

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 Roma¹ 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

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>

¹ 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

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	Educational, cultural and humanitarian Foundation Tolerans Skopje
Official legal form of the participant. This legal form must be suitable for an NGO.	Foundation

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	TOLERANS Foundation, is an NGO located in Skopje that performs activities in education, culture and humanity. The foundation manages two youth hostels in Skopje, one for boys and another for girls, and provides the Macedonian youth with high-standard accommodation in a safe and caring environment. More than 150 students are accepted annually. The students come from different cultural backgrounds, big part Roma, from different corners of Macedonia. They are mainly non-residents of Skopje and in need to stay in the capital city Skopje for their university studies during their freshman year. The freshman year is the most delicate period during which a newly-arrived student has a very limited knowledge about his/her new environment (a new city, university, new people, and a new education system). Tolerans helps them ease into the transition. Tolerans Foundation took part in many seminars and workshops organized by local NGOs on the subject of marginalization of minorities and social inclusion of minorities. With this experience in their hands, and with available students coming from minority social groups, the project "A Summer School to Facilitate Academic Betterment and Social Inclusion of Roma Pupils" was born. In cooperation with a project writing company and a local secondary school, the project was written, executed and is still considered a success with all goals and aims filled. Sustainability is met with a new planned project of the same characteristics, only few details regarding admitting students criteria changed. Other activities include seminars, workshops, internal projects, sport activities, and many other activities. With these activities we intend to help young people develop physically and mentally, via socialization, working on common goals, cooperation with different social groups, physical activities that promote health
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	In this foundation there are 4 full-time employees, 3 part-time employees, and the number of volunteers varies depending of the scope of different projects. It can be any number between 2 and 20.

Full official address, notably street/post box, postal code, city, country	Ul. Prohor Pchinjski br. 20 Cair 1000, Skopje Macedonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of
E-mail address	tolerans.mk@gmail.com
Website	/
Statutory registration number, VAT registration number (whichever available)	Statutory reg. number: 6837859 VAT registration number: 4082012510366
CONTACT PERSON:	
Name (Ms, Mr)	Mr Yusuf Sahin
Telephone number	+389 78 312 926
E-mail address	yusufsahin05@gmail.com

2. THE PROJECT

Title of the project	A Summer School to Facilitate Academic Betterment and Social Inclusion of Roma Pupils
Period covered by the project (Section 4 point 3. of the Contest Rules)	From: 30.12.2014 To: 31.08.2016
Geographical location of the project (Section 4 point 2. of the Contest Rules)	<i>Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i>
Source of financing of the project	<i>Partly internal and partly external. External donors: Yahya Kemal College</i>
Objectives, design, planning and activities of the project (Section 4 point 1., Section 5, criterion 1 of the Contest Rules): <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>	

The EU initiative "Roma Decade" inspired us to do a project in the field of Roma issues. The objective of the project is to create and learn from education practices pertaining to integrated education cohesion amongst pupils from diverse ethnicities. The Roma ethnicity is the most vulnerable from all, regarding every aspect, and that led us to the final decision about the main subjects of our project.

The target group was students in their final or penultimate year of elementary school. According to the 2002 Census figures, the most students leaving education are from the Romany ethnic group. By showing them that the community is concerned with their educational status, we shall aid to motivate young Roma elementary school students not to leave school but ultimately finish secondary school and university, and become treasured part of our community.

After establishing contact with the only Roma Municipality in Europe, Shuto Orizari, we presented our project and agreed on cooperation. Posters advertising the project were hung in the only primary school in this municipality and the school staffs were in charge of registering interested students. 27 students met the criteria of minimum grade average 4.00 (out of 5.00) and took a LDT (Level Determination Test). That way actual knowledge of the students was measured and accordingly students were accepted. Criteria of acceptance, according to priority, were as follows: LDT Results, Grade Average, Ethnicity, and Gender. Ultimately 14 students were accepted (5 male and 9 female).

During the summer vacation period, for one month, every day the students came to school and were taught 3 school subjects, Mathematics, English, and Informatics. Mathematics is the essence of science, English is the language with the most active speaking population, and Informatics is the subject of the future and the modern era. The lessons were designed to begin with A0 level (Beginner) and to finish with B2 (Intermediate). The lessons were taught by professionals with long history in teaching and pedagogy. Mathematics was taught by an internationally awarded teacher. English was taught by a registered teacher from USA, who was in Macedonia for vacation and accepted to volunteer in this project. Informatics was taught by a renowned scholar and MD in the field.

One work day was consisted of 3 lessons in the 3 subjects, two short breaks and one long lunch break. Students also attended 9 seminars on the following subjects: The Importance of Education, The Importance of Social Cohesion, Human Rights and Equality of Humans, Peace and Harmonious Coexistence, Culture and Cultural IQ, Proper Use of Technology, Healthy Living and Stereotyping, Prejudice and Fixed-Mindedness. The seminars were designed to raise their awareness about the aforementioned subjects because they deeply concern them. Students had 8 excursions, 3 were held in Skopje and 5 outside of Skopje. This aided to their feeling of social cohesion and diversity in our community. Second phase was consisted of remedial classes in subjects that were proven difficult to the students. This phase started and ended with the respective academic year.

