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**romanistudies.eu**  
European Academic Network on Romani Studies

8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Committee  
of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies  
(Strasbourg, 22 April 2015)

A European Union / Council of Europe Joint Programme  
(June 2011 – May 2015)

*The report has been prepared by Mr László Fosztó, Secretary of the Network.*

**Event:** 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Committee

**Date:** 22 April 2015

**Venue:** Room S 0.1, European Youth Centre Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 30, rue Pierre de Coubertin, F-67000 Strasbourg Wacken.

***Participants:***

- a) Members of the Scientific Committee: Dr Cătălin BERESCU, Dr Judit DURST, Professor Yaron MATRAS, Professor Michael STEWART, and Dr Elisabeth TAUBER (apologised: Professor Victor FRIEDMAN, Dr. Elena MARUSHIAKOVA, Dr. Ciprian NECULA, Dr. Veselin POPOV, Dr Eva SOBOTKA, Professor Peter VERMEERSCH and Ms Elisabetta VIVALDI).
- b) Coordinator from the Council of Europe: Ms Kathrin MERKLE; coordinator from the European Commission, DG EAC, Ms Nicola ROBINSON; administrative assistant Ms Katharina FOUQUET; Network Secretary Dr László FOSZTÓ.

**Executive summary:**

*Main outcomes of the meeting are:*

- a) Overview of the progress in implementing the latest Network activities (as laid down in the action plan adopted during the 7th Meeting of the SC);
- b) Planning the final actions which should commence before the end of the second phase of the project (by 31May 2015);
- c) Exchange on the future of the Network and its tools - development options;
- d) Review of the 4 years' project: Major challenges and achievements (including exchange on a discussion paper circulated by Professor Yaron Matras prior to the meeting).

The morning meeting lasted one and half hours (9:00-10:30) before the Final Showcase Event started and discussions continued with more informal exchanges during the lunch (13:30-14:30). Most topics on the agenda were covered during the morning session (a, b, c) while the lunchtime discussion was dedicated to the concluding review (d) on the past 4 years challenges and achievements. The Network created a unique resource of its sort; there are 405 members in 40 countries and 185 cities all over the world. It was agreed that Network will maintain its communication platforms, database and other resources, and it will remain open for new members after the end of the project. It will continue to encourage members to get engaged in policy relevant work and discussions to improve the Roma-related policies on all levels.

## **Details about the discussions and decisions adopted during the meeting:**

As part of the overview of the progress made in implementing the Network activities and planning the final steps the following issues were discussed:

- 1) **Overview of the available financial resources** which need to be spent / committed before the end of the project cycle (by 31 May 2015): based on the calculations from the secretariat of the project after spending the resources on the planned actions there is a sum of 12,436 € remaining from the total budget (2013-2015). It was discussed the best possible way to allocate this remaining resource. There was agreement that the most useful purpose is to produce visibility outputs and content which will contribute to raise the profile of the Network outside the academic community, in particular among policy makers and the general public.

**Decision:** (1) It was decided that a final leaflet of the Network will be produced and disseminated in a large number of copies in order to maintain the visibility of the website and database and also to encourage the recruitment of new members to the network. The production of this leaflet will use about half of the remaining budget (6,000 €). The remaining resources (6,436 €) will be used for the production of an e-book (with a ISBN number) (2) collecting the proceedings of the Network events: (a) the Seminar organised in Marseilles on ‘European dimension of Roma Culture: scientific and political discourses’ on 26 September 2013 (b) the Final Showcase Event on ‘Policies for Roma inclusion: The contribution of academic research’ (c) the reports of best quality submitted by the organisers of events the action ‘Bridging the Gap between Academia and Policy Makers’ and (c) the exchanges on the two discussions carried out on the email-group (edited by Judit DURST) on the ‘Compiling data on Roma’ and the on the ‘Definitions of target group’ will be also included.

**Responsible:** (1) The production of the leaflet will be arranged by Secretariat in-house of the Council of Europe. Ms Katharina Fouquet and the Network Secretary will be in contact for finalising the content and design. (2) The e-book will be edited by a responsible editor. It was agreed that Dr Eben FRIEDMAN will be invited to do the editing work. The Network Secretary will contact him and ask his agreement and facilitate contracting the editorial work. Professor Michael Stewart will assist the Secretary to identify a designer for the cover and layout preparations for the e-book. The ISBN number will be either obtained from the Council of Europe Publishers or from an external publishing company the Network Secretary will arrange this with the help from Ms Kathrin MERKLE.

