

# EU Second Roma Integration Award for the Western Balkans and Turkey



Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina,  
the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,  
Kosovo\*, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey

## APPLICATION FORM

(ANNEX 1 OF THE CONTEST RULES)

### Did you know?

It is estimated that about 1 million Roma<sup>1</sup> live in the Western Balkans, 2.8 million in Turkey and 6.2 million in the EU. Roma are Europe's largest ethnic minority. They face continued exclusion, segregation and discrimination.

The EU's policy on Roma inclusion, integration and empowerment is placed within an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 adopted by the European Commission in 2011. Within that framework, all 28 EU Member States and all 7 candidate countries and potential candidates for EU membership adopted their National Roma Integration Strategies which they now put in practice.

In June 2016, the Commission adopted its annual report on Roma integration that stresses the following as regards the candidate countries and potential candidates:

- Roma integration continues to be a priority in the enlargement process.
- Enough funding must be ensured to carry out integration measures.
- Attention should focus on implementation by local authorities.
- Roma community should be involved in planning, implementation and monitoring.
- Focus on results on the ground to reduce the gap between Roma and non-Roma.

Find out more: [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/index_en.htm)

Watch a film about Roma: <http://romahomeland.org/>

Watch a short video "A Better Future for Roma" in candidate countries and potential candidates: <https://vimeo.com/143848472>

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<sup>1</sup> As it is most commonly used in EU policy documents and discussions, the term "Roma" refers to a variety of different groups of people who describe themselves as Roma, Sinti, Kale, Gypsies, Romanichels, Boyash, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Manouches and other, and also includes Travellers, without denying the specificities and varieties of lifestyles and situations of these groups.

\*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.

**Before filling out this Application Form, please read carefully the Contest Rules. You also have to fill out, date and sign the Declaration of Honour.**

*Please fill out this Application Form and send it, together with the Declaration of Honour (Annex 2 of the Contest Rules), by e-mail to*

*[NEAR-ROMA-INTEGRATION-AWARD@ec.europa.eu](mailto:NEAR-ROMA-INTEGRATION-AWARD@ec.europa.eu)*

*by 31 October 2016 23:59:59 of Brussels time (the time of registration in the European Commission's IT system is decisive).*

*("NEAR" is the abbreviation for the European Commission department responsible for the Second Roma Integration Award: the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations.)*

*Please make sure that where the Contest Rules require quantified data, e.g. a specific duration or number of staff or beneficiaries, this Application Form contains this data.*

*Where this Application Form requires a limit on the number of words, any words in excess of that limit will be disregarded in the evaluation. Adjust the size of the table cells where necessary to fit the text.*

## 1. THE PARTICIPANT

Full official name of the participant	Mediterranean Roma Associations Federation
Official legal form of the participant. This legal form must be suitable for an NGO.	NGO

<p>Participant's history, aim and main activities (no more than 300 words). Demonstrate in particular the eligibility criteria under Section 3 points 2. and 3. of the Contest Rules</p>	<p>Mediterranean Roma Associations Federation (AKROMFED) was established in 2008 as a fusion of 5 Roma associations from the Mediterranean region to bring a momentum to the solution of the problems of Roma community at the fields of education, employment, health, housing and preserve Roma culture. After its establishment federation started to cooperate with local and national authorities to elaborately discuss the problems at these fields and their solutions.</p> <p>AKROMFED's main activities can be divided as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities supporting the EDUCATION of Roma</li> <li>• Activities for providing EMPLOYMENT possibilities to Roma people.</li> <li>• Activities for STRENGTHENING THE ROMA IDENTITY and maintaining the respect towards the Roma culture by both new generations of Roma and non-Roma citizens.</li> <li>• ADVOCACY activities through the ROMFO forum of Roma civil society organizations with an aim of development of State Policy for Roma in Turkey</li> </ul> <p>Since its establishment AKROMFED realized the following projects accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2012 Mediterranean Children's Art Atelier (Funded by Open Society Foundation)</li> <li>• 2013 Roma Mediators Project (Funded by Turkish Dutch Embassy)</li> <li>• 2013 Our Children (Min. of Family and Social Policies)</li> <li>• 2014 Roma Women to Work Their Children to Kindergarden (Funded by Open Society Foundation and Toroslar Municipality)</li> <li>• 2015 I am listening Romanes (Funded Sivil Düşün)</li> <li>• 2015 Radio Romano Vast ((Funded by Open Society Foundation)</li> </ul>
<p>Staff count: approximate number of people, voluntary or paid, full-time or part-time, directly carrying out <u>all</u> the activities of the participant, i.e. not just the project</p>	<p>Nearly 60 people are working paid full time working in various projects of the federation</p> <p>Nearly 50 people are working voluntarily</p>

