



**2014**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**



**NVO MLADI ROMI**

*The annual report here presented summarises all activities undertaken by the NGO Young Roma during 2014. The report provides an overview of implemented projects, as well as individual activities in the field of advocacy for better situation of Roma in Montenegro. The annual report provides an overview of finance and each donor's share in the overall financial structure of our organisation.*

**January 2015**



## *About us*

NGO Young Roma – Herceg Novi was registered in May 2005 as a local non-profit organization with the aim to contribute to improving the situation of Roma in Montenegro and their full integration into Montenegrin society. Therefore, the vision of our organization is: Roma men and women as equal, educated and active citizens of Montenegro.

Activities of Young Roma are primarily focused on working with the community and monitoring the implementation of national and local action plans in the field of social inclusion and integration of Roma, by encouraging active participation, advocacy, promotion and mediation in the exercise of minority rights.

To achieve its goal, our organization:

- Animates and encourages young Roma men and women to be active participants in the decision making process relating to the integration of Roma;
- Provides an active contribution to the education of Roma children and youth;
- Works on resolving citizenship status and identity documents issues;
- Contributes to the improvement of living conditions for the Roma community;
- Works on preservation of Roma culture and tradition;
- Initiates development of local action plans and strategic documents at the local level in the field of Roma integration;
- Cooperates with all relevant national and international organizations aimed at improving the situation of Roma community.

Our organization is particularly recognized for activities and results in the field of regulation of the legal status of Roma inhabited at the territory of Montenegro. NGO Young Roma has also initiated and coordinated drafting and adoption of local action plans for Roma integration in the municipalities of Herceg Novi, Kotor and Tivat.

Through its dedicated work, this, at first, small, local organization, has grown into a credible partner of national and local institutions and international organizations. Since 2013, NGO Young Roma is the focal point of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. As part of our regular activities, we cooperate with a number of local organizations and are members of several national coalition of non-governmental organizations with a common aim to improve the situation of the Roma community in Montenegro.

## Projects

### » Personal documentation - first step toward equality «

Lack of personal documents hinders the achievement of a number of rights in the field of social protection for the domicile and displaced Roma and Egyptians. Aware of the importance of this issue, Young Roma started with the implementation of activities aimed at addressing the issue of Roma and Egyptians settled in the Boka Bay back in 2008.

This project, supported by UNDP in Montenegro, the third in a series that focused on Roma and Egyptians who have their legal status unresolved, and who have inhabits the area of Pljevlja and Bijelo Polje. Special activity in this project was a thorough field research in, which showed that only a small number of people applied for resolving the legal status, and that their requests are still in the process. Further, in accordance with the recent amendments to the Law on Social Protection, some of the families from the Roma and Egyptian communities have lost their right to social assistance. The particular value of this project is the application of proven model for obtaining the documents, whose application contributes not only to resolve the legal status of RE people in these municipalities, but also ensures that all identified individuals continue to be entitled to family allowance. The aim of this project is to contribute to resolving the legal status of the 50 domicile Roma and 50 internally displaced persons. This 12-month project is being implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the relevant local authorities and Roma civil society.

During 2014, through this project we:

- ✚ organised over 20 meetings with representatives of UNDP, the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro, regional units of the Police of Montenegro, UNHCR, the Mobile Team from Kosovo, social welfare centres, civil society;
- ✚ organised five working visits to Roma settlement Trlica in Pljevlja;
- ✚ organised two working visits to Bijelo Polje;
- ✚ organised five working visit to Roma settlements in Kotor and Tivat;
- ✚ organised one visit to Kosovo;
- ✚ organised a meeting with the external consultant of UNDP;
- ✚ provided free legal aid to 147 beneficiaries and resolved dozens of individual applications in the field of resolving the legal status and similar requests.

***At the European Commission's call for the Award for Roma Integration to civil society organisations in assisting the integration of Roma communities across the Western Balkans and Turkey, this project was placed in the top 3 in Montenegro.***





## » Decade Focal Point 2014 «

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Full participation and involvement of Romani communities, including through Romani civil society, is one of the commitments made within the Decade.

