



ROMA YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN EUROPE

CHALLENGES, NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

YOUTH AND (PRO)ROMA NGOS PERSPECTIVES

A report prepared within the Roma Youth Voices project
2020

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KEY FACTS AND FINDINGS

- In Europe, the number of Roma youth-led structures is slowly increasing, and Roma youth are gaining visibility within the broader youth and Roma civil society sector, with 51% of the organizations involved in the survey being led by Roma youth.
- 53% of the respondents believe that Roma youth are poorly represented at EU level.
- Some of the main barriers that prevent Roma youth from engaging with EU-level NGOs and networks have to do with lack of information and opportunities for cooperation; language difficulties; citizenship status (non-EU membership); the capacity, reputation and experience of the organization in question, and the competition for grants in NGO circles.
- When it comes to the specific activities provided by the NGOs that were included in this study, it can be observed that most of them are engaged in “one-way street” activities targeted at Roma youth (i.e., information, learning opportunities, mentorship, volunteering programs), yet few of the respondents reported that they had had the opportunity to engage in Roma youth-led activities.
- The NGOs included in this study reported that Roma youth NGOs or NGOs working on Roma youth have low capacities (i.e., staff, financial and human resources). This has a direct influence on the number of projects these organizations are able to implement, the number of Roma youth affiliated with their NGO, and, to a certain extent, their overall outreach capacity.
- While some of the NGOs might have the capacity to deal with Roma issues more generally (i.e., education or culture), they have limited or no capacity to serve and empower Roma youth and women and to address their issues (i.e., lack of knowledge, human resources).
- 70% of the respondents stated that there are not enough organizations that are accessible to Roma youth. Considering the impact NGOs can have on Roma youth in terms of providing different types of services, information and personal development skills, it is imperative to support the establishment of new structures such as organizations and groups available and accessible to Roma youth.
- When it comes to the main barriers that NGOs experience when trying to engage young Roma in their work, the most important are to do with the financial capacities of those NGOs (23% said this). Meanwhile around 12% of the NGOs believe that they cannot offer opportunities for participation within their NGO that would be attractive to Roma youth.
- Almost 94% of the respondents believe that Roma youth do not have knowledge of policy-making nor an understanding of how they can influence it.

1. PROJECT DETAILS AND METHODOLOGY

This report is a result of the work of a number of organizations involved in the Roma Youth Voices Project lead by the Phiren Amenca International Network between 2019 and 2020.¹ Through its work Phiren Amenca interacts with a great number of young Roma coming from all over Europe. The organization works with Roma youth of diverse academic backgrounds, language skills and international experiences but also with young Roma coming from segregated and impoverished areas, who, as participants in the organization's activities, often leave their city or country for the first time. In order to better shape European projects and institutional agendas to respond to the importance of Roma youth participation, Phiren Amenca conducted a research about the different challenges, needs and potentials Roma youth face.²

The Roma Youth Voices project was initiated in 2018 by Phiren Amenca International Network, ternYpe Roma Youth Network and their partners aimed to invest into a grassroots social movement of Roma and non-Roma youth. The objectives of the project were to seek reconciliation, social justice, solidarity and respect between Roma and non-Roma, and to take actions against Roma targeted stereotypes, antigypsyism³, and racism. Among its main activities, the project focused on raising awareness of and campaigning for respect, dialogue and solidarity between Roma and non-Roma; capacity-building of Roma youth organizations on local and national level; raising voices, mobilization and participation of Roma youth in policy-making processes; and strengthening the role of young people and youth organizations in the context of national and European policies targeted at Roma and non-Roma youth.

Through this project it is envisioned that Roma youth (and their organizations) will become empowered to advocate for their own needs, contribute to challenging stereotypes and racism (through campaigns, dialogue between Roma and non-Roma, civil society alliances for solidarity and defense of human rights) and become aware about existing European and national policy initiatives related to Roma. Last but not least, the project aims to (1) enhance the recognition of Roma youth organizations as agents of change and partners for Roma inclusion by decision-makers and civil society and, at the same time, to (2) raise awareness about the needs, challenges and potentials of Roma youth.

This report presents the findings from an online questionnaire targeting youth and (pro)Roma⁴ civil society organizations (i.e., NGOs) working with, for or on Roma youth issues.

¹ For more details about the project see the Project page at: https://phirenamenca.eu/category/projects/roma_youth_voices/

² Position Paper of the Roma Youth Networks on the Post-2020 EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies

³ Antigypsyism/anti-Roma discrimination is a manifestation of individual expressions and acts as well as institutional policies and practices of marginalization, exclusion, physical violence, devaluation of Roma cultures and lifestyles, and hate speech directed at Roma as well as other individuals and groups perceived, stigmatized, or persecuted during the Nazi era, and still today, as "Gypsies." This leads to the treatment of Roma as an alleged alien group and associates Roma with a series of pejorative stereotypes and distorted images that represent a specific form of racism (IHRA Working definition of Antigypsyism 2020).

⁴ Civil society organizations (i.e., inter-governmental organizations, expert bodies, foundations) which developed in response to the deterioration of the social situation of Roma; they do not have a Roma specific portfolio nor are they run by Roma, but are involved in the struggle against the discrimination of Roma (for example, Eurodiaconia, CSD Diaconia Valdese - Italy).

The survey was open to youth networks, youth NGOs, and Roma youth NGOs operating at an EU, national or local level. Its main aim was to assess the needs, challenges, and opportunities of working with/for Roma youth. Finally, yet importantly, it aimed to look into the real and perceived obstacles specific to Roma and youth NGOs and their needs for effective participation of Roma youth both as beneficiaries of programs and projects, but also as citizens (see Annex).

The survey collected **33** responses from **different Roma youth representatives and stakeholders** among which representatives of the following:

1. "Roma Future" Rijeka, Croatia
2. Centre Amalipe, Bulgaria
3. Amaro Drom, Germany
4. ARCA, Ukraine
5. Arete Youth Foundation, Bulgaria
6. DIOGENES ROM Project asbl, Belgium
7. Association of Young Roma, Slovakia
8. Association Youth Club Roma Stolipinovo 1996, Bulgaria
9. DANROM Faurei Association, Romania
10. DiverseYouth Network, Hungary
11. EPEKA, Slovenia, Serbia, Montenegro, Austria, Germany, UK
12. E-Romnja - Association for Promoting Roma Women Rights, Romania
13. FAGiC, Spain
14. Integro Association, Bulgaria
15. IQ Roma servis, Czech Republic
16. Largo Association, Bulgaria
17. NGO Slovo 21, Prague, Czech Republic
18. Obcianske Zdruzenie Dakujem – Palikerav, Slovakia
19. Otaharin, Bosnia Hertzegovina
20. ProEuropean Network, Bulgaria
21. RGDTS Nonprofit Kft, Hungary
22. Roma Education Fund
23. Roma Entrepreneurship Development Initiative, Serbia
24. Roma Youth Organization "Walk with us - Phiren amenca", Montenegro
25. Roma Youth Association of Croatia
26. Romano Kher, Norway
27. Romano Missio, Finland
28. Romaversitas Foundation, Hungary
29. Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry - Finnish Roma Association, Finland
30. Uccu Roma Informal Educational Foundation, Hungary
31. United Societies of Balkans, Greece
32. World without Borders, Bulgaria

This report aims to contribute to the broader discussion of Roma youth participation in civic and political life at the national and European level from the perspective of Roma and pro-Roma (youth led) NGOs working with and for Roma youth. The report starts with a short discussion on the importance and different understandings of participation, especially with regards to Roma youth. It then presents the context for the Roma youth civil society sector as revealed through the survey and existing literature. The next section assesses the capacity of NGOs and structures working with Roma youth on issues affecting them. The report continues with a general assessment of the quality and depth of Roma youth participation as perceived by the survey respondents. It then points out the existing needs and opportunities for enhancing Roma youth participation and representation at the local, national and European level. Finally, based on the overall survey results and conclusions, the report puts forward a set of recommendations aimed at enhancing the situation of Roma youth and their capacity for civic and political participation.

2. DEFINING ROMA PARTICIPATION

The existence of the Roma movement could be seen as a critique of representative democracy. What has prompted the interest resulting in policy programs targeting the Roma in Europe was, on the one hand, the numerous Roma rights violations but also the emerging Roma mobility (after the collapse of totalitarian regimes and the EU enlargement phases), which led to developments around Roma participation (i.e., new Roma led civil society organizations, reserved seats in national parliaments) and increased attention by international organizations and Roma activists to issues Roma people face. It can be claimed that from the very beginning the Roma movement was bottom-up, however, there was little place for Roma to gain power and visibility at the national level, whilst at the same time national governments could not address Roma people's issues. In particular, decision-makers' reluctance, ignorance and the limits of antiracist Roma politics in general, have failed to address the voice, presences, needs and concerns of Roma women (Kóczé, Jovanovic and Balogh, 2015) and Roma youth (Mirga, 2014; 2018).

Participation is a rather complex issue, especially for groups such as the Roma who have a rather recent history of formal participation. Vermeersch (2017) distinguishes between three main avenues of participation: (1) in electoral politics and the political organizations of the democratic process (i.e. mainstream, ethnically based political parties), (2) in NGOs and (3) in state institutions. In addition, practice has shown that Roma participation can also happen through non-Roma institutions and organizations serving the voice of Roma. Similarly, McGarry (2014) identifies three types of representations of Roma people: societal representation, politico-legal representation, and self-representation. Societal representation occurs mainly through non-Roma population, whereas politico-legal representation happens mainly through international organizations, national governments and NGOs and self-appointed Roma representative, whereas self-representation happens directly through Roma voices.

