
OSCE

Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

CPRSI Newsletter

Vol.1 No. 1

Inside This Issue

Note from the Director	1
ODIHR Contact Point	1
Intern's Report.....	3
Reports submitted to the CPRSI.....	4
Roma theatre in Warsaw.....	5
Roma related activities.....	6

A note from the director

Dear Friends,

On many occasions, the OSCE participating States have expressed their concerns for the rights of national minorities. We recognise that respect for these minorities is an urgent requirement for the maintenance and development of free societies and flourishing cultures.

To further the development of this process at the Budapest Summit in December 1994 the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights was asked to act as a Contact Point for Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) issues (CPRSI)

Six months have now passed since we started to work on fulfilling this mandate and as recent experience shows a great need exists for the ODIHR Contact Point. We plan to promote this through our bi-monthly newsletter devoted specifically to Roma and Sinti issues.

This publication will be distributed, free of charge, to Non-governmental organizations interested in Roma problems, International organizations and Governments of the OSCE participating States.

Our newsletter aims to:

- record Roma related events e.g., seminars and meetings, which are of importance to the international Roma community;
- list the complaints of Human Dimension Commitments violations regarding Roma and Sinti;

- report on the work of the OSCE ODIHR Contact Point;

We strongly encourage you to write to us and provide us with information which will help improve the functioning of this Contact Point.

We hope that this joint activity will be a small step in bringing us all closer to an ordered, tolerant and peaceful world and will help build a stable Europe for all participating States.

OSCE ODIHR CONTACT POINT FOR ROMA AND SINTI ISSUES

Paulina Rogowska
ODIHR Information Adviser

From the editor:

For the benefit of those readers who did not participate in the process of defining the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, we would like to provide a brief overview of our Contact Point.

The OSCE debate on Roma issues which actually commenced a long time ago intensified in late 1993, when the High Commissioner on National Minorities presented his report on Roma in OSCE region with very disturbing conclusion.

The situation of many Roma communities has greatly worsened in the last few years. This mostly concerns areas such as citizenship, political participation, racially motivated violence and relations with the majority of communities, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, education and job training, health care, housing, criminality and relations with law-enforcement officials.

The Human Dimension Seminar on Roma in the CSCE Region (September 1994) resulted in a concrete proposal to establish, within the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Contact Point for communication between Inter-governmental Organizations, OSCE participating States and Non-governmental organizations on Roma issues.

Following the decision of the Budapest Summit in December 1994 this contact point has now been established within the auspices of the ODIHR. The ultimate goal of the Contact Point is to assist participating States to find constructive solutions for the problems facing the Roma.

Tasks of the CPRSI

The Budapest Summit gave the Contact Point three main tasks which we shall now quote from the original document "Toward a Genuine Partnership in a New Era" (Chapter VIII, paragraph 23):

"The participating States decide to appoint within the ODIHR a contact point for Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) issues. The ODIHR will be tasked to:

-act as a clearing house for the exchange of information on Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) issues, including information on the implementation of commitments pertaining to Roma;

- facilitate contacts on Roma issues between participating States, international organizations and institutions and NGOs;

- maintain and develop contacts on these issues between OSCE institutions and other international organizations and institutions."

It is also worth mentioning that the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights is to fulfil this task using existing resources and that no additional funding or human resources have been given to the ODIHR.

Working approach of the CPRSI

After several consultations with other international organizations and Roma NGOs, the working approach and the action plan for the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) was established.

The OSCE is not confrontational in its approach; while maintaining close contacts with NGOs, the organization is assisting the participating States in the implementation of their human rights commitments. This approach embodies the working strategy of the CPRSI: to facilitate contacts and exchange of information among the OSCE institutions, Inter-governmental, International organizations, Governments of the participating States, and Non-governmental organizations, and to encourage the development of Roma organizational capacity by assisting the co-operation of Roma associations and organizations.

The CPRSI will limit itself to areas of Roma concern with emphasis on the legal and political field, in particular to discrimination and violence against Roma and Sinti.

Partners CPRSI will co-operate with

We strongly appeal to the governments of participating States, international organizations and Non-governmental organizations who are interested in Roma issues, to provide the CPRSI with the information necessary for its effective functioning.