As enshrined in the Decade's Terms of Reference, Romani civil society is entitled to participate actively in the Decade process including in decision making, contribute to effective implementation of the National Decade Action Plans by initiating dialogue between the local authorities and local Romani communities, communicate the goals and objectives of the Decade to the Romani population, actively participate and offer its input and expertise in implementation and monitoring at the national level of the National Decade Action Plans, and ensure the participation of Roma to the broadest possible extent in the Decade process at the national level. Specifically, Romani civil society is represented at the International Steering Committee meeting – the governing body of the Decade on the international level.

To ensure this, the Decade Secretariat issued an open call for selection of Decade Focal Points in 2012. YOUNG ROMA is Decade Focal Point for Montenegro.

During 2014, through this project we:

- ✚ organised four meetings with civil society representatives to discuss current issues in the field of Roma inclusion, implementation of local action plans, the process of monitoring the implementation of the National Strategy for Integration of Roma and the Decade Action Plan, as well as valid statutory processes and related regulations;
- ✚ funded the participation of over 20 representatives of Roma civil society in over 10 international conferences on Roma integration, through DFP procedures: European Summit Roma in Brussels, meetings of the International Steering Committee of the Decade in Podgorica and Sarajevo, thematic workshops and conferences on the prevention of discrimination, economic empowerment of Roma, inclusive education, housing, health and the protection of women, which were organised in Podgorica, Tirana, Shkodra and Sarajevo;
- ✚ participated in four meetings of the Decade Focal Point Network in Podgorica, Bucharest, Prague and Skopje;
- ✚ in cooperation with the Decade Secretariat organised presentation of the Decade Intelligence Report in Podgorica;
- ✚ created website [www.mladiromi.me](http://www.mladiromi.me), launched Facebook and Twitter account, launched the Google Group "Roma issues", which currently has 40 members, from the field of civil society, local and national authorities and international organizations dealing with the inclusion of Roma;
- ✚ translated and disseminated several reports of international organizations which monitor the area of integration of Roma in Montenegro.



## » Through education to integration «

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Inclusion and retention of Roma children in the education system is the most important element of their integration and socialization. Problems such as illiteracy and weak economic power of parents significantly hinder this process.

Therefore, the objective of this project is to support quality education for Roma children in the municipality of Herceg Novi. The specific objectives of this project are: to improve the regularity of school attendance by Roma children, to improve knowledge and increase the number of Roma children who successfully finish the school year, as well as to increase awareness of parents of Roma children on the importance of education.

The main activities under this project were:

- ✚ daily maintenance of extra classes with children in the presence of two mentors who have provided assistance to children in learning, homework, motivated them to achieve better results at school, as well as to regularly attend school classes;
- ✚ making of individual databases of school success of Roma children (monitoring of the education process);
- ✚ several motivational and thematic workshops with parents with the aim of providing support and improving success of Roma children;
- ✚ meetings with directors of primary schools and the Centre for Social Work from Herceg Novi;
- ✚ recreational and educational trips for children.

The project is implemented in cooperation with elementary schools "Daso Pavičić", Igalo, "Milan Vukovic," Savina, " Ilija Kišić", Zelenika and the Municipality of Herceg Novi. The project started with the implementation in 2013 with support of the OSCE / ODIHR and implemented by NGO Young Roma, while in 2014 the OSCE Mission to Montenegro decided to take over the financing in cooperation with our organization.





## » Workshops for making jewellery «

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NGO Young Roma, in cooperation with the Employment Agency launched a training program for making and selling jewellery, which lasted 45 days, starting from 1 August. Funds for this project were provided through the public works program of the Employment Agency. Four unemployed young people from the Roma community participated in the program (*Zarija Gaši, Senada Ahmetaj, Indire Rama i Arijana Ahmetaj*).