- 2) An **overview of the meetings organised by the Network** during the past period was presented. Within the frame of the Bridging the Gap between Academia and Policy Makers there were organised 7 meetings during the past period. These meetings were: (1) [‘Crime and Health seminar series’](#), 2014 organised in London, 3-4 December; (2) [‘Roma as a political subject: Between Citizenship Status, National Minority and Vulnerable Group’](#) Workshop in Bucharest, on 10-11 February 2015; (3) [‘Safeguarding Roma children: is it a cultural problem?’](#) Workshop at the University of Manchester, on 25

February 2015; (4) '[Enhancing Roma Participation in Public Policy in the Slovak Republic](#)' workshop organised by the Centre for Research of Ethnicity and Culture (CVEK) from 26 to 27 February 2015 in Bratislava; (5) '[Pathways of Roma Housing Inclusion: Practices and Tools between Research and Policy](#)' The thematic Workshop organized on 19 and 20 March 2015 at the University of Turin; (6) '[Ciganos and education – Dialogue between Academics, Policy Makers, Policy Practitioners and Ciganos](#)' Workshop Lisbon, Portugal, 23-24 March 2015 (7) '[The Role of Informal Education in the Social Inclusion of Romani Children](#)' Workshop in Budapest, Hungary, on 24 March 2015. One meeting was cancelled ('Roma integration on local level' planned in Vilnius, Lithuania in February 2015) at the request of the organisers due to changes in the local context. In the frame of the meetings with the National Contact points there was one event organised 'Nordic Meeting of the Network Members' in Stockholm, Sweden, on 8-9 December 2014.

The final Showcase Event 'Policies for Roma inclusion: The contribution of academic research' was organised as planned and took place on the same date and place as the 8th SC Meeting, on 22 April 2015.

**Decision:** The NCP meetings planned in the previous action plan for Hungary and Romania were cancelled due to the lack of interest. The reports of the meetings are archived on the Network website under the resources, documents, reports on events section: <http://romanistudies.eu/documents/reports-on-the-network-events/>

**Responsible:** The Network Secretary is uploading reports on the website and will prepare the report on the Showcase Event 'Policies for Roma inclusion: The contribution of academic research'.

- 3) A follow-up discussion was held on the Training on Education for officials of the EC planned in Brussels (the trainer selected by the evaluation committee in December 2013 is Dr Barbara Giovanna BELLO). The date of the training has been postponed twice and the training has not taken place so far.

**Decision:** In order to close the plans for this action feasibility will be explored with the help of the Network coordinator from the European Commission. The Secretary will provide Ms Nicola ROBINSON with all the details about the preparations of the training so she could inform Dr Barbara Giovanna BELLO on the situation offering explanation or excuse for the delay.

**Responsible:** The Network Secretary will be in contact with Ms Nicola ROBINSON in order to check and finalise the plans for this action point.

- 4) There was **an exchange on the future of the Network**, and the preserving its legacy. During the past months there was a continuous flow of membership applications. It was agreed that the Network will remain open to new members based on the same criteria of full membership and associated membership that have been applied so far. New applications will be submitted to the list moderator and reviewed by a validation

committee. The validation committee is composed, as decided at the previous SC meeting: Dr Eva Sobotka, Dr Judit Durst, Professor Yaron Matras, Professor Michael Stewart, Dr Elisabeth Tauber, and Dr László Fosztó. In due course the committee may be extended. A detailed discussion the Network tools and their further development options was discussed. It was agreed that the website including the database, the Facebook page and the email group will be maintained as they are. Few minor changes in wording of the project descriptions will be necessary to signal the end of the funding and to acknowledge that the Network was created by a Joint Project between the European Commission and the Council of Europe. The domain name <http://romanistudies.eu/> will remain the property of the Council of Europe and it will be prolonged in order to ensure the continuity of the Network.

**Decision:** (1) The domain name <http://romanistudies.eu/> will remain the property of the Council of Europe and it will be prolonged in order to ensure the continuity of the Network. (2) The website will continue to be hosted by the University of Manchester. (3) It was decided to continue the Network Blog and invite a new editor.

**Responsible:** The Network Secretary will be in contact with the Council of Europe IT Service with the support of Ms Kathrin MERKLE to ensure the continuity of the domain name. The Network Secretary will invite Dr Eben FRIEDMAN to take over the role of the Blog Editor.

- 5) There was a **discussion on the external communication of the Network**. Potential ways of cooperation will be explored between the members of the Network including their host institutions will be also encouraged in order to facilitate research consortiums which also aim at policy advice. The Network will continue to encourage members to get involved in policy relevant work and discussions to improve the Roma-related policies on all levels.

**Decision:** Invitations received from the funding organisations (the European Commission and Council of Europe) and other policy making bodies will continue to be disseminated on the network email list. Members of the Network will be encouraged to participate in the ongoing debates, as for example about the plans for a European Roma Institute (ERI).

**Responsible:** The Network Secretary will be responsible for compiling a chronology of the events, documents and discussions related to the ERI and publish it on the Network website (<http://romanistudies.eu/news/eri-chronology/>). The chronology will be regularly updated based on the information received from the Network members and external sources.