take the opportunities now available, and ensure that their voice is heard in developing and implementing policy.
3. ED will seek to develop programmes in countries at the 'edge of Europe' – in Moldova, Turkey, the Caucasus, central Asia – transferring and adapting the lessons learnt, experience and skills from previous successful projects.
4. ED will seek core funding now that charitable status has been achieved, and explore developing a 'sustainers group' who can offer consistent financial support over the coming years.
5. ED will promote the development of staff and resources adequate for effective implementation of the above strategy, to ensure a continuity and diversity of personnel and financial resources.
6. ED will further develop its own website, publish reports and develop other communication and dissemination channels, to raise our profile and to make links and exchange experience with relevant NGOs and academic institutions in the UK.

ED ACTIVITIES 2006/07

UK – Positive Routes: Building the capacity of the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups (Feb 2007 – April 2008)

This project aims to build the capacity of a national level network – the National Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups to give the marginalized Gypsy and Traveller community a stronger and united voice to represent their interests at local, regional and national levels, and in international activities.

The Federation of Gypsy Liaison Groups (the ‘Federation’) is a national level network of British Romany Gypsy community representatives. The Federation was set up in May 2006, after the Travellers Law Reform Coalition – a UK-based network which primarily lobbied Parliament for Gypsy and Traveller rights – was disbanded by the Gypsy and Traveller participants. The Federation is currently hosted on a voluntary basis by the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group. Consultation with grass roots Gypsy and Traveller communities is fed into this structure through the National Federation of Gypsy and Traveller Groups Forum, which allows groups and individuals who are not aligned with any group/movement to represent their views.

European Dialogue is working in close partnership with the Federation and Regional Networks of Gypsy and Traveller representatives and community members. This project is building the capacity of the Federation by developing and enhancing skills required to support a programme of structured activities. There is strong support among the project team for a follow-on project, in order to consolidate and build upon the achievements of this project.

The project is taking place in three distinct phases, over a 15 month period:

Phase 1 – Identification of the regional steering groups and supporting them in carrying out in-depth consultation with Gypsy and Traveller communities across England, through regional conferences and through needs’ analysis.

Phase 2 – Development of Local Action Plans (LAPs), on the basis of the needs identified in Phase 1, and presenting them to the relevant local, regional and national authorities.

Phase 3 – Identification of models of good practice developed under Phases 1 & 2, and develop policy responses to be proposed to UK government, and to be brought forward through participation in government-level Gypsy and Traveller working groups, and to raise the issues with European institutions based in Brussels.

The project is funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Scurrah Wainwright Charity.





Practical guidance booklet on policing in relation to Gypsies and Travellers in England and Wales (April – Sept 2007)

Relations between police and Gypsy and Traveller communities throughout the UK have presented a challenge for many years, in part based upon a long history of confrontation and the on-going social issues facing Travellers and Gypsies. In recent years much has been done to improve the relationship, not least the Moving Forward initiative supported by the Home Office and implemented by the Derbyshire police and the Derbyshire Gypsy Liaison Group.

This successful project has worked to improve liaison, trust, mutual respect and understanding between police and Travellers, to enable sustainable support to improve and inform policing. The inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller communities in police training, and the establishment of strategic partnerships have both been cornerstones of this work.

Building on these positive initiatives, European Dialogue was commissioned by the Home Office, Communities and Local Government, and National Police Improvement Agency to produce a practical guidance booklet on policing in relation to Gypsies and Irish Travellers to be distributed to all forces across England and Wales.

The target audience for this booklet is front-line police officers in England and Wales, and it contains information relevant to operational policing in relation to Gypsies and Travellers. It essentially seeks to re-emphasize the fact that Gypsies and Travellers have the same rights and should be treated equally to all other citizens. Within this framework, by providing information about Romani Gypsies' and Irish Travellers' cultural customs and practices, the booklet aims to inform police practice and assist police officers in delivering a high quality service to all. This information should help police officers better assess the impact of actions undertaken in relation to Gypsies and Travellers.

Extensive consultation with both members of the community and police officers has been an essential component in producing the booklet. The draft booklet was completed during Autumn 2007, and final version should be published and distributed during Spring 2008.

The initiative was funded by the British Government Home Office, and Communities and Local Government.

PRIMER – Bulgaria (Nov 2004 – Jan 2007)

The Project for Roma Inclusion in Mainstream Education Resources (PRIMER project) – Bulgaria, ran for two years from November 2004 and aimed to improve access to and performance in pre-school and primary education for Roma girls and boys in two locations in Bulgaria: in the 35,000 strong Roma neighbourhood of Fakulteta in Sofia, and in Lom, a mid-sized town in the deprived northern region of Montana. The project's integrated strategy had a wide impact both on the Roma children, and on the wider communities, through the establishment of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), and establishing Classroom Assistants; School, Home and Health Liaison Workers, and Curriculum Development Workers to tackle cross-cutting issues compounding Roma children's low enrolment, performance and attendance in mainstream schools.

Results

PRIMER managed to achieve dramatic results in the two target areas, transforming the educational potential for Roma children. Its main achievements included a significant increase in the enrolment, attendance and academic achievements of Roma children between 2004 and 2006. The model was endorsed by the Deputy Minister for Education in Bulgaria, who urged the wider dissemination and use of the PRIMER methodology across the region. The PRIMER project has informed national education policy at the highest level and its models of good policy and practice in implementing inclusive and culturally sensitive education curricular can be adapted throughout Bulgaria and in other countries to improve education for Roma children.