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.

Results can be categorized and elaborated according to the performed activities.

The main activity was carrying out the lessons. The implemented curriculum was adjusted to their school curriculum and started with lessons they had attended one year before, it carried on to lessons they just had and finished with lessons they were about to have in the following academic year. This way they were reminded of something they had studied some time ago, something they have just recently studied and were prepared for what was about to be studied in order to obtain wider grasp of the taught subjects. Since they were already introduced to the topics of the following academic year, increase in their average grades was expected and accomplished. This is realised by comparison of documents provided by the school containing grades of the students.

The increase of grades among the students was not only due to the lessons carried out during that one month. This project had a second phase where during the school year, during every Saturday, students were part of remedial classes in all school subjects. They reported issues with understanding subjects that they had at their current school, and accordingly remedial classes with teachers from Yahya Kemal College were organized.

Seminars in the aforementioned subjects were designed to raise their awareness about the community they live in and the prospects of their future if they pertained to pursue their academic success. One seminar was held by a Roma student that is attending a university. They all associated with the issues he had passed through to reach university. His perspective motivated them to look at him as an example they could all follow. Other seminars were held by trained orators that succeeded in grasping the essence of the subjects and deliver them in an accessible and understandable way. Questionnaires regarding seminar subjects were held where students were asked to give their opinion. Results showed that the essence of the discussed subjects were clear in their minds.

The excursions were the main carrier of the extra-curricular activities. Students socialized more, they visited places they previously were not able to, and met with Roma officials that were working on plans how to increase the number of Roma students signing up for university studies. These important visits to crucial and previously planned places proved to be big motivation boost to the students. This was documented by questionnaires that were filled by the students. Statistic from the questionnaires shows that 50% (7 students) chose seminars, 35.7% (5 students) chose excursions, and 14.3% (2 students) chose other events as parts of the project that had the most positive effects on them.

The end result of 20 months' work was the successful admittance of two students from this project to Yahya Kemal College on full scholarship. These two hand-picked students will prove one day that the Roma community has a big potential for leaders and successful students, and it will

motivate others in pursuing their academic dreams.

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.

Ms Gjulsefa Kurteshi, principal of the Elementary School Brakja Ramiz Hamid, was involved in this project part-time. Her involvement was consisted of taking note of students who enter the van that carries the students from the Brakja Ramiz Hamid school to Yahya Kemal College. Her data was collected and used in our statistic report. She also volunteered on two occasions to accompany us on two official visits. She introduced the project, on our behalf, to the Head of the Education Department that is concerned with Roma Students. On another occasion, she accompanied the Management team of this project to the visit to the Mayor of Shuto Orizari Municipality. Her cooperation and willingness to help was invaluable and highly appreciated. Because she was involved part-time, her efforts were rewarded accordingly.

Mr Samir Bajrami, student at the International University of Struga, was involved in this project as holder of the seminar "Human Rights and Equality of Humans". He gladly volunteered in this project as an example to the attending students as how Roma students are equal to other students and can equally accomplish anything they want in their lives. His involvement in future similar projects will be well appreciated and acknowledged.

The staff implementing this project is consisted of Project Manager Mr Omer Serdar Ozturk PhD, Project Manager Assistant Mr Muhamed Mujovikj, Financial Manager Mr Erkan Agush BD, Financial Manager Assistant Ms Senada Agush BD, Mathematics Teacher Ms Biljana Grozdanovska MD, English Language Teacher Ms Nesrin Jusuf BD, Informatics Teacher Mr Melih Gulcan MD and Assisting Personnel Ms Gjulsefa Kurteshi BD and Mr Samir Bajrami.

No Roma teachers responded to the ads published in local newspapers about vacant teachers positions. Because of that, non-Roma staff was hired for the three teacher positions.

From all involved personnel, 22.3% were Roma.

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.

Gender balance was one of the main pillars of the design of this project. Ideally, the participants were supposed to be equally represented. However, for the sake of involving more qualified students, accepting criteria were as follows, from more important to less important: : LDT Results, Grade Average, Ethnicity, and Gender. From 14 admitted students, 9 were female and 5 were male. When taking into consideration the list of applied students, there were 19 female and 8 male students who applied. However, LDT results and Grade Average were the crucial and deciding factor, and no gender discrimination appeared in any form, in any part of the implementation of the project.

However, gender balance was not intended for the beneficiaries only. Gender balance was pursued in forming the team that implemented the project as well. From all involved individuals, 5 were male and 4 were female. This way the principle of gender balance was always taken into consideration.

