

Thematic evaluation on IPA support to Roma communities

Evaluation Mandate

Directorate General/Unit	DG ELARG, Unit A3
Type of evaluation	Thematic retrospective evaluation External (to be contracted)
Planned start date	June/July 2014
Planned completion date	June 2015 (indicative)
Budget/budget line:	IPA/2012/23681
Indicative budget	180 000 EURO
Type of procedure	Framework procedure

1. Why do we need this evaluation?

1.1 Justification

The European Union is founded on common values and principles, including respect for fundamental rights. With this regard the Copenhagen political criteria require that the enlargement countries put in place sound and elaborated legal frameworks to provide protection of minorities.

The Roma¹ inclusion became a **high priority point on the political agenda** of the EU and of the Member States, as reflected by the outcome of the European Roma Summit on April 4th. The Commission has provided political leadership to Roma integration, which received the support of other EU institutions. Since 2011, a framework for National Roma Integration Strategies² is in place at EU level. Based on the Commission's proposals, in 2013 the Council adopted a Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the member states, which is the first EU soft legal instrument in this field, and also issued increasingly strong country specific recommendations related to Roma inclusion to the Member States in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy. In addition, following the Commission's proposal, the Council and the European Parliament adopted the new Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 which facilitates the use of EU funds for Roma inclusion and calls for the earmarking of at least 20% of the European Social Fund for social inclusion, combatting poverty and social exclusion.

The Commission approach towards Roma in the enlargement countries was set out in the Strategy Paper in October 2013³. Taking into account the principles, goals and instruments of the EU Framework on National Roma Integration Strategies, the Commission is pursuing a coherent approach in enlargement countries aimed at closing the gap between the main population and Roma in terms of access to documents, education, employment, social protection & health and housing.

In the period 2007-2013, around €150 million pre-accession assistance has been provided to

¹ Referring to the definition used in the EU Framework for National Roma Integration strategies up to 2020, adopted with COM(2011) 173 final O.J.L 76/68, 22.3.2011, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf

² COM (2011) 173, 5.04. 2011

³ COM (2013) 700, 16.10.2013

support social inclusion and integration of Roma in the enlargement countries, including housing. Through IPA II DG Enlargement will continue to support measures facilitating the social and economic inclusion of Roma. Projects directly making an impact on the lives of individual Roma persons will be prioritised, with a particular focus on education and social inclusion. Future IPA assistance should be closely linked with the implementation of the national Roma strategy and action plans and the fulfilment of its objectives. The Commission (COM) aims at better targeting the IPA funding to finance measures agreed in, inter alia in the national seminars or throughout the accession process, with improved cooperation with other international organisations, identifying and building on best practice.

In light of the above mentioned challenges, priorities and changes in the policy towards Roma inclusion in enlargement countries, **DG Enlargement should undertake an evaluation of the performance of the policy and supporting funding under IPA I 2007-2013** ("evaluation first" principle⁴). The evaluation should provide an assessment on the attained results and outcomes, their impact and sustainability, the good practices and pitfalls in IPA I programming and implementation. It should serve as a good basis and a sensible tool for proposing and making changes to the existing policy, backed up with a retrospective evaluation of the performance of that policy over recent years. In addition, such a thematic evaluation on EU's support to Roma communities needs to provide a crucial judgement of the extent to which the IPA I assistance has:

- Supported the implementation of the Roma strategic policy objectives both at country level (national Roma strategy and action plan) and at EU level (joint conclusions of Roma seminars);
- Contributed to tangible improvement of the living conditions of Roma (in the specific areas in which IPA projects were implemented);
- Taken into account/involved other important Roma actors at central and local level with special attention to international organisations and CSOs;
- Involved the Roma communities in all stages of the program/project cycle.

The evaluation should also assess the capacity of the country institutions (at central and local level) to programme and absorb the assistance in a meaningful way, reaching tangible results. It should also evaluate the objectives achieved and how effectively and efficiently this has been done, outlining good practices and shortfalls in achievement and the sustainability of the results. To this end, the evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, EU-added value of the interventions. Special attention should be given to distinguishing between IPA-funded

- Roma specific interventions (explicitly targeting Roma communities)
- Interventions targeting Roma explicitly but not exclusively (territorial interventions implemented in areas where Roma are overrepresented)
- Mainstream social inclusion interventions that might reach Roma as any other citizen.

1.2 Purpose of the evaluation

⁴ COM (2013) 686, 2.10.2013

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

The results of the evaluation will be used for (re-)orientation of DG Enlargement policy and assistance towards the Roma community in enlargement countries in the period 2014-2020, based on past experience and lessons learned. The outputs of the evaluation are planned to be used to:

- provide recommendations on the DG ELARG policy approach on Roma inclusion with the view of linking the policy approach to IPA II programming;
- adjust programmes and IPA II funding, based on the main gaps/weaknesses in IPA I programming and implementation;
- help to design the IPA II programmes and projects, making an impact on the lives of individual Roma persons,
- outline corrective measures, if applicable on the way in which IPA I assistance is implemented and monitored (both in terms of technicalities and procedural aspects as well as in regards substantive content);
- provide recommendations on the improvement of the monitoring and evaluation frameworks, namely in regards of the appropriate indicators that should be embedded in the project cycle and the appropriate project-level data collection mechanisms that would generate the data necessary to populate the indicators;
- increase accountability, transparency, visibility of IPA assistance, enabling dissemination of achieved results to general public, stakeholders and civil society.