Planned Activities

- The CPRSI will collect and, upon request, disseminate information and documents on the implementation of human rights commitments related to Roma - focusing on discrimination and violence against Roma. The list of reports we receive on the implementation of human rights commitments with regard to Roma will be published in the CPRSI Newsletter and will also be available to participating States at the Implementation Meeting in October 1995.
- The CPRSI will prepare a handbook of International organizations and legal instruments applicable to Roma issues
- A country-by-country handbook of domestic institutions, consultative, advisory and judicial bodies and other institutions dealing with Roma will be prepared.
- The ODIHR will host a Roma Intern to the Contact Point twice a year for three months. This year's internship program has been funded by the Project on Ethnic Relations.
- A list of meetings and cultural activities of relevance to the world community of Romanies will be maintained by the CPRSI.
- Articles on Roma issues will be published regularly in the OSCE ODIHR Bulletin, to promote awareness of Roma problems as well as stimulate a debate on Roma issues.
- The CPRSI will maintain a list of organizations interested in addressing Roma problems.

Information Required

- The Contact Point is currently completing a list of Roma and Sinti NGOs and governmental institutions dealing with Roma. Presently, due to the information provided by the Gypsy Research Centre in Paris we have approximately 300 organizations on our list and we are still searching.
- Information provided by governments on the situation of Roma in their respective countries.
- Reports related to the implementation of human rights commitments, with special reference to discrimination and violence against Roma, and steps undertaken in order to combat these trends.
- Information about meetings and cultural activities of relevance to the international community of Roma.
- Information on domestic institutions dealing with Roma and the procedures to be used when reporting violations of Roma human rights.
- Specific laws or decrees on Roma protection.

Point of contact within the ODIHR

Mr. Jacek Paliszewski has been appointed within the ODIHR as co-ordinator of Roma Contact Point Activities. In addition, the working group of the Contact Point consists of two more persons: Ms. Paulina Rogowska, Ms. Elizabeth Winship and Mr. Martin Alexanderson. Mr. Ilya Belkin is the editor of this CPRSI Newsletter

What's going on in the Contact Point?

Nicolás Jiménez
 Roma Intern to the CPRSI
 July 1995

From the editor: Nicolás Jiménez was born in 1968, in Madrid, Spain. He is a sociologist and vice-president of Asociación Nacional Presencia Gitana, a Spanish Romani NGO established in 1972. In order to exchange expertise and develop organizational capacities, the temporary placements of a Roma Intern to the Contact Point will be scheduled twice a year for three months. This year the internship program has been funded by the Project on Ethnic Relations.

Research work

I have been chosen for the first internship programme in the field of Roma and Sinti Issues. During this period I intend to conclude a sociological research on the present structures and activity programs of Romani, Sinti and Traveller NGOs in the OSCE region. The aim of this study is to obtain an updated overview of the Romani associated movement.

Why it is necessary to know more about this movement? The answer is self-evident - sometimes, Intergovernmental organizations, States and even Romani, Sinti and Traveller NGOs do not perceive the significance of this issue. As a result, some decisions taken in these different scopes are reduced in their effectiveness due to lack of pragmatism in their forecasting.

Therefore, in order to get a wider perspective on this matter and to assist my research I have sent a questionnaire to 108 Romani NGOs from 30 countries.

Mailing list

In addition to this, our Contact Point team have started a Mailing List of Romani, Sinti and Traveller NGOs, Romani related NGOs, research institutes, experts, international organizations and national governmental bodies. Currently, we have 638 entries and are still expanding. We would be grateful that if you know any organizations in this field you could forward some information and their

addresses to us here in the ODIHR. We would also like to know if any of the organizations listed did not actually receive this Newsletter.

Clearing House

We are eager to share all the documents from Roma organizations we have so far received. In order to better inform our readers about the content of the Clearing House, the documents and reports received will be placed in a data bank. The information in our data bank is available to anyone on request. In addition, the list of reports received by the CPRSI will be published in this Newsletter every second month.

Roma workshop

In October this year, the OSCE implementation meeting will be held in Warsaw. The aim of this meeting is to review the implementation of the OSCE commitments.

