# Roma youth and education: The use of artistic practices to build bridges and promote integration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference number:</th>
<th>cso pr rom 126 2003</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field of support:</td>
<td>Roma Youth Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project duration:</td>
<td>8 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td>Ljiljana Garic</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:cso.garic@mn.yu">cso.garic@mn.yu</a></td>
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<td>Estimated budget:</td>
<td>38,362 €</td>
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## Development challenges addressed:
According to recent research completed for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper the Roma population present the most marginalized, discriminated and poorest group in Montenegrin society. This is also reflected in their exclusion from the education system: out of 20,470 Roma living in Montenegro, there are only 840 pupils in regular schools, 35 Roma pupils in High Schools and 6 students attending university. Seventy six percent of the Roma in Montenegro are illiterate.

The integration of Roma into the educational system has to be thoughtfully planned out, to ensure that it does not produce a counter-effect. Initial efforts must focus on educational areas, which present an integral part of the Roma tradition.

## Objectives, strategy and outcomes:
**Overall objective:** Increase commitment to education among Roma youth by building skills in artistic expression and music.

**Strategy:** Regional experience has shown that the most successful ways of integrating marginal groups in society is by building on existing interests and affinities of the given group. The provision of arts and music workshops for Roma youth in three different towns in Montenegro builds on skills respected in Roma communities and used in their daily lives, but at the same time respected and very much part of mainstream society. Therefore, the building of skills in music and arts present a ‘bridge’, which can ease and facilitate the integration process of this excluded community. This initial project represents a pilot project, which shall be carefully evaluated and hopefully replicated across the Republic.

**Outcomes:** Target groups of Roma youth from three different Montenegrin towns have built key skills in music and artistic expression. A critical evaluation of a pilot project, which can input into extending informal education provision for Roma. A changed attitude of Roma youth towards creative education practices. The dismantling of prejudice against the Roma in mainstream society.

## Summary of activities:
- Information gathering
- Conceptualization of music and visual arts informal education workshops
- Media campaign (TV clip, posters etc)
- Target group identification
- The employment of workshop coordinators for music and visual arts classes
- The holding of exhibitions and concerts across Montenegro

## Project to be implemented by:
The Centre for Vocational Education

## Implementation partners:
Roma NGOs