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

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.	Tolerans Foundation was the initiator of this project. The main idea of this project was presented to the project writing company Alfa and the Yahya Kemal College by Tolerans Foundation representatives. Representatives of Tolerans Foundation were present during the implementation of all the activities. They were in charge of resolving issues, if any, and giving directions to the management team. Prior to the start of the main activities meetings were held once a month between Tolerans Foundation, Alfa P.C.M and Yahya Kemal College representatives where all the details of the project were discussed. After the start of the main activities, representatives of all sides met weekly in order to discuss the ongoing activities and plan ahead the future activities. Even though the Management team of Alfa P.C.M had the responsibility to implement the activities, they were all supervised by Tolerans Foundation representatives.
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.	Alfa Project Consultancy and Management Project Writing and Management Company Ul. 11ti Oktomvri br.1A kat3, Plostad 1000, Skopje Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia VAT registration number: 4080014547850 Yahya Kemal College Skopje Private Elementary and High School Ul. Edvard Kardel br.22 1000, Skopje Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia VAT registration number: 4030997257040

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/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108156189303340/?type=3&theater>

Picture of the first parents' seminar titled "Importance of Education". The high attendance and good cooperation lasted with them throughout the whole duration of the project.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108156189303340/?type=3&theater>

Mr Samir Bajrami, Roma student of Internatioanl University of Struga, held an extensive and well elaborated seminar. He was and still is an example to other Roma stduents.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108138795971746/?type=3&theater>

As part of the project, each student was visited at their home. That way they felt closer to us and quickly were able to relax and focus on their studying.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108141019304857/?type=3&theater>

Mr Recep Ali Cupi is handing our certificate to a student that successfully finished the project. Mr Ali Cupi is responsible for Roma students in the whole country.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108146522637640/?type=3&theater>

Informatics class held by Mr Melih Gulcan. His enthusiasm and charisma make the lessons fun, thus the students focus better and learn more.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108150705970555/?type=3&theater>

Even though Mathematics can be difficult, having a skilful teacher makes it very easy to learn. Students are working on improving their grades, and more importantly, their knowledge!

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108150705970555/?type=3&theater>

[61058620679767/1108154652636827/?type=3&theater](https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/videos/1108154652636827/?type=3&theater)

Students at the ancient Ohrid amphitheatre. Learning is not about staying in a classroom, it is also about visiting ancient archeological sites and looking through the eyes of our ancestors!

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/videos/1108161675969458/>

The first excursion outside of Skopje. While we were admiring the lake and talking about the start of literacy at that very site, we gave everybody a warm welcome.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/videos/1108199025965723/>

All other excursions were educational and serious, however the Ohrid one proved to be the most effective. Students through fun learned a lot about the birthplace of Cyrillic alphabet.

<https://www.facebook.com/SummerSchoolRomaYKC/photos/a.1108139659304993.1073741830.761058620679767/1108204492631843/?type=3&theater>

Atice and Alma, the current students of Yahya Kemal College and winners of the full 4-year scholarship given by Yahya Kemal to the two best students of the Roma project.

We wish you good luck!

Tolerans Foundation was legally formed on 27.09.2012. Since then, 48 Roma students passed through the foundation over the years and they have left a significant mark.

Main activities coordinator, regarding Roma students, is Samir Bajrami.

Activities worth mentioning are as follows:

01.12.2012 – Chess competition, 4 Roma students took participation (total 12 participants)

07.02.2013 – Indoor futsal tournament, 7 Roma students took participation in 3 different teams

01.05.2013 – 03.05.2013 – Trip to Albania, out of 22 students 6 were Roma

15.05.2013 – Poetry reading competition, out of 20 participants 2 were Roma

01.06.2013 – University guidance seminar given to high school graduates by Gafur Bekiri (Roma student)

01.08.2013 – 15.08.2013 – Reading camp organized in Struga, out of 32 participants 7 were Roma

03.10.2013 – Orientation seminar given to University freshmen students by Kadri Abdiu (Roma student)

01.11.2013 – 11.12.2013 – Preparation classes for National Math Olympiad, 3 Roma students included

12.12.2013 – Participation certificates for 3 Roma students at the National Math Olympiad

11.01.2014 – 19.01.2014 – Extra lessons in Mathematics (Geometry) given to students by Muhammed Lako (Roma student)

08.02.2014 – 10.06.2014 – Every Sunday remedial lessons in various subjects given by the following Roma students: Samir Bajrami, Gafur Bekiri, Kadri Abdiu, Muhammed Lako, Sami Bajrami, Kafri Bajrami, Muhamed Fazliu, Mensur Cupi, Todor Skaloski, Niko Nestor, and other.

01.08.2014 – 11.09.2014 – Every Saturday Roma students and other Tolerans representatives met with representatives of Alfa P.C.M in order to design a project for Roma students studying in primary school

15.09.2014 – Cooperation agreement signed with Alfa P.C.M

16.09.2014 – 30.12.2014 – Tuning of details to the project between Roma students and Alfa P.C.M representatives

30.12.2014 - 31.08.2016 – Holding of the project "A Summer School to Facilitate Academic Betterment and Social Inclusion of Roma Pupils"

01.09.2016 – ongoing – guidance to the two students admitted to Yahya Kemal College on full scholarship, which was the product of the held project