A more authentic representation of Roma implies that representation originates from their own voice, and it would not only better address the actual needs of the Roma community, but it would also allow for Roma people to better identify themselves and to foster solidarity with each other. The issue of who is an expert on Roma issues is the core of today's debates on Roma participation. While some scholars refer to these Roma experts as detached and neutral researchers, some others (rhetorically) question whether the ordinary members of an ethnic group are not themselves expert witnesses (Mirga, 2018).

The debate is taken further by the idea of "local (Roma) knowledge" and who is entitled to speak on behalf of Roma. Nicolae Gheorghe (Cited in Bíró et al., 2013) talks about 'Roma experts' who sometimes can be some sort of '*gadjo*' who do not base their legitimacy on their origins from ethnically 'unambiguous' and more traditional family backgrounds. The point here is that such people have "a highly divergent trajectories from the lives of many people [they] aim to represent' (p. 52).

Most of the times, Roma are represented by those Roma who no longer have a direct link with grassroots Roma communities. One aspect pointed out by Phiren Amenca was that Roma youth are mainly represented by older generations of Roma leaders. For all these reasons, in the specific context of this research it is worth asking: Who talks and acts on behalf of Roma youth?

“Roma participation in a narrow sense denotes initiatives and spaces that enable the interactions between citizens and decision makers when citizens act through or with their Roma identity in society. These spaces of interactions can be in the governance sphere as well as in a broader array of civil society sphere, which interact in various ways, and debate and articulate relevant public affairs. Participation in shaping public affairs is a condition and an enabling force to ensuring non-discrimination and equal citizenship in addition to promoting democratic and efficient governance of Roma inclusion. These forms of participation are envisioned to contribute to recognition and empowerment, without which an advanced and enduring equality is hardly possible for the Roma”

Most of the time the term ‘participation’ is used incorrectly and narrowly in the context of Roma youngsters (mainly children) as beneficiaries of different policies, programs, projects and measures (i.e., education programs). This is for example, the case of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, but also on national level strategies and documents. However, we believe that Roma youth participation compasses several dimensions:

- participation as beneficiaries and targets of policies, programs, projects and support measures;
- participation as representatives of civil society;
- participation as youth representatives at the national and European levels and within governing structures addressing both Roma and youth (including in governmental and non-governmental organizations);
- civic and political participation.

Phiren Amenca members and partners are of the opinion that with a few exceptions the Roma civil society sector has remained rather weak (in terms of capacity, resources, advocacy power, legitimacy, and independence). For example, in some countries, the respect young Roma feel towards the well-established Roma civil society organizations and senior Roma leadership creates obstacles for Roma youth to participate on equal terms (i.e., do not challenge status quo).⁵

Roma participation can be considered as an accurate indicator of the success and sustainability of policies targeting Roma and the commitment of decision-makers in promoting equal rights and justice for all (Rostas, 2019). Yet, the term “Roma participation” is often used superficially, and the phenomenon it covers is often fragmented and partial, tokenistic and symbolic.

⁵ Written comments to the background paper on Diversity and Participation presented during the Workshop on future policies for Roma on 1st October 2019 - The future of EU Roma youth policies. Available online at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/multiple_expert_contribution_-_the_future_of_eu_roma_youth_policies.pdf

Most of the time such fake participation serves to legitimize policy-processes rather than involve Roma in a meaningful and structured way. This report proposes that the implementation and design of policies should avoid making Roma merely the subject of interventions, but rather encourage their empowerment through genuinely participatory approaches, based on active citizenship, thus breaking the vicious circle of blame and mistrust between Roma and mainstream society.

Existing European and international frameworks have largely emphasized the need for participation of Roma in issues affecting their lives. For example, the 10 Basic Common Principles on Roma Inclusion⁶ point out that civil society organizations, social partners (organizations involved in the EU level social dialogue) and academics/researchers should be involved and included in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of Roma inclusion policy initiatives. The involvement of civil society in these processes is recognized as vital both for the mobilization of expertise and the dissemination of knowledge required to develop public debate and accountability throughout policy making. Similarly, the 2013 Council Recommendation (2013/C 378/01) states that it is important to “involve regional and local authorities and local civil society in developing, implementing and monitoring their national strategies or integrated sets of policy measures within broader social inclusion policies”.

This report argues that it is essential for both Roma and Roma youth to be involved not only in narrowly defined ‘Roma issues’, but in a wider range of policies and citizenship-related issues. This would also contribute to the de-stigmatization of Roma inclusion and could contribute to understanding other underrepresented, vulnerable groups or other groups’ experiences of marginalization.

⁶ The 10 common basic principles on Roma inclusion. Available online at:
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/7573706d-e7c4-4ece-ae59-2b361246a7b0>

3. EXPLORING THE ROMA YOUTH CIVIL SOCIETY

As far as the **profile of the organizations** represented in the study is concerned, around 53% of them define themselves as NGOs encompassing a broader scope but including activities dedicated to youth; around 32% are NGOs exclusively dedicated to youth; 12% represent networks of NGOs; and 3% are political or social youth movements.

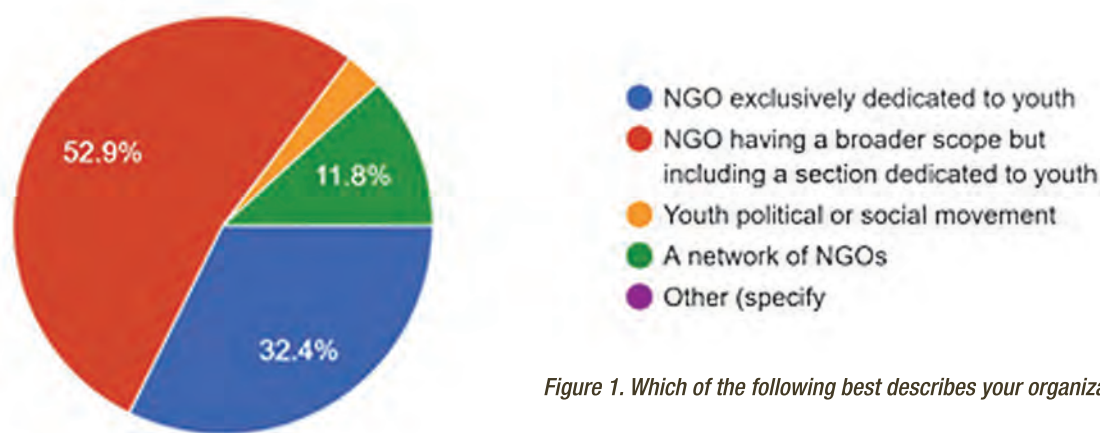


Figure 1. Which of the following best describes your organization?

The growth of new Roma youth structures has been triggered to a certain extent by the involvement of international and transnational actors - such as the OSCE, Council of Europe, the European Union and private donors - in Roma youth mobilization (Mirga, 2014; 2018). The incentive for this type of investment has been twofold: on the one hand, such supporters believed that youth are the ones who can break the cycle of poverty and change their lives and the lives of their children; on the other hand, these organizations believed youth represented a valuable resource who at one point in time, will take over the older generation of Roma leadership.

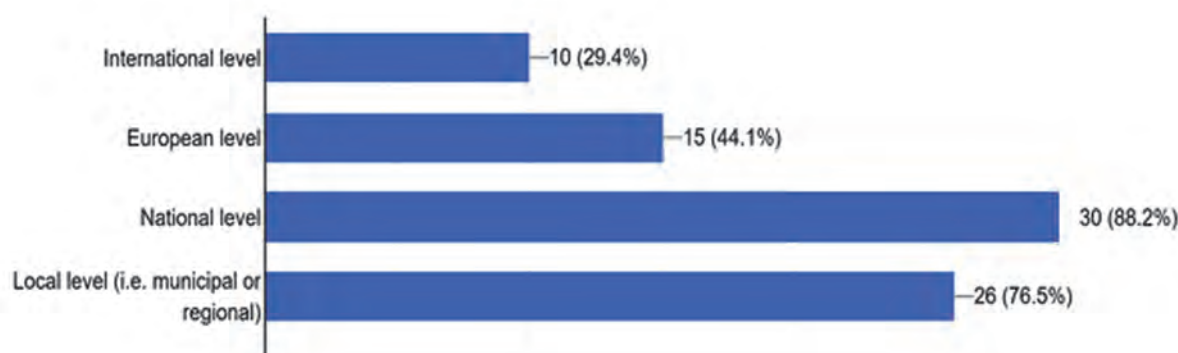


Figure 2. At which of the following scales does your organization operate?

When asked about the scale of operation of their organization, six respondents stated they operate only at the national level, and two of them only at the European and respectively at the international level. Despite this, most survey respondents said that the structures they represent operate at multiple levels: 88% of them operate at the national level, whereas 76% operate also at the local level. A somewhat smaller percentages reflect their operation at the European – 44% and international level – 29%. Out of the total number of organizations which responded to the survey, 88.2% stated that they represent Roma and Roma youth, whereas 11.8% represent young people in general.

Alongside the Roma women's and the Roma LGBTQIA+ movements, Roma youth represent an important component in the overall Romani movement. In the case of women's and Roma LGBTQIA+ movements the biggest challenges were the male dominated structures, discourses and practices which excluded gender and sexuality (Mirga, 2014). In the case of youth, the perception of some of these Roma structures is that youth amount to a group of passive beneficiaries, who are not much involved, and are negatively influenced by the mainstream non-Roma culture (especially the educated youth), as well as being excessively assimilated and 'less- Roma' (Mirga, 2014). Such phenomena lead youth to identify less with their older leaders and their organizations however, they identify with the cause. As such, young Roma prefer to establish new youth organizations in which they gain ownership and share decision-making power (Mirga, 2014; Vermeersch, 2017).⁷

Based on the survey responses, it was disclosed that leadership is quite diverse even within one organization: 16 of the 33 organizations involved in the survey have Roma youth leadership (up to 35 years old); 15 of them function under Roma leadership (not necessarily youth), and 12 of them have mixed Roma/non-Roma leadership. Likewise, 5 organizations portray themselves as led by youth, 8 of them are led by women, and 8 of them by non-Roma.

