



INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND
POLICY ANALYSES -
ROMALITICO

INTRODUCTION

This document is the first strategic plan of the Institute for Research and Analysis of Politics Romalitico concerning the period 2019 - 2022. The strategic plan defines the vision, mission, principles, values as well as the commitments that Romalitico advocates. In the past five years, Romalitico from the beginning a certain period have acted informally, and in 2016 started to act formally but through an unwritten strategy. At the beginning of 2018, Romalitico officially it's work transferred into a written strategy with defined strategic and program goals for the period 2019 - 2022.

Preparation of this document included all board structures as well as the staff management, but also in the finalization of this document through consultation process were included NGOs and representatives of institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia. The strategic plan for the next three years determines the strategic goals, measures and activities that will be undertaken in the future period in order to achieve the desired results, which refer to the correct and timely addressing of the challenges faced by the Roma community.

In order to fulfill this document, it is necessary to involve and cooperate with all active stakeholders in society, civic organizations, institutions, donors, international organizations, activists, etc. With their help we can have full implementation of this document and achieve a positive change in the life of the Roma community in the Republic of Macedonia. Implementing this document requires the involvement and collaboration with all stakeholders in society, NGOs, institutions, donors, international organizations, activists and others. With their help and contribution, we can have full implementation of this document and achieve positive change in the life of the Roma community in the North Macedonia.

WHO WE ARE

Romalitico as an informal group and academic medium was founded in March 2013 by Roma students at the Central European University in Budapest. After three years of informal acting in the course of 2016, Romalitico was officially registered as a non-governmental and non-profit "Institute for Research and Analysis of Policies - Romalitico" registered under the Law on Associations and Foundations in the Republic of North Macedonia. Romalitico acts in three programs, Politics, Economics and Law and focuses on evidence-based research, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

From the beginning, the Institute for Policy Research and Analysis it's been based on teamwork, cooperation and partnerships that it has built in the process of advocacy and consultancy with other social entities in the country and abroad. The Institute is dedicated to promoting a dynamically open society through analysis, research, consultancy and training for public policies targeting Roma in the Republic of North Macedonia and wider. The Institute aims to contribute complementarily to the development of political culture among the Roma community, including in public debates on current and future political and socio-economic processes.

Transparency and independence, including expertise and commitment to the Roma issue, are key values for the future of Romalitico. As a think tank organization, Romalitico is a critical voice in a society that has no political affiliation or association. Also, transparency inside and outside the organization represents the credibility and reputation Romalitico enjoys as a professional organization in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The Institute for Research and Policy Analysis - Romalitico contributes in a different way about social processes related to the interests of the Roma community. The Institute distinguishes itself from the activities of other organizations because it is the first Roma institute in the Republic of North Macedonia and beyond. Relevance and innovation are key values in leading this kind of organization, in which the methods employed by Romalitico include a large set of new tools and uses a approach of evidence based advocacy.

The Institute will continue to practice and nurture existing principles, values, attitudes and beliefs in order to continue the transparency and sustainability which in the past two years were the main feature of Romalitico and contributed to become a recognizable name in the public.

According to the above, Romalitico will represent and promote the following principles and values in the period 2019 - 2022:

- **Transparency and independence**

Romalitico is non-partisan and independent institute from all national and international institutions and donors that aims to offer political solutions without political affiliation. The Institute is committed to transparency in the management with the financial assets. Through its website and through other public media, it publishes all relevant information about its work.

- **Relevance and innovation**

Romalitico strives to provide the general public with new quick, quality, solutions and information regarding the Roma issue. It also aims to contribute through its analyses to new advocacy approaches.

- **Cross-sectoral and long-term solutions**

Romalitico aims to promote a new multidisciplinary way of strategic policy planning in the fields of law, economics and politics.

- **Inclusion and partnership**

Romalitico as an Institute promotes dialogue among all stakeholders who are involved in the processes in any way and aims to contribute to the improvement of the situation of Roma in the Republic of North Macedonia and beyond.

EMPLOYED PERSONNEL

Suad Skenderi is a graduate political scientist at FON University at the Department of Political Science, Diplomacy and Journalism. During the studies he was a volunteer in the Humanitarian and Charity Association of Roma "Mesecina" - Gostivar and coordinator of the youth network "Blue Sky" - Gostivar. In 2009 he was assistant to the sector of Human Rights and Ethnic Relations in "Mesecina" - Gostivar implementing projects related to inter-ethnic relations between Roma and other ethnic communities. Suad Skenderi is one of the pioneers in community organizing in the Republic of Northern Macedonia. Romano Avazi in 2012 was the first Roma civic movement aimed at the equal and equitable representation of Roma in the state and public administration. He successfully completed the "Roma Access Program" program (Political Science and International Relations) and continued his master's studies at the department of Political Science at the Central European University in Budapest. His specialization is the political representation of minorities, research and methodology.