Great support and assistance for the implementation of the program, which was the first such activity for Roma in Herceg Novi, was provided by German CSOHELP - Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe eV and their representative office in Podgorica. Bearing in mind that this project helped to reduce unemployment and increase the competitiveness of Roma, the NGO Young Roma provided funding to continue these workshops within the project DORRA - Domestic Roma Handicraft, which is implemented by HELP with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany. Unique jewelry created during the project DORRA was exhibited at the New Year bazaar of handicrafts in late December.



## » Workshops for informal learning of Roma language and culture «

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This project was initiated by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, aiming at improving the situation of the Roma community and the successful integration of this population in our society. NGO Young Roma is a local partner of the Ministry for its implementation in Herceg Novi.

Lecturers at the workshops for informal learning of Roma language and culture use previously adopted Primer for Roma language whose creation, together with the Roma Council, was supported by the Ministry. Primer is the starting adjuvant in teaching in so far four municipalities; namely, Podgorica, Niksic, Berane and Herceg Novi. The largest number of Roma people lives in these municipalities, and, therefore, they are listed among the top four in this pilot project.

The training is intended not solely for children of the Roma population, but also adults, especially given the large percentage of illiteracy among the older members of the Roma community.



Ministry for Human and Minority Rights

## » Improving the integration of Roma at the local level «

This project was jointly implemented by CEDEM, NGO Young Roma and the Municipality of Herceg Novi, with the financial support of the Open Society Foundations from Budapest.

This project started in 2013; however, in the first quarter of 2014 the local housing study was developed as the main product of this project. The study provides a detailed overview of the housing of Roma and Egyptian population in the municipality, and proposes recommendations based on valid and verifiable data from the field. The study was supported by expert analysis of the legal consultant and civil engineer. A separate part of the study offers the report from the field research. The field research was a basic starting point in which the team identified the existing problems of housing in villages and individual houses, then the social, physical, educational and professional capacity of residents. Such comprehensive approach creates the conditions for finding the right way to help these families by using the internal resources of the population.

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*Projekat izrade situacione analize u oblasti stanovanja romske i egipćanske populacije  
Opština Herceg Novi*



*Slika 1 i 2: solidne nezavršene porodične kuće u Zelenici*



*Slika 3, 5 i 6: stari objekat koji je goren*

## Initiatives

During 2014, Young Roma submitted several initiatives to relevant local and national authorities, and international organizations with the aim of regulating individual and collective rights of members of marginalized groups, particularly Roma. Below are some of the most important:

- ✚ In cooperation with partner organizations, we prepared recommendations for the purposes of the seminar dedicated to the issues of inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities in Montenegro, organized by the EU Delegation to Montenegro. The document contains the key recommendations in priority areas defined within the Roma Decade 2005 - 2015: education, employment, personal documents, health and social care and housing.
- ✚ We prepared comments and recommendations on the Draft Law on Amendments to the Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms, in particular by requiring that the Law be amended with regard to the installation of control mechanisms to prevent nepotism and corruption in the disposal of assets of the Fund for Minorities, but also pointing out that the subject of the correction of course should be transparency and full representativeness when forming minority councils.
- ✚ We participated at the conference "Interactive dialogue on Roma platform" organized by the European Commission in Brussels. As representatives of the Decade Focal Point Network, we requested establishment of a civil society working group that would collaborate closely with the European Commission in advising on the theme, agenda, objectives and expected outcomes of upcoming EU Roma platforms and in ensuring follow-up work between the meetings.
- ✚ In cooperation with the Association for Democratic Prosperity - Zid, UNO Libertask and the Union of Free Trade Unions of Montenegro we submitted the initiative for introducing the right to housing in the Constitution of Montenegro, and formed a Social Housing Development Network in that regard. Although the Constitution does not establish a right to housing as a particular social right, Montenegro as the welfare state should be considered solely responsible for the constitution of social justice. This means that the right to housing as one of the most important human rights should be constituted in the principles of human dignity. The initiative is addressed to the President of Montenegro, President of the Parliament of Montenegro, caucuses, as well as the Prime Minister of Montenegro.
- ✚ In the reporting period, we submitted dozens of petitions, requests and letters for solving individual problems of members of Roma population. Requests were sent to the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry for Human and Minority Rights, social welfare centres, municipalities, and others.