During this meeting the CPRSI will organise a workshop on "Networking of contacts and co-operation with Romani, Sinti and Traveller NGOs". Experts invited to this network will discuss the most urgent issues of Sinti and Traveller populations. To ensure the effectiveness of this seminar it is important that all participating NGOs inform the Contact Point of their priorities in the matters to be discussed at this meeting. In my opinion, the Romani, Sinti and Traveller activists should use this opportunity to assess the fulfilling of duties by national governments.

* * * * *

LIST OF REPORTS

From the editor:

Paragraph 23 Chapter VIII of the Budapest Decisions reads:

"the ODIHR will be tasked to:

- act as a clearing-house for the exchange of information on Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) issues, including information on the implementation of commitments pertaining to Roma and Sinti (Gypsies)."

In respect to this mandate the Contact Point presents now the titles of the reports which have been sent to it..

Violations of the Rights of Gypsies in Bulgaria, in 1992 - 1994, Dimitrina Petrova, The Human Rights Project on Legal Defence of the Gypsies in Bulgaria, 1994.

Report Concerning the Pogrom Which Occurred in Hadareni, Mures County, Norica Costache, Roma federation from Romania, 20-21 September 1993.

Report on Prosecuting and Preventing Violence, Intolerance and Conflicts Involving Romanies in the CSCE countries,
Ethnic Federation of Romanies in Romania

Over 300 Gypsy People Placed Close to a Waste Tip, Asociacion Nacional Presencia Gitana, 16 November 1994.

Report on Gypsies, Erol Anar - Human Rights Association.

General Report on Provision on Human Rights in Slovak Constitution, John A. Young, International Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.

Report for the United States of America Embassy in Bratislava on Human Rights in Slovak Constitution, John A. Young, International Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, 4 October 1994.

Is Slovakia Ready for the Potential Influx of Roma Denied Czech Citizenship? John A. Young, International Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.

A Need for Change in the Czech Citizenship Law, Ina Zoom, Tolerance Foundation, November 21, 1994.

Report on the Czech Citizenship Law, Ina Zoom, Tolerance Foundation, May 25, 1994.

Freedom Review - Report on Impunity and Discrimination in the Administration of Justice in Cases of Violence Against Romanies/Gypsies in Romania. Romani CRISS , The Roma Centre for Studies and Social Intervention, January 1995

Report on Impunity and Discrimination in the Administration of Justice in Cases of Violence Against Romanies/Gypsies in Romania, Romani CRISS , The Roma Centre for Studies and Social Intervention Annexe Documentaire, February 1995.

Report on Impunity and Discrimination in the Administration of Justice in Cases of Violence Against Romanies/Gypsies in Romania Romani CRISS, The Roma Centre for Studies and Social Intervention.

Thousands of Roma in Czech Republic are Stateless, Vereniging Lau Mazirel - belangenbehartiging van mensen met een nomadische cultuur, 23 January 1995.

Ethnopolitics Focuses in Bulgaria: Turks, Pomaks, Macedonians and Gypsies, Stefan Troebst, 26 November 1993

Statements

Statement for United Nations Committee for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, International Romani Union, Roma Federation of Romania, February 27, 1995.

Statement for the distinguished members of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of all forms of Racial discrimination, International Romani Union, Roma Federation of Romania , March 13, 1995.

Petition to the European Parliament, Rudko Kawczynski, President of Roma National Congress (RNC) to M.Egon Klepsch, President of the European Parliament, 10 July 1993

Postulatum, RNC Roma National Congress

Statement addressed to Ambassador Audrey Glover - OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Roma Associations from Romania, May 4, 1995.

Vereniging Lau Mazirel - belangenbehartiging van mensen met een nomadische cultuur, Peter Jorna, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 5 March 1995

Vereniging Lau Mazirel - belangenbehartiging van mensen met een nomadische cultuur, January 1995

PUBLICATIONS

Documentation: Hamburg Police Takes Political Revenge, RNC Roma National Congress (NGO Status at CSCE), April 1994.

Documentation: Germany Plans to Deport Stateless Roma From Former Yugoslavia to Romania, RNC Roma National Congress, 2-11 March 1994.

Roma und Deutschland, RNC Roma National Congress, 16 May 1993.