PRIMER Bulgaria was funded by the Big Lottery Fund, from which European Dialogue received an excellent final evaluation of project activities and results. The Lottery concluded that *“The project was able to reach more children than originally anticipated... This demonstrates that the project has made a difference with a focus on improving education for disadvantaged Roma children. It is also a testament to all the hard work of the project team... Enrolment figures showed good improvements after project intervention e.g. in Sofia 53% of pre school attendance was increased to 100%... Reduction in premature departure has been achieved in all districts and it is good to see the figures documented that support the reductions across the districts in the report... Further stats demonstrate that increased test performance and Roma based relevant teaching has resulted from the project.... Overall this has been a successful project and has the potential to be sustainable providing that resources can be found”*.

European Dialogue is now developing two projects, for likely implementation in 2008-9, based on PRIMER Bulgaria, in countries where Roma children suffer extreme disadvantage: PRIMER Serbia and Macedonia, and PRIMER Moldova.

PRIMER Bulgaria was funded by the British Big Lottery Fund.



Roma children waiting to perform at the PRIMER Final Celebration, December 2006



Roma children from a school in Lom, Bulgaria



TRAILER - Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania, Ireland & UK (Dec 2004 – Nov 2006)

The TRAILER project - Traveller and Roma Action for the Implementation of Legal and Equality Rights was among a number of projects which were funded by the EU Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination (2000-2006) to improve the implementation of national anti-discrimination legislation vis-à-vis the EU equality directives.

During the project European Dialogue brought together human rights/anti-racist organisations from five European countries: Bulgaria, Slovakia, Ireland, the UK and Romania. All were at different stages of implementing national anti-discrimination legislation, and all aimed to promote access to justice and social inclusion for Roma, Romany Gypsies and Travellers. European Dialogue’s partners in the TRAILER project were Devon Racial Equality Council (UK), Romani Baht Foundation (Bulgaria), Poradna (Slovakia), Pavee Point (Ireland) and Romani CRISS (Romania).

The project included a diverse range of interrelated activities which responded to the local needs of Roma, Romany Gypsies and Travellers, and the state of play of national anti-discrimination legislation.

- Trainings and seminars
- Monitoring and documentation
- Legal assistance & litigation
- Transnational study visits
- Training manuals & *Know your rights* leaflets
- Local action plans

Within the national activities the partners produced a variety of leaflets/brochures and practice manuals to inform Roma, Romany Gypsies and Travellers about their rights and to provide guidance to NGOs, legal practitioners and service providers on the provisions of national anti-discrimination legislation vis-à-vis the EU equality directives and how to use the law to combat discrimination.

- Bulgaria: *Enforcement of the Protection Against Discrimination Act - A Responsibility of Society and the Protected Groups - Judicial Practice on the Act*
- Ireland: *The Role of Positive Action in Pursuing Traveller and Roma Employment Equality*
- Romania: *You have the right not to be discriminated against*
- Slovakia: Non-discrimination and human rights practice manuals available in Slovak for free from Poradna
- UK: *Every Traveller Child Matters* booklet

TRAILER was funded by the EC DG Employment and Social Affairs, the Andrew Wainwright Reform Trust and the AW60 Trust.



Anti-discrimination materials produced by Devon Racial Equality Council, Poradna, and Romani Criss under TRAILER



SARR BiH: Strategies for Achieving Rights for the Roma Minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dec 2006 – Aug 2007)

The Roma are widely acknowledged to be the most vulnerable minority group in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), living largely in conditions of extreme poverty and marginalisation. Through SARR BiH, European Dialogue (ED) aimed to apply a strategy focusing on Roma community empowerment to strengthen Roma political participation and social inclusion. It also aimed to work with local and national authorities to improve their capacity in social policy development and implementation.

ED, in partnership with local NGOs and with the assistance of local coordinators, planned to primarily work within three pilot communities in BiH to carry out activities over a period of 24 months. Through focusing on improving the active participation of local level Roma actors in rights-based politics in BiH, ED aimed to strengthen Roma inclusion in policy development and improving access to social services. SARR BiH aimed to provide a model for how further social inclusion policy could be developed through a participatory, communicative process, involving local level input. SARR BiH closed in August 2007.

SARR BiH was funded by the European Commission EIDHR.

Police and Roma: Towards Safety for Multi-Ethnic Communities (Sept 2004 – Jan 2007)

In response to the continued problems that ethnic minorities face in relation to policing, this programme of activities aimed to improve access to justice for ethnic minorities and particularly Roma, Gypsies and Travellers, in the OSCE area. The agenda was designed to support the implementation of the recommendations on policing of the OSCE Action Plan on Roma/Sinti issues.

Working with Roma, Gypsy and Traveller NGOs and activists, police and relevant members of other national and international institutions, the programme included activities in the Balkans, Poland, Romania, Russia and the UK. A key activity was to work with the Romanian Police towards a strategic review of their policy and practice in relation to ethnic minority communities. The programme identified current issues and examples of good practice of which are documented in a Resource Manual.

This programme was funded by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).



Police, Gypsy and Traveller representatives from the UK and Western Europe