Mirga (2018) shows that the ownership recently achieved by young Roma within the context of the civil society sector has contributed to rejuvenating the Roma movement. This revival has been the result of strong ethnic pride among youth, as well as a bottom-up, grassroots approach of some NGOs, which is a move away from service provision and tokenistic participation, and more towards community engagement, sense of self-awareness, political and civic consciousness and community-organizing (Mirga, 2018).

Our survey respondents were also asked to assess how well young people are represented in EU-level youth NGOs or networks. The results show that 37% of the respondents believe that Roma youth are poorly represented, 16% believe Roma youth are somewhat underrepresented, whereas about 32% believe Roma youth are fairly represented at an EU level.

⁷ Jasharov (2016) explores the legitimacy and collective policy making power of two important transnational Roma youth advocacy networks (FERYP- currently inactive - and ternYpe) which are convincingly legitimized and recognized by European institutions. See: Jasharov, J. 2016. Power, legitimacy and collective policy making: The case study of FERYP and ternYpe Roma youth networks. Available at: www.etd.ceu.hu/2016/jasharov_jashar.pdf.

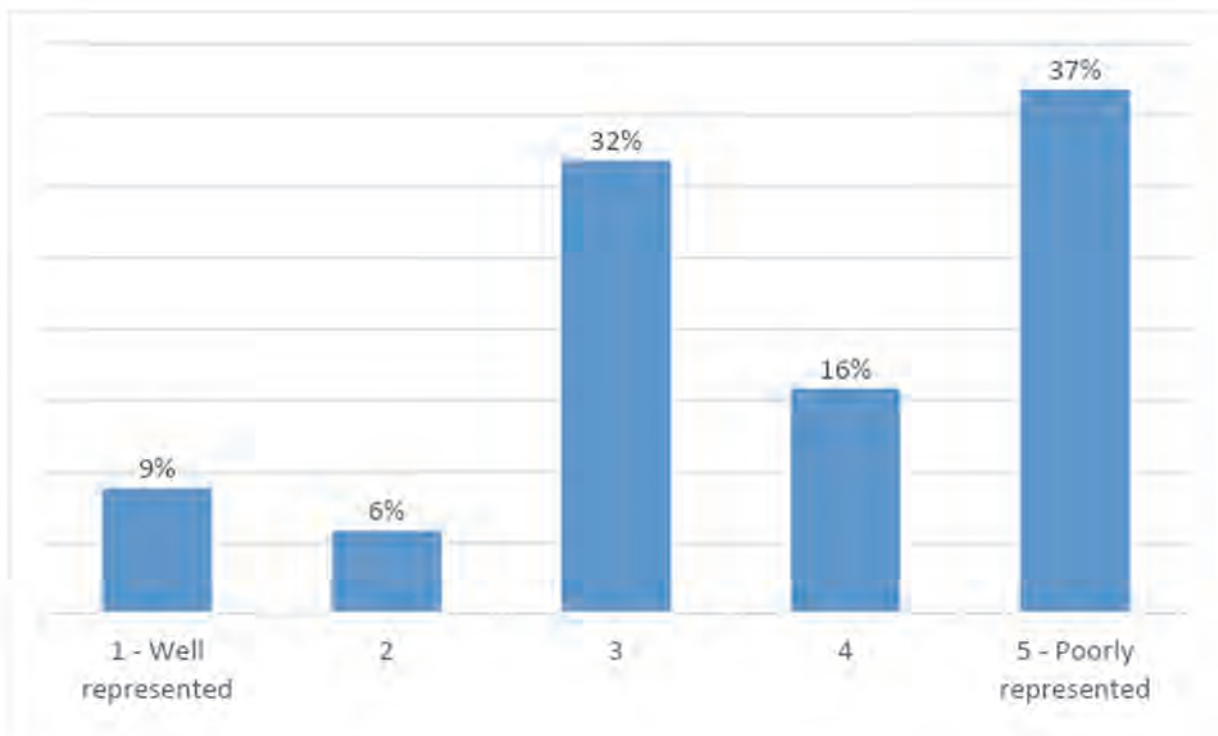


Figure 3. How well represented are young people from your organization in EU-level youth NGOs or networks?

When asked whether the organization they represent is a member of any EU-level youth NGOs or networks 50% of them said yes, whereas 44% said no and about 6% did not know. According to Beck and Ivasiuc (2013), the fact that it was rather difficult for Roma to get organized at the national level (i.e., establish formal structures and Roma led institutions inside EU their own countries) has pushed Roma towards international/European/transnational structures, as spaces for mobilization. This has created a situation in which the local is overlooked in favor of national or transnational contexts (McGarry, 2010). Bíró et al., (2013), argue that this phenomenon led NGOs to become dependent on EU and other types of international funds and donors, which diverted NGOs from continuing their work through community mobilization and organizing, and instead led to them being burdened with administrative tasks. As such, Bíró et al., (2013) advocate for the local organization and mobilization of Roma through competent leadership, as an effective way to improve their lives.

However, there is an important need for international networks. As the example of Phiren Amenca shows, a network of Roma and Roma youth organizations can advocate for the inclusion of Roma youth in youth policy and participation processes or for their involvement in European mainstream structures and institutions. Moreover, a strong European network can have an important role in building the capacity and cooperation of Roma and non-Roma youth organizations by developing educational programs and activities and amplifying the voice of Roma youth on grassroots, national and European levels. In addition to that, an international network can synchronize the needs but also amplify the resources of its members by sharing these within the network and with EU level decision-makers. Such networks can also bring new knowledge to their members and play the role of a bridge from international to national; or from national to grassroots levels. Perhaps this latter is one of their most important role.

A well-known important characteristic of the Roma youth sector is the more inclusive coalition-building processes with other minorities (i.e., Muslims, Jews, LGBTQIA+, mainstream youth, student organizations), in an attempt to build larger interest-based alliances and coalitions. The emerging process of self-mobilization of Roma youth is innovative in the sense that it builds on elements of ethnic pride and belonging, while on the other hand, bringing in elements of solidarity with other disempowered youth groups (along ethnic, religious, gender identity, LGBTQIA+, lines etc.). All of these bring added value to the Roma movement, to youth empowerment and Europe structures. Such alliances and coalitions can have a double effect: on the one hand Roma youth understand better the complexity they are exposed to; on the other hand, it shows that focusing on Roma youth issues is useful for all Roma and not only for Roma youth, as well as for society as a whole.

Survey respondents stated that they found it difficult to engage with any EU-level youth NGOs or networks, whereas most of the respondents stated this was not an issue:

The EU level institutions and structures have always shown interest, and for instance with minority organizations we could easily build up alliances (RGDTS Nonprofit Kft, Hungary).

According to our respondents, some of the main barriers for engaging with EU-level NGOs and networks were a lack of information and opportunities for cooperation, language difficulties, non-EU membership of potential partners; the capacity, reputation and experience of the organization in question; but also, the competition for grants among NGO circles:

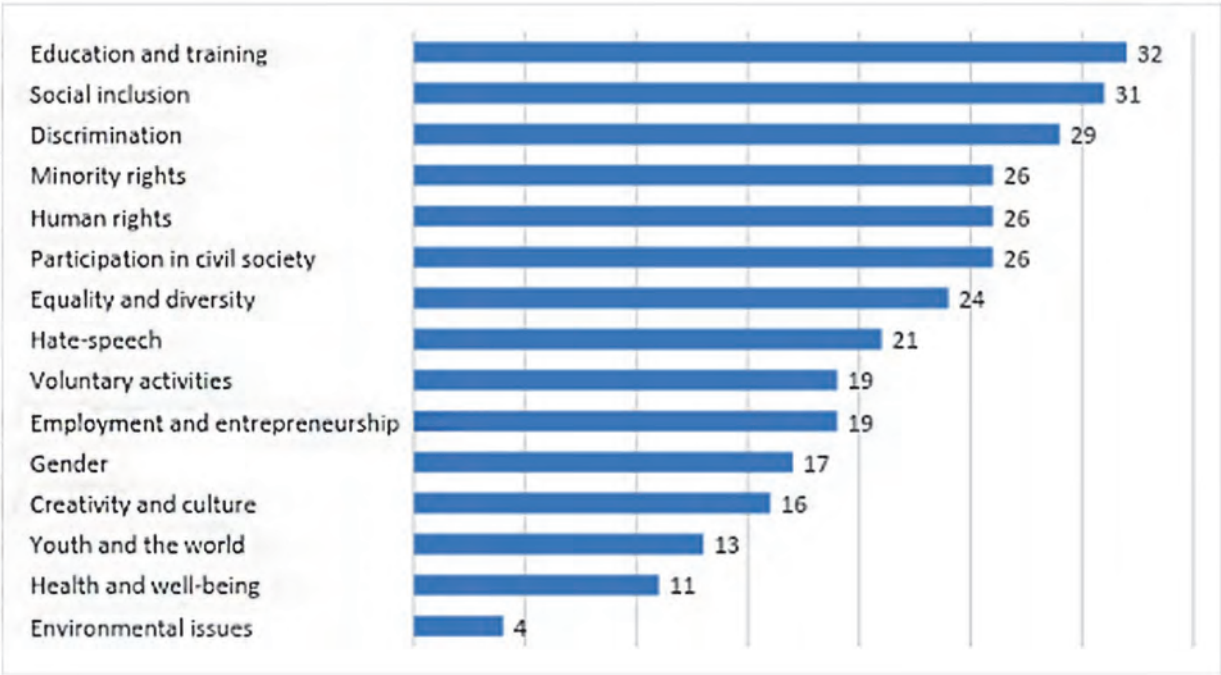
For us it is difficult! We do not know [well] enough how the EU really works; we do not have contact persons whom we can reach to get the info. We also lack the language skills and we do not have enough resources and knowledge to apply or to get involved. We are somehow isolated from European Roma and Roma activities and programmes (Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry - Finnish Roma Association).