2. What might it include?

2.1 Scope (indicative)

The evaluation is foreseen as a strategic, policy-oriented evaluation and to this extent, it should be launched at the DG Enlargement HQ level, but it requires support of the EUDs/EUO and main interlocutors at national level. There are no related evaluations, planned to be launched at local level by the EUDs, but all relevant monitoring and evaluation activities, carried out so far in the beneficiary countries will be taken into consideration in the current assignment.

For the sake of providing a thorough assessment of the performance of EU support to enlargement countries in the programming period 2007-2013, the evaluation should cover all IPA beneficiary countries at that time – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey Focus should be on Roma only.

The evaluation shall assess:

- Quality of the IPA intervention logic taken by ELARG since 2007 and its effectiveness (e.g. implementation of the Roma strategic policy objectives, clearly distinguishing between the national/central government level; the regional/local level and the EU level (joint conclusions of Roma seminars) and its translation as objectives into the IPA I programming framework),
- Performance (efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, impact, sustainability and EU value added) of assistance financed through IPA 2007-2013 national and regional programmes, targeting support to Roma both at programming and at implementation level, looking at good/bad practices in terms of operation (size of projects, implementation modality, flexibility) as well as in terms of content (relevance of interventions, correctness of intervention, etc.);

- Quality of monitoring systems in place in terms of used indicators, monitoring mechanisms of results, links with the evaluation function;
- DG Enlargement cooperation with external stakeholders, supporting Roma inclusion, identifying best practices, taken into account/involved important Roma actors at central and local level with special attention to international organisations and CSOs.

Based on relevant findings, conclusions and lessons learned above, it will provide relevant operational and concrete recommendations for:

(1) programming future EU assistance in this area, based on good practices which can be recommended for further and possibly expanded engagement, and "negative" programming examples;

(2) role and the best placed actors on the ground which ELARG can use to implement its programmes (international organisations, CSOs, development agencies, etc).

(3) if relevant, corrective measures, where applicable, to improve the implementation and monitoring of ongoing actions.

(4) areas that do not require the involvement of EU assistance because they are well covered by other donors or require a partial assistance to be coordinated with other donors present in the field.

(5) improvement of the monitoring and evaluation frameworks, namely in regards of the appropriate indicators that should be embedded in the project cycle and the appropriate project-level data collection mechanisms that would generate the data necessary to populate the indicators.

2.2 Objectives (indicative)

The primary objective of the evaluation is to provide findings and recommendations to assist DG Enlargement in improving its programming and implementation of IPA II assistance, targeting support to Roma communities in the enlargement countries, based on the lessons learned and good practices in the programming and implementation of IPA I assistance.

3. How we will do it?

3.1 Tentative timing

Consultation with the stakeholders, Steering Group set up and elaboration of the draft ToR	January – April 2014
Validation of the ToR	May 2014
Signature of the external contract followed by kick-off and inception report	June/July 2014
Organisation of a workshop (end of desk and field phases meeting), dedicated to present the preliminary results and to consult on the findings with the stakeholders	April 2015
Delivery of final evaluation outputs. Debriefing of results.	June/July 2015
Dissemination plan	by December 2015

3.2 Stakeholders and Steering group – Who should be involved?

The beneficiary of the evaluation is the European Commission, DG ELARG.

The stakeholders for this evaluation include:

National stakeholders include (non-exhaustive list):

- National IPA Coordinators (NIPAC);
- Roma national coordinator/contact point (when such position exists);
- Relevant Ministries, Anti-discrimination bodies, regional and local authorities, dealing with Roma inclusion in the enlargement countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey), union municipality associations, housing agencies, etc
- Representatives of the Roma community in the beneficiary countries. A list of relevant representatives of the Roma community that evaluators might consider to meet will be drawn up by the geographical units in DG ELARG in cooperation with the EU Delegations.

COM stakeholders include (non-exhaustive list):

- DG ELARG Directorate A, B, C and D, namely A1, A4, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, C3, C4, D2, and D3;
- DG EMPL, DG REGIO, DG JUST, DG HOME, DG SANCO, DG EAC
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
- EU Delegations in beneficiary countries, European Union Office in Kosovo;
- Fundamental Rights Agency

International Organisations (non-exhaustive list):

- World Bank
- OSCE/ODIHR
- Council of Europe
- UNDP
- UNICEF
- UNHCR
- Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat
- CSOs, dealing with Roma issues at international/national level;

Quality control of the evaluation

The launching and the implementation of the evaluation will be supported an advisory Reference Group that will ensure the quality of the evaluation and will have responsibilities, as follows:

- Guiding the planning and implementation of the evaluation to comply with the quality standards and pre-determined criteria (it will be consulted on the evaluation mandate, draft terms of reference and all draft report);
- Assisting the evaluation manager (DG ELARG A3 Unit) in implementation of activities;
- Providing an assessment of the quality of the work of the consultant; including endorsement of the inception report, interim report and the final report.
- Ensure proper follow-up action plan after completion of the evaluation

The Reference Group will include representatives from DIR A, B, C and D of DG Enlargement and other EC's services, DGs (DG EMPL, DG REGIO, DG JUST), if necessary other relevant stakeholders.