Full official address, notably street/post box, postal code, city, country	Turgutreis Mah. 4114 Sk. No: 58/A 33010 Akdeniz / Mersin TURKEY
E-mail address	<a href="mailto:akromfed@hotmail.com">akromfed@hotmail.com</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.akromfed.org">www.akromfed.org</a>
Statutory registration number, VAT registration number (whichever available)	Statutory reg: 330-022-150 VAT no: 0210552118
<b>CONTACT PERSON:</b>	
Name (Ms, Mr)	G. Hakan Koçman
Telephone number	+ 90 507 339 35 30
E-mail address	<a href="mailto:hakankocman@gmail.com">hakankocman@gmail.com</a>

## 2. THE PROJECT

Title of the project	Roma Women to Work Their Children to Kindergarden
Period covered by the project (Section 4 point 3. of the Contest Rules)	From: Dec 2014 To: Aug 2016 <b>OR</b> Ongoing since: _____
Geographical location of the project (Section 4 point 2. of the Contest Rules)	<i>Mersin, Turkey</i>
Source of financing of the project	<i>Mediterranean Roma Associations Federation Open Society Foundation, Turkey ( Cash) Toroslar Municipality (Contribution in-kind) National Employment Office ( Cash) Public Education Center of Ministry of National Education (Contribution in- kind)</i>
<p>Objectives, design, planning and activities of the project (Section 4 point 1., Section 5, criterion 1 of the Contest Rules):</p> <p><i>Please explain in no more than 500 words how the objectives, design, planning and activities (completed by the date of submission of this application) of the project can directly positively affect the Roma children and youth (below 18 years) and/or young adults (18-30 years) in terms of inclusion, integration and/or empowerment, with expected long-term effects on their lives. If the beneficiaries of the project belong to various age groups, please explain and confirm that Roma children and youth and/or young adults are a majority of the beneficiaries.</i></p>	

*Our project “Roma Women to Work, Their Children to Kindergarden” is designed as a pilot project to bring an innovative and holistic approach to the problems of Roma. Before the designing of the project a survey is carried out in Roma neighborhoods in Mersin in cooperation with Assoc. Dr. Neriman Açıklan from Mersin University Sociology Department and their students. The results showed that 84.6% of the Roma men were working in marginalized sectors without social insurance. 45% of Roma families were having 3-5 children and 40% 1-2 children and 7.2% 5 or more. Besides that 65% of these marriages were underage. The 48.4% of Roma women interviewed stated that they were housewives and %50.9 of them stated that they were doing houses cleaning to earn money. Some of these women were, because of lack of opportunities, were taking their little children with them to house cleaning. Also the survey showed that most of the Roma kids were not*

*Results achieved of the project (Section 5, criterion 2 of the Contest Rules):*

*Please explain in no more than 500 words the results (achieved by the date of submission of this application): how the project was able to directly positively affect the Roma children and youth (below 18 years) and/or young adults (18-30 years) in terms of inclusion, integration and/or empowerment, with expected long-term effects on their lives. Explain how you have measured these results and how these findings have been or will be used to adjust the objectives, design, planning or activities of the project.*

*During our survey, we found out that the atomic family structure of the Roma was sound and observed that Roma men were under the heavy load of earning daily money. Most of the men's wives though were taking care of the little kids at home and keeping the house. Their children were devoid of pre-school education and were in the vicious cycle of Roma's common fate. So to enable the empowerment and integration of the Roma and to break the vicious cycle they are in, it was a good choice to work with these women, relieve them from their daily burden and provide them a job together with self improvement opportunities with providing their children pre-school education.*

*During the three rounds of trainings 120 women received both vocational trainings and trainings for self improvement. The first thing the women had experienced was that another kind of existence was possible and they were not trapped in their own problematic situations. They saw that different solutions could be brought to their own problems. They also felt the relief of contributing to their own family budget and were able to build a confidence in themselves about their skills. This situation directly changed the house environment positively. With the trainings they received on Roma identity and by preserving one of their traditional occupations they paid tribute to their ancestors and understood their role in preserving the Roma culture in the society they live in as being Roma women. This brought a total new feeling about their own identity and a new vision*

*and hope for their future.*

*While experiencing all these, the Roma kids received pre-school in the atelier area which let them to come together with their mothers in the same place, but in a different way. Most of the Roma kids are still devoid of pre-school education which is making their adoption to primary schools harder and finally with the effect of other factors creating their vicious cycle lead them to drop out. So to enable their integration from the very beginning, besides removing other factors, pre-school education prepared in accordance with their needs is a must. The teacher of the kindergarten was also a Roma teacher who was working with Roma children and who were trained to work with vulnerable groups. So in this kindergarten Roma children is treated with due care and attention and found a supporting environment which effected their future positively.*

*During this three round of training sessions, the dedication, willingness and understanding of the women are observed which finally lead to the selection of the women to be employed. Thirty of them are selected for being permanently employed in the atelier. At the moment the atelier is producing its own reed products and selling these products to market and also to exporters. The kids of these women are still enrolled in the kindergarten and receiving pre-school education. So a totally self sustaining and innovative system for the integration of Roma into society have been successfully structured. The lives of these families are also changed forever with a new awareness.*