This is very much in line with what Mirga (2018) argues - that there are substantial differences when it comes to the involvement of civil society organizations in the European (and European Roma) policy-making arena: Roma youth organizations, especially smaller grassroots entities, are less skilled and resourced in comparison with well-established (pro)Roma organizations. Smaller Roma youth NGOs working at the grassroots play an important role in ensuring local communities' voices are heard and in making local knowledge available to other levels of policy making.

4. YOUTH AND (PRO)ROMA NGOS' WORK ON ROMA YOUTH ISSUES

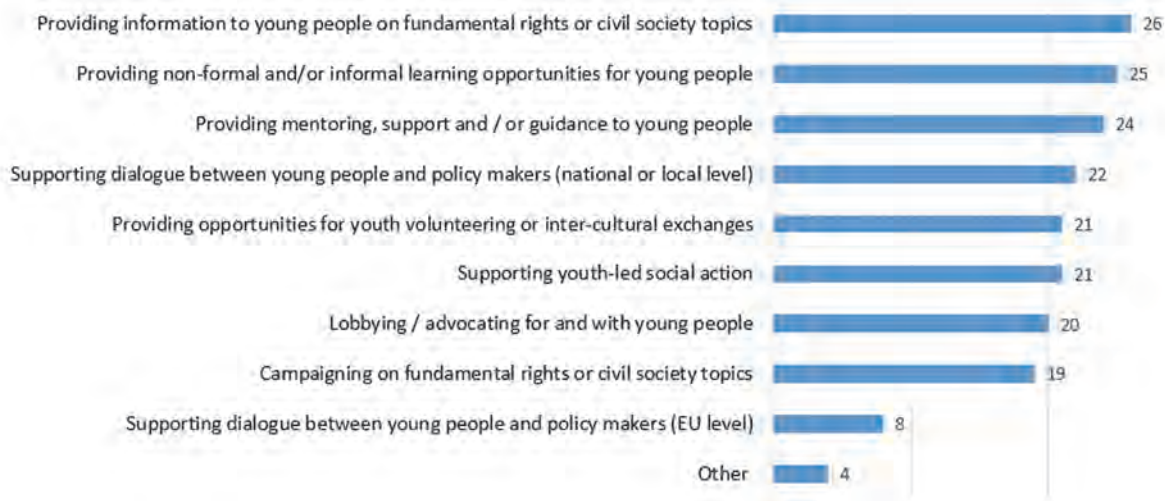
As the figure below shows, the NGOs and other organizations targeted in this study pointed out that the **top five issues** they are addressing through their work relate to (1) education and training, (2) social inclusion, (3) discrimination, (4) minority rights and (5) human rights. On the other hand, issues related to gender equality, culture, youth in a global setting, and health and environmental issues are less likely to be addressed by such organizations and structures. The picture below shows that the portfolios of most of these structures concentrate on most immediate needs they consider relevant for the Roma youth and children.

Figure 4. Which of the following types of issues are addressed by your organization?



When it comes to the specific **activities** provided by the targeted organizations, it can be observed that most of them are engaged in “one-way” activities, that is they provide different type of services to young people (i.e., information, learning opportunities, mentorship, volunteering programs), yet lower numbers of the respondents reported opportunities for youth-led activities (See Figure 5).

Figure 5. Which of the following types of activities are provided by your organization?



To conclude, there is a need to intensify and diversify Roma and other NGOs’ work with/for Roma youth. NGOs’ work has been an important factor in mobilizing Roma youth and in supporting their personal and professional development. However, often projects assume what Roma youth need without properly consulting with those concerned. Roma youth should be included in identifying the needs of their peers and the type of activities and projects that need to be implemented to address those needs. Likewise, Roma youth should be supported to establish new youth organizations and strengthen existing ones, so they gain ownership and share decision-making power.

5. ASSESSING THE CAPACITY OF NGOS AND STRUCTURES WORKING ON/WITH ROMA YOUTH

Out of the total number of organizations surveyed, 65% have between 1 and 10 full or part time **paid staff**, 18% have between 10 and 20, and 15% have more than 20 full or part time paid staff. This low staff capacity has a direct influence on the number of projects implemented, the number of Roma youth affiliated with their NGO, and to a certain extent their overall reach-out capacity.

At the time of filling the survey, all the respondents were engaged in some form of project (regardless of project stage, size and budget). However, at the time they filled out the survey none of them had new projects submitted for funding. Meanwhile, 23% of respondents had more than 6 projects running where their NGO was responsible for the implementation. Higher percentages of respondents reported lower numbers of projects: 38% reported between 3 and 6 projects whereas 35% reported between 1 and 3 projects.



Figure 6. How many projects are you running/implementing currently as the responsible organization?

Based on respondents' answers about their membership and young people taking part regularly in their activities, it was revealed that around 9% of the NGOs in the survey have between 100-500 young people affiliated with their organization; 26% have more than 100; 23% between 50 and 100, 29% between 10 and 50, whereas 12% of them involve between 1 and 10 young people.

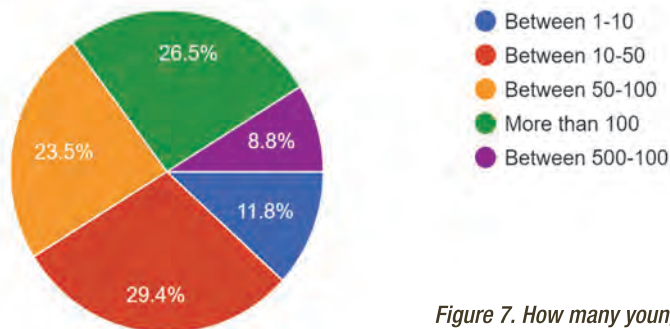


Figure 7. How many young people are directly affiliated to your organization?

When it comes to respondents' capacity to reach out indirectly to young people, the survey shows that 65% of the NGOs reach out to more than 200 young people per year. About 12% and 15% of the NGOs surveyed reported reaching out to between 1-50, or 50-100 youngsters respectively. Overall, as Figure 8 below shows, the capacity of such NGOs to reach out to youth and Roma youth is generally low considering both the high percentage of youth within the European Union (32% of the EU population as of 2019 ⁸) and the high percentage of Roma youth within the Roma population⁹.

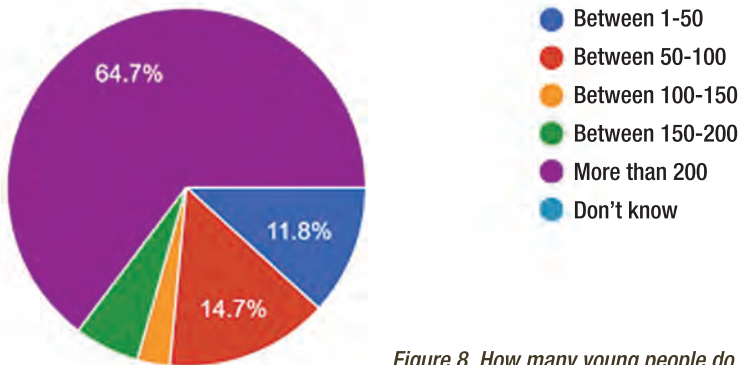


Figure 8. How many young people do you reach indirectly per year?

When asked whether they think there are enough **(Roma) civic organizations accessible** to Roma youth in their country, 70% of the respondents stated that there are not enough accessible organizations. Considering the impact NGOs can have on Roma youth in terms of providing different types of services, information and personal development skills, it is imperative to support the establishment of new structures available and accessible to Roma youth.

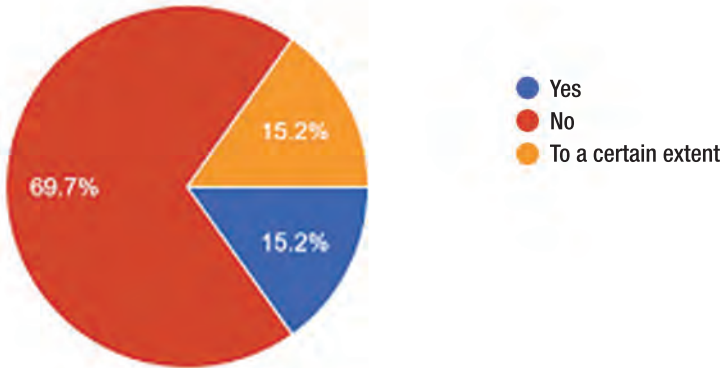


Figure 9. Do you think there are enough (Roma) civic organizations accessible to Roma youth in your country?

⁸ Being young in Europe today – demographic trends. (2020). Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/39754.pdf>

⁹ Being young in Europe today – demographic trends. (2020). Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/39754.pdf>

The Velux Foundations. (2019). 2019 – Roma in Europe. Available at: https://www.epaper.dk/velux01/ceu_report_roma/

For further reference see: See the World Bank data for Romania: <https://bit.ly/3cGoQIC> or the OECD data for Slovakia: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/the-roma-have-a-much-younger-population_d8c7c39a-en

Do **NGOs have the capacity** to respond to Roma youth needs? The answer is they have, but it is limited.