Provisional file prepared for the "Human dimension Seminar of Roma/Gypsies in the CSCE region", Romano Lil Proceedings - Violence Prevention, Confidence Building, Local Development in Roma Majority Community Relations, Centre de Recherché Tsiganes; Universite de Paris V, Romano Lil Series, Vol.II, September 1994.

Magazine #2, Romani CRISS, The Roma Centre for Studies and Social Intervention, Romano Lil, September 1994

Variable geometry rights. Persecution of collective violence against Roma community in Romania, Romani CRISS , The Roma Centre for Studies and Social Intervention .

Struggling for Ethnic Identity - Czechoslovakia Endangered Gypsies, Rachel Tritt - Helsinki Watch, Copyright by Human Rights Watch, August 1992.

ROMA THEATRE PRALIPE THEATER AN DER RUHR

To celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the founding of the OSCE, The Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights invited the Roman Theatre Pralipe to Warsaw. The Mülheim-based Roma-theatre PRALIPE performance marked the 20th Anniversary of the Organization on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 50th Anniversary of the United Nations and International Year of Tolerance on 17 March 1994. The theatre's original interpretation of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" was performed in Warsaw on 24 July 1995 in "Teatr na Woli" theatre. The plot while transporting the Yugoslavian war to the stage never attempts to simplify the present conflict. Instead, it gives the audience a direct approach to the intensive, powerful consequence of the play. The ridiculous aspects of this war are highlighted. The audience is confronted with both states of constantly meaningful danger and irrational hate. Nevertheless, the love story of the 20th century Romeo and Juliet remains at production's centre.

The company plays classical European texts in Romanes, their own language which is foreign to the audience only for the first few minutes. All the materials are transformed to produce a theatre of images and symbols with rare aesthetical strength and consequence.

THEATRE AN DER RUHR is responsible for the Management, the Organization as well as Public Relation for the group PRALIPE. until today the following performances were produced: "OTELLO" William Shakespeare, "SEVEN AGAINST THEBEN/ANTIGONE" Aischylos/Sophokles, THE GREAT WATER Zivgo Cingo, ROMEO AND JULIET William Shakespeare and WITCHES.

List of Roma related events in 1995
(2nd update)

From the editor:

We hope to publish in this section a list of seminars, conferences, training, workshops - which are of interest to the community of Roma. We would appreciate if you could assist us by providing any information about such events. MAY15 Warsaw The first three-months internship of the Roma NGO representative at the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues begins. 18 - 27, Strasbourg Training session on Situation and Perspectives of Minority Youth in Europe

23 - 26, Bucharest

International Seminar on Tolerance organised by the OSCE in co-operation with UNESCO

29 - 31, Amsterdam

Annual Session of the Gypsy Lore Society

JUNE

6 - 8 Rome

Holy See, 4th International Meeting on the Pastoral Care of Gypsies, sponsored by the Pontifical Council

7 - 8 Prague

Round Table on Human Rights and Roma Issues, organised by the Soros Roma Foundation

16 - 21 Uppsala

NGO Human Rights Congress "Beyond Vienna"

JULY

3 -9 Warsaw

The Train of Freedom and Liberation "CHOICES", organised by Prague, the CoE, Bratislava, Budapest, Vienna, Zurich, Strasbourg

AUGUST

28 - 30 London

Round table on Romani linguistic and cultural identity, organised by the Institute of International Comparative Research in Social Sciences, Vienna

SEPTEMBER

Warsaw

The second three-months of the Roma NGO representative at the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues begins.

29 - 30 Strasbourg

Hearing of Roma Women from Western, Central and Eastern Europe, organised by the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG) and the Council of Europe

OCTOBER

2 - 19 Warsaw

Implementation Meeting on Human Dimension Issues, consultation on the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues activities

8 - 15 Budapest

Conference: "Woodpeckers on the Fortress Europe" - Practical European Networking Against Racism, Nationalism and Fascism-Part VI, organised by the UNITED for Intercultural Action

NOVEMBER

28 Warsaw

Human Dimension Seminar on the rule of Law

DECEMBER

1 Ploetsi

Third meeting of the working group on the project on "The Roma in the Local Communities; toward a European Network of Municipalities for Roma", organised by CPLRE, CoE, in co-operation with the Romanian Federation of Cities