Albert Memeti, graduated economics in 2012 at the Department of Financial Management at the Economic University in Skopje, Macedonia. During his studies he was an active member of the Roma NGO "Sonce", Tetovo, where he worked on various projects during 2006-2010. He also worked in ProCredit Bank, Skopje as Advisor for Information in 2009. In 2012, he successfully completed the preparatory course for the postgraduate studies "Roma Access Program" at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. He also completed his master's degree in the two-year program at the Department of Economic Policy in Global Markets at the same university. His future plans are to specialize in the field of Economics.

Elvis Shakjiri is one of the founders of the Institute for Research and Policy Analysis - Romalitico, and the manager of the Legal empowerment program. In 2010 he graduated from the Faculty of Law at the South East European University, and later continued his master studies in Budapest - Hungary Central European University Program Human Rights. After completing his master's studies, Shakjiri has been engaged with a working scholarship at the Political Capital Policy Institute in Budapest. During the engagement period, Shakjiri works in the area of electoral models and political campaigns. Prior to the founding of the Institute, Shakjiri worked in several non-governmental organizations, as a legal adviser and coordinator of several projects.

Deniz Selmani has graduated from the study program for Public Administration at the South East European University in Tetovo. He continues his education by enrolling his master studies at the same university in the study program for Diplomacy. In 2017, Selmani has been engaged as research fellow at the Center for Economic Analyzes - CEA where he developed a research on the concept of otherness and entrepreneurship. Also, Selmani, as a national expert of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, has conducted a comparative analysis of the implementation of the Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in Macedonia, as well as a draft methodology for identifying persons without documents. His research interests are political parties, electoral models, as well as monitoring the implementation of public policies aimed at inclusion of the Roma community.

Simona Simova is a graduate marketing manager at the European University - Skopje. She continues her education at the Institute of Economics Cyril and Methodius in the department of Financial Management. She acquired her first marketing experience as an intern in MPM and Idea Plus, where she mainly works on marketing research on the Macedonian market. In June 2016 she starts as an intern in Croatia Insurance for later to become a Coordinator for Payment. She continues her experience in the field of finance in the Institute for Research and Policy Analysis - Romalitico, where she currently holds the position of financial assistant.

Maria Sulejmanova is a graduate lawyer at the Faculty of Law - Justinian I in Skopje and holds a master degree in Human Rights from the Central European University - CEU in Budapest. She is also an alumni of the CEU and the RAP program in Budapest. During her undergraduate studies, Maria singled out volunteer experience in various institutions and NGOs, such as the Ministry of Justice, the Court of Appeal - Skopje, ELSA, Romaversitas and MOF. After completing her master studies, she was also an intern at the Roma Rights Center in Budapest. Maria has the position of a junior researcher at Romalitico and she believes this experience will increase her willingness to engage in future engagements as an advocate and lawyer in the field of human rights. This experience also provides unique knowledge about issues related to the Roma and generally with the overall policy analysis process. Therefore, she is strongly motivated to upgrade, work and develop in a creative and highly ambitious environment where the initial criterion and principle of work is critical thinking. Her interest is directed at the analysis of laws, constitutionality and collision between laws, research aimed at targeting competent institutions, as well as comparing public policies and laws in different countries.

CONTEXT

The political context in the Republic of North Macedonia is constantly dynamic in the last few years and requires continuous monitoring of the social flows that have an impact on the life of the Roma community. The main trend that can be noted is the efforts of the Government to resolve the name issue and join the EU and NATO. Also, as a trend that the government wants to impose through mainstream policies and political parties, the concept of one society for all, and therefore wants to end special policies for ethnic communities.

Moreover, the political power available to the Roma community in the Republic of Northern Macedonia is limited. However, there are certain processes on which the Roma community, using various tools and mechanisms, can influence the existing political processes of interest to the Roma community. Political parties, civil society organizations and coalitions, Roma intellectuals employed in public administration, institutions, media, research centers, councilors at local level are the main drivers of change in the given political context. All these drivers have their function and role in the setting up of the Roma community on the agenda of the Republic of North Macedonia. The function refers to how the state apparatus works, i.e. what is the function of a particular driver (contest of elections, proposing public policies, governance, etc.), while the role of the state apparatus is the social responsibility that has a certain driver. In the given political context, what is lacking in all of the above drivers in addition to the mutual coordination are the technical skills and human resources that they have.