Working with Roma youth is one of the directions in Amalipe work - through student parliaments in Amalipe network of schools, through community youth volunteer clubs, and many other activities. We consider that we have capacity to respond to Roma youth needs! (Amalipe, Bulgaria)

First of all, it was clear that while most NGOs have the capacity (i.e., financial, human resources) to deal with Roma issues more generally (i.e., education or culture), most of them have limited or no capacity to empower and address Roma youth and women's issues (i.e., knowledge, human and financial resources). Secondly, while NGOs have the capacity to respond to youth needs regarding access to information on human rights, discrimination, advocacy tools to fight against antigypsyism or violence, most NGOs don't always have the financial resources needed to ensure the sustainability of their work. Thirdly, while NGOs can provide Roma youth with a space to develop their knowledge and skills and to become advocates for their needs, rights and opportunities themselves, NGOs are not able to respond to those needs of Roma youth which are beyond the scope of their organization such as school segregation or poverty.

We have the capacity to address the educational needs for a small group of Roma youth. We cannot address the needs of all youth and of all the educational needs. We do attempt to address structural and institutional factors which have a larger scope in responding to needs of Roma youth (Roma Education Fund representative).

Last but not least, most of the NGOs (as pointed also above) have limited human capacity (i.e., professional NGO staff) and they also lack key institutional development elements both infrastructure and finances-wise (i.e., capacity to access available resources and opportunities).

Complementing these findings, a Council of Europe's Study on the results and impact of the Roma Youth Action Plan (2016-2019)¹⁰ has shown that "capacity of Roma youth and Roma organizations continues to be a significant challenge" (p. 28). CoE's study revealed the following capacity related challenges:

- Most Roma youth structures, and NGOs have limited knowledge and skills to undertake financial and project management, or tasks such as drawing up actions plans, completing funding proposals, as well as other operational functions.
- The co-funding to partake in EU projects has been and will continue to be a serious impediment for Roma youth autonomy.
- Discrimination against Roma organizations was mentioned as a continuing obstacle for the foreseeable future since it impedes the social and political participation of Roma youth and their organizations.
- Community leaders were also mentioned as barriers to Roma organizations since they might act as gatekeepers not interested in youth participation.

¹⁰ See more at: <https://rm.coe.int/study-on-impact-of-roma-youth-action-plan/16809ca31d>

Similarly, Roma youth networks' member and partner organizations¹¹ pointed out that there are very few organizations that focus on young Roma at European and national levels. They lack capacity and sustainability, and do not receive specific support from the state, or from European institutions, and are fully dependent on private and sporadic funding.

Our research shows that Roma youth NGOs in Europe are few and far between. In most cases, these have few employees, and tend to work mainly on issues such as education, employment and health care for Roma youth. The number of Roma organizations working, albeit partially, on Roma youth issues and empowerment is even smaller. For example, there are only two European Roma youth networks: Phiren Amenca and TernYpe, and they share most of their member organizations. Both national and international Roma organizations have difficulty sustaining their activities, as they have limited access to finance. The difference in this respect between Western and Eastern Europe is especially acute. While in Western Europe local governments, national agencies and other local donors allow funding for domestic projects and youth initiatives, in Central and Eastern Europe this funding is limited to European programs and projects, whereas Eastern Europe is where most of the young Roma live. In order to support Roma youth, the few Roma non-governmental organizations need increased capacity. They, in turn, can reach out and grow the capacity of young Roma people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds who have limited knowledge about Roma mobilization and activism.

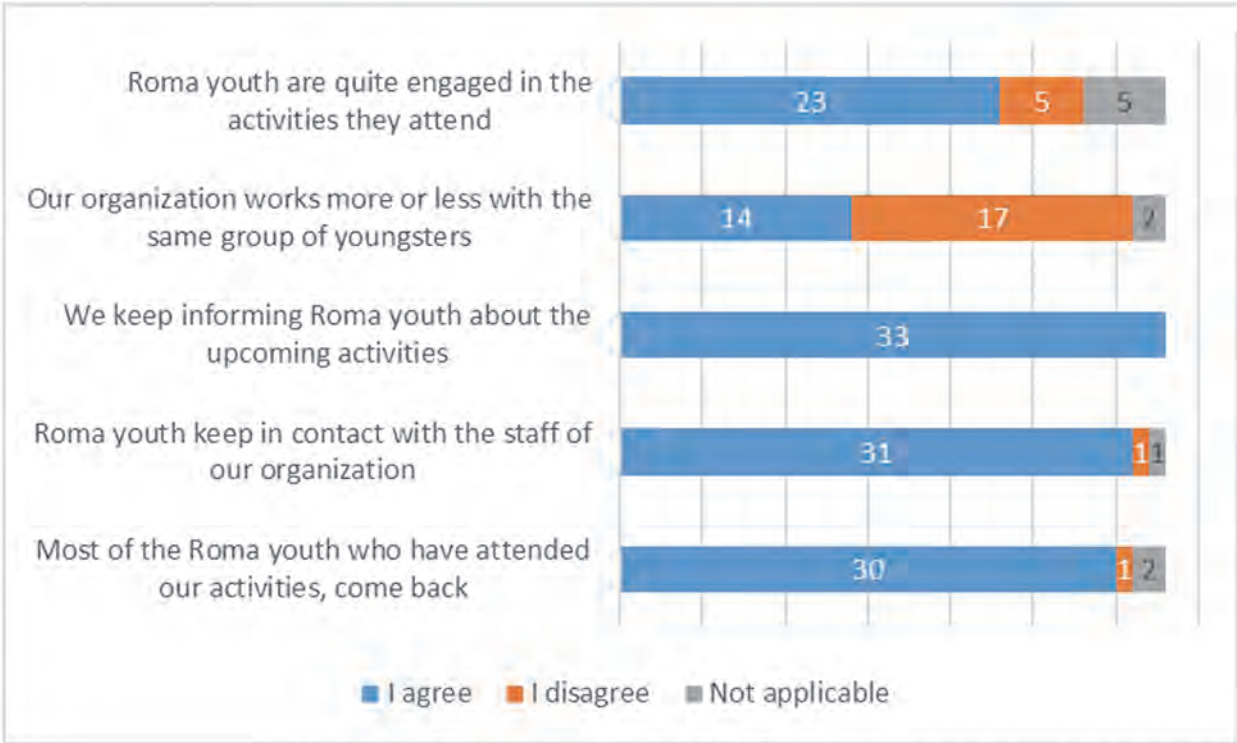
¹¹ Position Paper of the Roma Youth Networks on the Post-2020 EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/youth_position_paper_on_post-2020_eu_roma_framework.pdf

6. THE QUALITY OF ROMA YOUTH PARTICIPATION

When NGOs were asked to **evaluate the quality of participation** of Roma youth and the different dimensions of NGO engagement with Roma youth, they revealed the following (See figure below). First, out of the total respondents, 23 agreed that Roma youth are quite engaged in the activities they attend, whereas only 5 disagreed. When it comes to the diversity of the beneficiaries of these NGOs' work, more than half of the respondents stated that their organization does not always work with the same group of people whereas 14 organizations work more or less with the same group.

Respondents unanimously said that they keep Roma youth informed about upcoming activities, and a quite high percentage also claimed that the Roma youth involved in their activities keep in contact with the staff of their organizations. Similarly, respondents said that most of the Roma youth who have attended NGOs activities come back and take part in new ones. This reveals that investment in young people and the youth civil society sectors contributes to keeping youth civically engaged.

Figure 10. From your NGO experience, how would you evaluate the following?



NGOs had shared opinions when asked about the **level of youth civic participation** (i.e., voting rates, attending public meetings, discussions) in their country of operation. Around 45% of the respondents said that only few young Roma in their country take an active part in such events. About 40% of the respondents were of the opinion that generally Roma youth in their countries are not so active. Finally, 12% of them stated that Roma youth are quite active and 1% stated that most of the Roma youth in their country of operation actively participate in public life.

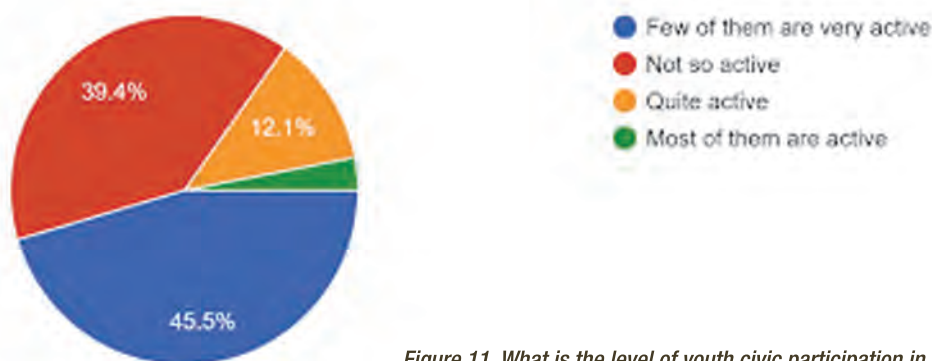


Figure 11. What is the level of youth civic participation in your country of operation?

When it came to **volunteering**, the picture was as follows. First, 45% of the respondents believe that volunteering is not a priority for Roma youth. This might also be due to the low or non-existent opportunities for volunteering – 11% of the respondents said that they did not have opportunities for volunteering. Meanwhile, 24% of the respondents believe that most Roma youth have been involved in some form of volunteering, whereas 20% believe that Roma youth volunteer on a regular basis.