Share of Roma staff carrying out (implementing) the project (Section 5, criterion 3 of the Contest Rules):

*Please describe, in no more than 300 words, how many people – paid or volunteer, full-time or part-time – are directly carrying out (implementing) the project. What is the share in % of Roma among these people?*

*Do not confuse the people who carry out (implement) the project and the people who benefit from the project! For example, teachers and social assistants carry out a project while children benefit from it. However, sometimes it may be difficult to distinguish: for example, unemployed people may receive training as beneficiaries of the project and at the same time they can be employed by the project or do volunteer work to carry out the project. Therefore, describe clearly the people who carry out (implement) the project.*

*During the implementation period of the project, 1 project coordinator and 1 project coordinator assistant, 1 kindergarten teacher, three vocational trainers worked paid and worked full time for the project. The paid staff was all Roma. During the implementation period the trainees received mentioned trainings related to self development and improvement. Women who are illiterate also received received literacy courses. They also received psychological support from a professional therapist. These people were volunteers of the project. These people were 6 people in total. So when we consider the paid staff 100% of it was Roma. When we consider all people assigned in the project, the total of Roma is 50%.*

Share of women and men (girls and boys) among beneficiaries of the project (Section 5, criterion 4 of the Contest Rules):

*Please state, in no more than 300 words, what the share of women and men (girls and boys) is among the beneficiaries of the project. If there are gender imbalances, please explain them and explain how these findings have been or will be used to adjust the objectives, design, planning or activities of the project. If the project is intended to benefit one gender only, please justify why that is appropriate to achieve the objectives of the project.*



*In terms of gender balance, our project's core idea was to strengthen Roma society via strengthening Roma women. So the gender balance was on women's side. As being a unique project, our project put all the weight on women and strengthening them. The first reason to choose Roma women as the target group was for bringing a new vision and approach to the solutions of Roma community. We believe that Roma women is a very serious transformative force for Roma community. Their potential is usually idle because of the surrounding environment and their role is most of the time confined to being a mother, a housewife or a house cleaner. To change the vicious cycle in which the Roma community is in, we believe that Roma women must change and be transformed into dynamic individuals. That's also because they raise the future generations. So we thought of creating a new model for strengthening Roma community and role model women to bring the needed transformation to society. Also we thought that we saw a gap to be benefited from and this was the contribution of the women to the development of Roma society.*

### 3. COOPERATING ENTITIES (fill out only if applicable – Section 3, point 4. of the Contest Rules)

<p>Describe in no more than 300 words the share of implementation of the project by the participant, i.e. without the cooperating entities. This share must be meaningful and substantial.</p>	<p><i>Roma Women to Work, Their Children to Kindergarten project is designed and implemented by Mediterranean Roma Association's Federation from its beginning to the end. From the detection of the problems to the conceptualizing phase and from designing of the project to the end of the implementation period, everything is carried out by the federation. Holding meetings with partners and associate entities are also held by the federation and their contribution is directly demanded.</i></p> <p><i>Besides these, the federation got into contact with a private company trading on reed products and made a deal with them. The federation signed a contract with this Germany based company and obtained a reed matting machine from the company against the purchase of matted reed products. The company also asked for the extension of the contract with the consent of both parties for the purchase of the reed products over the agreed prices.</i></p> <p><i>The federation's final contribution was calculated as one third of the total amount of the project.</i></p> <p><i>The coordinator of the project was also the federation. Only trainings related to self development is given by volunteer people and organizations.</i></p>
<p>List the cooperating entities. For each entity, provide its full official name, its legal form, its official address and its statutory and/or VAT registration number.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mersin Toroslar Municipality, Municipality Zeki Ayan Mah. Kuvvai Milliye Cad. No: 251 – P.Kodu 33220 Mersin –Türkiye VAT No: 8560045743</li> <li>• Mersin Public Education Center, Public Entity Şevket Sümer Mahallesi, 5922. Sok. No:1, Akdeniz/Mersin VAT No: 618 023 59 68</li> <li>• Provincial Directorate of National Education, Public</li> </ul>

## 4. SUPPORTING VISUAL MATERIAL

In compliance with the Contest Rules (Section 6), visual material supporting this application (e.g. photos, videos, brochures) is only accepted if it is openly available on the internet in electronic format (a website, YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook etc.). Provide links below and explain the material, in particular how it shows various aspects of the project. The supporting visual material itself may be in any language.

*Provide the link and a short (maximum 30 words) explanation for each item of visual material. Do not provide more than 10 items; any items beyond this limit will be disregarded during the evaluation.*

[https://www.facebook.com/akdenizromanlar/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=658360721011652](https://www.facebook.com/akdenizromanlar/photos/?tab=album&album_id=658360721011652)

*The link above contains the pictures of the project taken in various stages. These shots show the women in training and production and also the kids in the kindergarten.*

# We wish you good luck!