Each context is based on 3 key factors, political space, political will and capacity. In the political space of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Roma community had the opportunity to participate and contribute to the development of the country since its independence. With the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) since 2001, political pluralism was gained, i.e. many ethnic political parties emerged between 2001 and 2005, including Roma parties. The current electoral model is an obstacle for greater political participation of the Roma community on national and local level. Additionally, the fulfillment of the principle of equitable and adequate representation of ethnic communities in the public administration envisaged by the OFA after 17 years has not yet been fulfilled. In other words, the political space itself does not mean much if it is not used in the direction of improving the situation of the Roma community.

Regarding the political will, it can be noted that it exists, but it is declarative, without taking serious and concrete steps towards improving the situation and fulfilling the promises of the election campaign. It is lacking mobilization of the Roma community through which the state and the politicians will be held accountable for the promises made before the elections. The country has institutional capacity, but it lacks human and financial capacity to implement policies for Roma, the county for Roma policies seeks to find external donors that will finance the policies and projects. This is also reflected in the data from several surveys stating that budget items provided for financing Roma policies are not fully utilized. The main reason for this practice is the lack of human capacity that will be fully committed to work and implement policies for Roma.

The civil sector is considered as a political player and depending on their criticality they are treated as friends or enemies of the Government. In a capture state, the two main aspects of the system are different - how the government structure is designed is not made according to the principle of good governance, public good or for the benefit of the people. It is designed to benefit a particular group, close to the government. CSOs do not have supporters in society because of two main reasons: courtesy and solidarity are not essential parts of society; civil society organizations have not paid much attention to establishing supporters for their work. As a result of lack of communication with supporters, people very little know about the work of civil society organizations. There is no trust in society from one to another, to public authorities and to political players. People still participate in activities, but as individuals, and not as part of the community and there is a tendency of individualization of collective actions.

MISSION AND VISION

The mission of Romalitico is to promote a dynamic open society through analyses, evidence-based research and advocacy for influencing public policies, the relationship of power and the allocation of resources for Roma in the Republic of North Macedonia and Europe.

The vision of Romalitico is to strive to challenge the status quo and improve the situation of Roma in Europe.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Program for Political Empowerment
Domain: Increasing political representation of Roma and ensuring good governance of elected officials
<i>Outcome: Educating the voters to make informed choices</i>
<i>Outcome: Accountability and accessibility of elected officials before and after the elections</i>
Domain: Channeling Roma's priorities into the national and EU agenda through targeted and mainstream public policies
<i>Outcome: Participation of Roma in the process of integration of the country into the EU</i>
<i>Outcome: Inclusion of the needs of Roma in the public policies in the Republic of North Macedonia</i>
Domain: Realization of the rights of the Roma community guaranteed by the Ohrid Framework Agreement
<i>Outcome: Promotion and realization of the use of the Roma language and symbols</i>
Domain: Sensitizing national and local institutions for Antigypsyism
<i>Outcome: Raising awareness at the institutional level of the Antigypsyism</i>

Program for Economic Development
Domain: Allocation of funds from the state budget for the priority needs of Roma
<i>Outcome: Utilizing the local budget of the municipalities for solving the local problems of the Roma community</i>
<i>Outcome: Inclusion of the priority needs of the Roma community in the state budget</i>
<i>Outcome: Financing the priorities of the Roma community</i>
<i>Outcome: Increasing the state budget for the integration of Roma</i>
<i>Outcome: Increased financial framework for supporting the Roma community</i>
Domain: Channeling the needs of Roma in the EU's financial framework
<i>Outcome: Involvement of Roma Youth in the Youth Guarantee Program</i>
<i>Outcome: Creating policies for formalizing and supporting the Roma business community</i>
<i>Outcome: Creating policies for balanced regional development and inclusion of Roma in existing Local Economic Development Strategies</i>
<i>Outcome: Increasing the scope of Roma as beneficiaries of existing employment measures</i>
<i>Outcome: Introducing new programs within the existing employment measures that reflect the needs of the Roma community</i>

Program for Legal Empowerment

Domain: Increasing political representation of Roma and ensuring good governance of elected officials

Outcome: One constituency without an optional threshold

Domain: Channeling Roma's priorities into the national and EU agenda through targeted and mainstream public policies

Outcome: Assessment of the impact of the regulation on the Roma community

Outcome: Preparation of recommendations and draft amendments

Domain: Realization of the rights of the Roma community guaranteed by the Ohrid Framework Agreement

Outcome: Equitable representation of Roma in the public and state administration

Domain: Sensitizing national and local institutions for Antigypsyism

Outcome: Reform of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination

Outcome: Legal protection against Discrimination