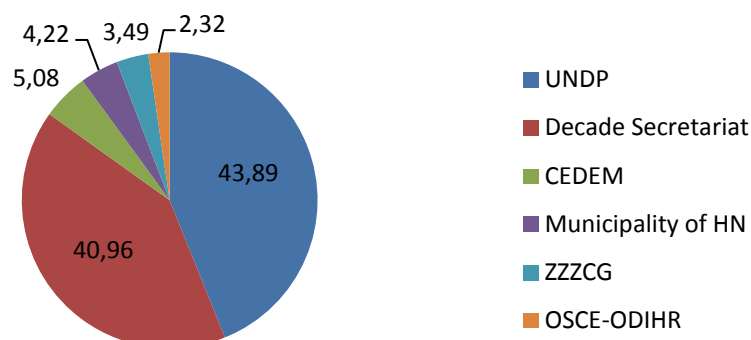
## Financial Report<sup>1</sup>

During the reporting period, as in previous years, NGO Young Roma was funded through project grants from international donors, other NGOs, as well as through donations of the Municipality of Herceg Novi and state authorities. Certain project activities conducted by our organization were funded based on individual contracts between our associates and donors, which is the case in the three projects, where NGO Young Roma appears as a mediator in the implementation. Namely, these projects are: "Through Education to Integration" funded by the OSCE, the second phase of the project "DORRA - Domestic Handicraft of Roma Women", supported by HELP and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as "Workshops for informal learning of Roma language and culture" supported by the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro. Honoraria fees for these projects were directly transferred to our associates; therefore, these payments will not be shown in the financial structure of the organization.

<b>FINANCIAL OVERVIEW IN 2014 PER DONORS</b>	
<b>DONOR</b>	<b>AMOUNT IN €</b>
UNDP Montenegro	20 735
Decade of Roma Secretariat – Budapest	19 350
Centre for Democracy and Human Right – Podgorica (CEDEM)	2400
Municipality of Herceg Novi	2000
Employment Agency of Montenegro - ZZZCG	1650
OSCE-ODIHR - Montenegro	1100
<b>Total</b>	<b>47235</b>

<sup>1</sup> Financial report for 2014 available at: <http://mladiromi.me/2014-07-21-09-36-07/dokumenta/category/3-publikacije?download=30:finansijski-izvjestaj-2014>

## The donors' share in NGO Young Roma funding - percentage



## *Young Roma staff and associates in 2014*

1. Samir Jaha, Executive Director
2. Dženita Brčvak, Project Coordinator (Decade Focal Point 2014)
3. Saša Pavičević, Financial and Office Manager
4. Sanja Knežević, Office Coordinator, Herceg Novi
5. Mehmet Beriša, Local Project Coordinator (Improving the integration of Roma at the local level)
6. Kastriot Murataj, Project Assistant (Personal documentation – first step toward equality)
7. Emrah Jefkaj, Project Assistant (Through Education to Integration)
8. Stanislava Andrić, Project Assistant (Through Education to Integration)
9. Senka Domović Bulut, Project Assistant (Through Education to Integration)
10. Veselj Beganaj, Project Consultant (Decade Focal Point 2014)
11. Allmir Tahiri, Project Assistant (Decade Focal Point 2014)
12. Tina Tafa, Project Assistant (Workshops for informal learning of Roma language and culture)
13. Mona Jašaraj-Ahmetaj, Project Assistant (Workshops for informal learning of Roma language and culture)
14. Zarija Gaši, Office Assistant for Herceg Novi and engaged in Workshops for making jewellery
15. Senada Ahmetaj, engaged in Workshops for making jewellery
16. Indira Rama, engaged in Workshops for making jewellery
17. Arijana Ahmetaj, engaged in Workshops for making jewellery.