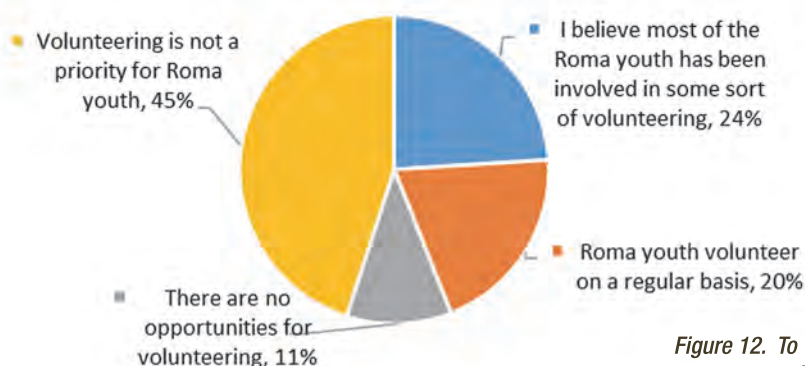


Figure 12. To what extent do you think Roma youth volunteer in their region/community/country?

In trying to assess how NGOs perceive Roma youth motivation to participate in Roma-related civic and political activities the survey found that 37% of the NGOs included in this study believe that Roma youth's participation is related to the extent to which the costs associated with the activities they attend are fully covered. The second most popular two motivations (both at 16%) attributed to Roma youth relate to whether Roma youth see the direct effect of their participation, or whether they see their friends taking part in the activity.

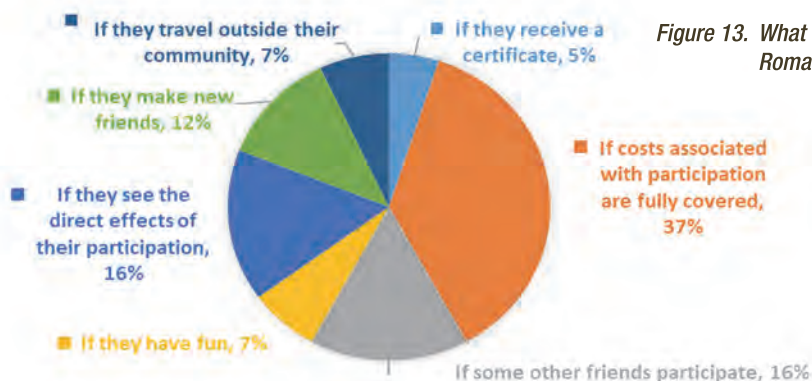
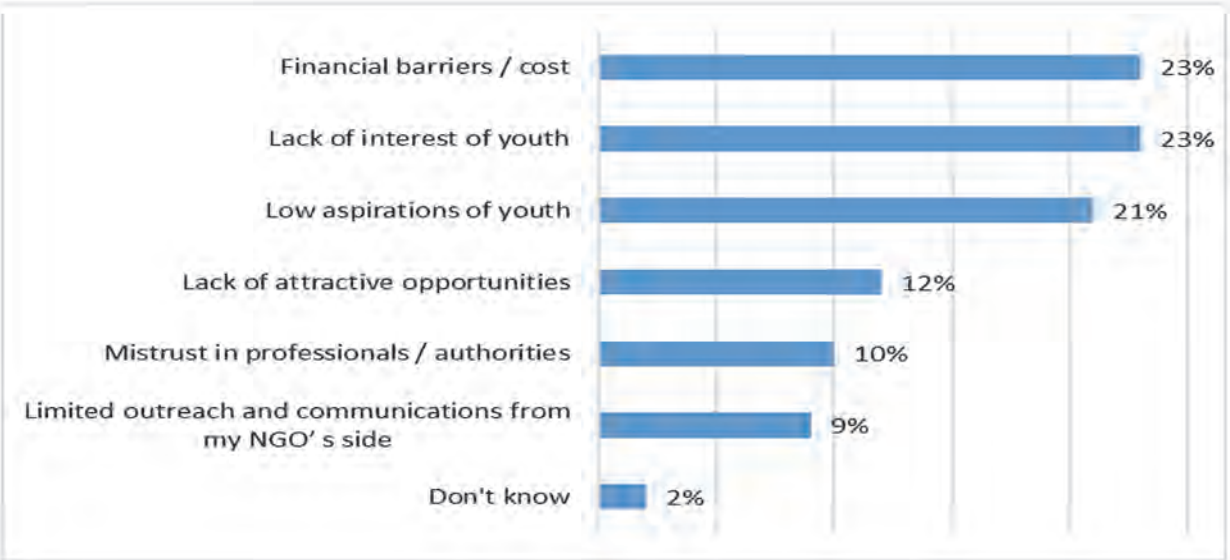


Figure 13. What motivates Roma youth to participate in Roma related civic and political activities?

In addition, NGOs were also of the opinion that Roma youth motivation varies, and it depends on age, the issues their community is facing, the timing of the activities (i.e., length and distance), or the prestige, reputation or commitment of the NGO inviting them to participate.

Figure 14. What are the main barriers to engage young Roma in the work of your organization?



When it comes to the main barriers in engaging young Roma in the work of their organizations, NGOs mentioned a lack of financial capacity (23%) and lack of interest on behalf of Roma youth (also around 23%). Similarly, 21% of respondents agreed that Roma youth have low aspirations, which stops them from engaging. Respondents also believe that Roma youth lack attractive opportunities for participation within the NGOs they represented (12%), while 10% of Roma youth fail to engage because they mistrust professionals and authorities.

Last but not least, most of the NGOs' representatives believe that their NGOs are doing a more than fair job of reaching out to and communicating with youth. Other barriers to participation that NGOs identified were the lack of knowledge, education, resources (financial and time), training and previous participation experiences of Roma youth.

Other NGOs emphasized the discrimination Roma youth face when participating in NGO activities, and a lack of general support for participation from their communities:

Some of them [Roma youth] are marginalized, living inside their own communities (Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry - Finnish Roma Association representative).

Roma youth in Greece (to a big extent) face difficulties that affect their everyday life and usually they drop out [from school] to start working. In the more urbanized areas of the Roma communities there is an increasing number of Roma youths that continue to study after high school. These young men and women show greater interest into civic participation. Many young Roma have to work in order to help/support their families so they cannot see civic participation as a priority (United Societies of Balkans, representatives from Greece).

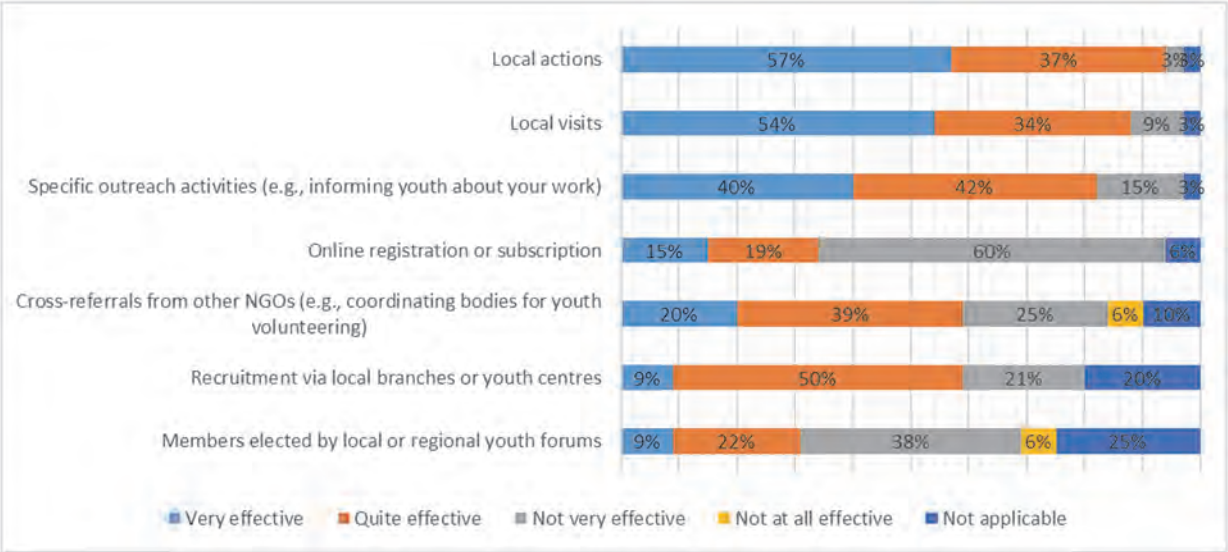
What are the **main barriers** of Roma youth with respect to participation in civic life, public life and politics? Based on NGOs' answers the following barriers have been identified:

- Lack of motivation
- Low self-esteem and self-confidence and aspirations
- Lack of English language
- Lack of information
- Lack of financial capacity
- Cultural issues (women participation)
- Family responsibilities
- Lack of role models
- No knowledge and skills
- No support from society, institutions, community
- Lack of platforms for participation
- Discrimination and exclusion
- No interest
- Low trust in NGOs
- Lack of time
- No direct results of their participation
- There is adequate approach on youth engagement
- There is no leadership to foster participation
- Travel related barriers
- Lack of suitable Roma youth oriented programmes
- Low trust in politics
- Poor formal education
- Low participation of their parents

7. ENGAGING ROMA YOUTH AND FINDING OUT THEIR

As Figure 15 below shows, NGOs revealed that local actions, local visits and specific outreach activities (i.e., informing youth about the work of the NGOs) are among the most effective ways to engage Roma youth in their activities.

Figure 15. How effective are the following methods for engaging with young people?



NGOs participating in the survey were asked to assess whether Roma youth understand **how policy is made and how they might influence it**. The figure below clearly shows that almost 94% of the respondents believe that Roma youth do not have knowledge on policy-making nor do they have an understanding how they can influence it. This is strongly related to Roma young people personal capacities and skills when it comes to representing their interests, yet also to their experience of participation in different governance structures.

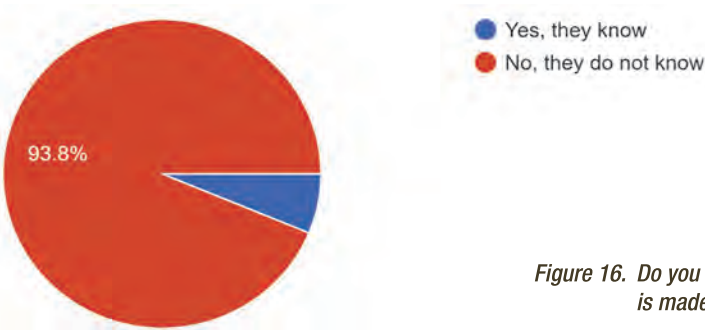


Figure 16. Do you think Roma youth understand how policy is made and how they might influence it?

Reflecting on the different **mechanisms or opportunities that allow Roma youth to participate** in governance structures at the national/ district/ local levels in the countries where they live, respondents stated that Roma youth participation and representation varies.

Most of the respondents stated that there are not many spaces for youth participation on the local level. In some countries however the municipalities of various cities or regions provide fellowships or training in governance structures.

We were informally invited to participate at local and regional level by the Consell de la Joventut de Barcelona [The Youth Council of Barcelona] and the Consell Nacional de la Joventut de Catalunya [The National Youth Council of Catalonia] but we are empowering young people to create their own organization or platform, so they can participate directly with their voice (FAGiC, Spain).

In Finland, few Roma are included at the local level policy-making if they live in bigger cities (metropolitan areas). The Finnish municipal youth divisions provide services to youth and the Roma are participants in the activities, but Roma youth do not initiate activities themselves. In Hungary, after the 2019 municipal elections more young Roma people were elected to public office within local municipalities but their number is still low.

At the national level, there is a lot of hope among young Roma activists and NGOs for youth participation within the National Youth Councils, mainstream youth NGOs and student associations, yet Roma youth presence in these structures is low or completely missing:

RGDTS is an observer member of the National Youth Council Hungary and we also supported one of our partner organization to get on the Council as a member organization. This is one way to be part of a structure, but in general Roma youth are mostly out of decision-making. In youth structures in general Roma youth are not represented or even excluded (RGDTS representative, Hungary).

Similarly, the unfavorable political situation in a country can limit the participation of groups such as the Roma:

Unfortunately, the state is governed by nationalist formations and this leads to direct discrimination against Roma youth and preventing them from participating in national, regional and local state and municipal structures (Association Youth Club Roma Stolipinovo 1996, Bulgaria).

To conclude, the general situation is that formal participation of Roma youth in such structures is usually low, with most having no access to any formal participation structures in society (i.e., most of them are usually socially excluded). If participation and representation structures exist there are not that many opportunities for young Roma to participate. And even where such opportunities exist participation is not real and meaningful but rather tokenistic. Even if there are initiatives for youth participation, the real involvement of youth is low in general, and for minority youth participation is even lower.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Throughout Europe, the Roma youth sector represents an important component in both the Roma and the youth movement. This report has presented the needs, challenges and opportunities of Roma youth and (pro)Roma civil society organizations (i.e., NGOs) working with, for or on Roma youth issues. Our research revealed the real and perceived obstacles that Roma and youth NGOs encounter, and preconditions for effective participation of Roma youth in civic and political life.

The NGOs taking part in this research believe that governments have a moral and legislative duty to respond to Roma youth needs. Most of the NGO representatives think that national governments in the EU have the capacity to respond to Roma youth needs yet they are not willing to do so, or they treat the youth subject rather superficially. According to them, national governments have the funding to respond to the Roma youth needs but they do not possess the knowledge of how to do so and how to achieve full, genuine and meaningful participation of Roma youth in the development, implementation, and monitoring of public policies.

Our respondents believe that Roma youth interests are not on national political agendas. Governments do not seem to be able to understand or reach out to Roma youth. There is not only a lack of political will, but also insufficient coordination and cooperation between governments, civil society and youth. There is therefore a need for all these actors to work on a strategic approach to adequate collaboration towards Roma youth participation, whereby national governments would work together with more actors and stakeholders including Roma communities and the mainstream youth sector:

Governments on a European or national level do not reach these groups [Roma youth] and there is a big gap in the street-level reality and the ideas of the political class. Little is said on behalf of these groups' and there are many prejudices (asbl DIOGENES | ROM Project, Belgium).

Based on the main findings of this report we draw the following conclusions.

Firstly, this report has shown that **there is a need to intensify and diversify Roma and other NGOs' work with and for Roma youth**. The work of NGOs has been an important factor in mobilizing Roma youth and in supporting their personal and professional development. When it comes to the specific activities provided by the NGOs included in this study, most of them are engaged in “one-way” activities (i.e., information, learning opportunities, mentorship, volunteering programs) yet few reported offering opportunities for Roma youth-led activities. Often NGOs and their projects assume what the target group needs without properly consulting with the those concerned. We recommend that Roma youth be included in identifying the needs of their peers and the type of activities and projects that would address those needs.

Around 12% of the NGOs representatives included in this study believe that Roma youth lack attractive opportunities for participation within the NGOs surveyed. The research shows that the portfolios of most of these structures concentrate on most immediate needs they consider relevant for the Roma youth and children such as education, social inclusion, fighting discrimination and promoting minority and human rights. Despite this, there is a need to diversity NGOs work with/on Roma youth and address 21st century youth challenges (i.e., digitalization, e-participation, environmental issues).

Similarly, the vast majority of the NGOs representatives involved in this study believe that Roma youth do not have knowledge on policy-making nor do they have an understanding how they can influence it. Therefore, in future, these NGOs (and not only they) should put more emphasis on Roma youth acquiring the knowledge and skills that would allow them to be involved in policy-making affecting their lives and the lives of their communities. At the same time Roma youth should be empowered to influence different policy-making processes.

Secondly, this report has shown that **there is a need to increase Roma youth NGOs' participation and representation in both Roma and youth structures and policy-making processes**. Around 53% of the NGOs representatives involved in this study believe that Roma youth are poorly represented at EU level. The national and local level organizations we spoke to said that the main barriers for Roma youth engaging with EU-level NGOs and networks, and institutions include a lack of information and opportunities for cooperation, language difficulties, or lack of EU membership. Barriers for EU level engagement also have to do with the capacity, reputation and experience of the organization in question, but also the competition for grants among NGOs circles.

Roma youth and Roma youth NGOs participation and representation in formal structures is generally low and even where participation and representation structures for the general population exist there are not that many opportunities for young Roma to participate in these structures. Nevertheless, if such opportunities exist participation is not real and meaningful but rather tokenistic. Even if there are initiatives for youth participation, the real involvement of youth is low in general, and for minority youth participation is even lower.

Within the Roma movement, Roma youth and Roma youth organizations are kept outside of or enjoy a low priority on the agenda of more established NGOs and Roma community leaders and lack opportunities for participation and engagement with their own community. About 70% of the respondents said that there are not enough organizations that are accessible for Roma youth. Therefore, stakeholders interested in Roma youth issues should support the establishment of new (possibly informal) Roma youth structures and organizations over which Roma youth can gain ownership and where they can share decision-making power.

Thirdly, this reports also points out the need of increased **capacity-building and funding opportunities for Roma youth organizations**. What is striking is that the number of classical Roma youth NGOs represented in this survey is low: out of the 33 responses just 11 of them were NGO exclusively dedicated to youth. Out of the total respondents, only 3 of the NGOs included in the study are led by Roma youth.

The NGOs included in this study felt that Roma youth NGOs (representing Roma youth or lead by Roma youth) or NGOs working on/with Roma youth have low capacities (i.e., staff, financial and human resources). This lack of capacity and financial constraints has a direct influence on the number of projects implemented by these NGOs, on the number of Roma youth affiliated with them, and on their overall outreach capacity (i.e., organizations managing to reach out to more than 200 Roma youth per year had more than 10 staff members).

Moreover, the survey showed that while some of the NGOs might have the capacity to deal with Roma issues more generally (i.e., education or culture), they have limited or no capacity to empower and address Roma youth and women's issues (because of their specific knowledge, but also lack of human and financial resources). Considering the impact NGOs can have on Roma youth in terms of providing different types of services, information and personal development skills, it is imperative to support the establishment of new structures available and accessible to Roma youth.

Based on the main gaps identified in this report the section below provides a series of recommendations.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The section below proposes several avenues that EU institutions, national governments, donor organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders can take to support (pro)Roma youth organizations and young Roma people to equally participate in public and civic life. The recommendations are structured under the three main objectives and aim to plug the gaps presented in the conclusion section of this report. While the recommendations are addressed to EU institutions, national governments, donor organizations and NGOs, we also invite other relevant stakeholders who support Roma youth and Roma youth organizations to take note of these.

OBJECTIVES	RECOMMENDATIONS
Mainstream and Roma NGOs should increase and diversify their activities targeting and involving young Roma	<p>Support the work of local and national informal groups and NGOs (with tools, expertise, visibility, cooperation, etc.) to focus on specific projects about Roma youth participation and representation.</p> <hr/> <p>Bring together Roma and non-Roma youth from diverse backgrounds (from LGBTQ+ communities, various sub-groups, socio-economic status, gender, etc.) and provide them with opportunities to meet, exchange points of view, needs and aspirations, as well as empowering them to participate actively in all levels of civic life.</p> <hr/> <p>Develop the political skills of young Roma.</p> <hr/> <p>Involve Roma youth from the early stages of project and program development so that their needs and interests are addressed.</p> <hr/> <p>Develop and implement strategies and action plans related to active citizenship, civic participation and human rights at national and local level.</p> <hr/> <p>Create alliances with other youth movements: minority youth, Jewish, Muslim, People of Color, LGBTQ+, etc.</p> <hr/> <p>Create partnerships with other non-Roma youth organizations targeting young people in order to create opportunities for joint actions.</p> <hr/> <p>Roma and non-Roma (youth) organizations should engage in different forms of partnerships with each other and with institutions to foster Roma youth participation.</p>

OBJECTIVES	RECOMMENDATIONS
Increase Roma youth NGOs' participation and representation in Roma and youth structures and policy-making processes	<p>Ensure the involvement of Roma youth organizations in the design, implementation and monitoring of the post-2020 National Roma Strategies.</p> <hr/> <p>The European Youth Forum, international youth organizations and National Youth Councils should ensure the meaningful participation of Roma youth individuals and organizations in their structures.</p> <hr/> <p>Include Roma youth organizations and their priorities in Local Action Groups (LAGs).</p> <hr/> <p>Provide specific measures to fund Roma youth organizations under European and national funding to make Roma youth voices heard and contribute to Roma youth inclusion.</p> <hr/> <p>Secure funding for Roma youth organizations to independently monitor post-2020 National Roma Strategies.</p> <hr/> <p>National governments and National Roma Contact Points and structures should involve Roma youth organizations in important consultation mechanisms concerning Roma and youth issues such as the National Roma Platforms or national youth structured dialogues.</p> <hr/> <p>Decision-making bodies and structures should seek an active dialogue and cooperation with Roma youth organizations to ensure lasting mechanisms of empowerment and participation of young Roma.</p> <hr/> <p>Ensure that Roma youth organizations are leading policy-making processes targeting both youth and Roma issues.</p> <hr/> <p>Governments and national Roma contact points should include Roma youth organizations in the design of post-2020 Roma strategies.</p> <hr/> <p>Involve Roma youth organizations in monitoring the work of equality bodies and the implementation of the Racial Equality Directive.</p>

OBJECTIVES	RECOMMENDATIONS
<p>Capacity-building and funding for Roma youth organizations</p>	<p>Provide information, training, funds and other tools to enable Roma youth organizations to take part in consultation processes and other institutionalized forms of involvement</p> <hr/> <p>Provide funds, technical support; and ease the administrative burdens for Roma youth organizations (i.e., applications and reporting systems for grants are complex and require digital skills).</p> <hr/> <p>Support the establishment and development of Roma youth organizations (i.e., through targeted financing and management tools for organizations led by Roma youth).</p> <hr/> <p>Provide funding, operational and management support to strengthen grassroots level Roma youth organizations.</p> <hr/> <p>Build the capacity of Roma youth NGOs to access and benefit from European youth instruments, such as the Erasmus Plus Programme, the European Solidarity Corps and others.</p>

Survey targeting NGOs working with/on Roma youth

The name of your organization and country of operation

Which of the following best describes your organization?

- ☐ NGO exclusively dedicated to youth
- ☐ NGO having a broader scope but including a section dedicated to youth
- ☐ Youth political or social movement
- ☐ A network of NGOs
- ☐ Other

Number of full/part time paid staff

- ☐ Between 1-10
- ☐ Between 10-20
- ☐ More than 20
- ☐ Other: _____

At which of the following scales does your organization operate? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ International level
- ☐ European level
- ☐ National level
- ☐ Local level (i.e. municipal or regional)
- ☐ Don't know

Is your organization a member of any EU-level youth NGOs or networks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to say

In general, your organization represents which of the two categories below:

- ☐ Roma and Roma youth
- ☐ Young people

Is your organization led by (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ Youth in general
- ☐ Roma youth (up to 35 yrs)
- ☐ Roma women mainly
- ☐ Roma in general
- ☐ Non-Roma
- ☐ Mixed leadership
- ☐ Other: _____

Which of the following types of issues are addressed by your organization?

- ☐ Employment and entrepreneurship
- ☐ Social inclusion
- ☐ Participation in civil society
- ☐ Education and training
- ☐ Health and well-being
- ☐ Voluntary activities
- ☐ Youth and the world
- ☐ Creativity and culture
- ☐ Equality and diversity
- ☐ Environmental issues
- ☐ Human rights
- ☐ Minority rights
- ☐ Discrimination
- ☐ Hate-speech
- ☐ Gender
- ☐ Other: _____

Approximately, how many projects are you running/implementing currently as the responsible organization? (regardless of size and budget)

- ☐ We do not have any projects now
- ☐ We have submitted some projects for funding
- ☐ We have between 1-3 projects
- ☐ We have between 3-6 projects
- ☐ We have more than 6 projects
- ☐ We are supporting other projects, but we are not the responsible organization

Which of the following types of activities are provided by your organization?

- ☐ Supporting dialogue between young people and policy makers (EU level)
- ☐ Supporting dialogue between young people and policy makers (national or local level)
- ☐ Lobbying / advocating for and with young people
- ☐ Providing information to young people on fundamental rights or civil society topics
- ☐ Campaigning on fundamental rights or civil society topics
- ☐ Supporting youth-led social action
- ☐ Providing opportunities for youth volunteering or inter-cultural exchanges
- ☐ Providing mentoring, support and / or guidance to young people
- ☐ Providing non-formal and/or informal learning opportunities for young people
- ☐ Other (specify)
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Approximately how many young people are directly affiliated to your organization (e.g. through membership, subscription, or participation in structured activities)?

- ☐ Between 1-10
- ☐ Between 10-50
- ☐ Between 50-100
- ☐ More than 100

Approximately how many young people do you reach indirectly per year (e.g. through information or awareness-raising, and wider communications)?

- ☐ Between 1-50
- ☐ Between 50-100
- ☐ Between 100-150
- ☐ Between 150-200
- ☐ More than 200
- ☐ Don't know

Roma youth participation structures

Are there mechanisms or space for youth participation in governance structures at the national/ district/ local levels in the country your organization operates in? Please elaborate

Do you think that national governments in the EU have the capacity to respond to Roma youth needs? Please elaborate your answer.

Does your NGO have the capacity to respond to Roma youth needs? Please elaborate your answer.

Do you think there are enough (Roma) civic organizations accessible to Roma youth in your country?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ To a certain extent

Roma youth motivation and capacity for participation

What motivates Roma youth to participate in Roma related civic and political activities?

- ☐ If they receive a certificate
- ☐ If costs associated with participation are fully covered
- ☐ If some other friends participate
- ☐ If they have fun
- ☐ If they see the direct effects of their participation
- ☐ If they make new friends
- ☐ If they travel outside their community
- ☐ Other: _____

What is the level of youth civic participation (i.e. voting rates, attending public meetings, discussions) in your country of operation?

- ☐ Few of them are very active
- ☐ Not so active
- ☐ Quite active
- ☐ Most of them are active

Are there mechanisms or space for youth participation in governance structures at the national/ district/ local levels in the country your organization operates in? Please elaborate

- ☐ I believe most of the Roma youth has been involved in some sort of volunteering
- ☐ Roma youth volunteer on a regular basis
- ☐ There are no opportunities for volunteering
- ☐ Volunteering is not a priority for Roma youth
- ☐ Other: _____

From your NGO experience, how would you evaluate the following?

(I agree / I disagree / NA)

- _____ Most of the Roma youth who have attended our activities, come back
- _____ Roma youth keep in contact with the staff of our organization
- _____ We keep informing Roma youth about the upcoming activities
- _____ Our organization works more or less with the same group of youngsters
- _____ Roma youth are quite engaged in the activities they attend
- _____ Most of the Roma youth who have attended our activities, come back
- _____ Roma youth keep in contact with the staff of our organization
- _____ We keep informing Roma youth about the upcoming activities
- _____ Our organization works more or less with the same group of youngsters
- _____ Roma youth are quite engaged in the activities they attend

Do you think Roma youth understand how policy is made and how they might influence it?

- ☐ Yes, they know
- ☐ No, they do not know

What are the main barriers of Roma youth with respect to participation in civic life, public life, politics?

How effective are the following methods for engaging with young people?

(Very effective / Quite effective / Not very effective / Not at all effective / Not applicable)

- _____ Members elected by local or regional youth forums
- _____ Recruitment via local branches or youth centres
- _____ Cross-referrals from other NGOs (e.g. coordinating bodies for youth volunteering)
- _____ Online registration or subscription
- _____ Specific outreach activities (e.g. informing youth about your work)
- _____ Local visits
- _____ Local actions

What are the main barriers to engage young Roma in the work of your organization?

- ☐ Low aspirations of youth
- ☐ Lack of interest of youth
- ☐ Financial barriers / cost
- ☐ Lack of attractive opportunities
- ☐ Mistrust in professionals / authorities
- ☐ Limited outreach and communications from my NGO' s side
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other: _____

Cooperation in the field of Roma youth

Have you found it difficult to engage with any EU-level youth NGOs or networks? If "yes", why?

Overall, how well represented are young people from your organization in EU-level youth NGOs or networks?

Poorly represented ☐1 ☐2 ☐3 ☐4 ☐5 Very well represented

What donors, international organizations or actors are active in Roma youth related activities?
Or you have collaborated with?

How might EU institutions and national governments support young people from diverse backgrounds to participate in public and civic life?

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