

Roma European Union JEKHIPE
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Strategy of the Roma European Union (REU) JEKHIPE

1. Introduction

The Roma European Union (REU) – JEKHIPE is an international non-governmental organization advocating for the enhancement of rights, integration, and the status of Roma across Europe. Established at the end of 2020 and officially registered in early 2021 as a non-profit organization based in Belgium, REU-JEKHIPE brings together Roma from Serbia, North Macedonia, Kosovo, and Montenegro, as well as Roma from Belgium, Germany, France, Sweden, Slovenia, Austria, and Italy. A significant portion of the membership, 33%, consists of Roma women, which gives the organization a strong gender focus and perspective. REU-JEKHIPE aims to improve the living conditions of Roma by representing their interests at the international level, promoting social inclusion, education, healthcare, employment, and fighting against discrimination. The organization advocates for the realization of Roma rights in accordance with international norms and laws, and its programs are aimed at specific activities that contribute to improving the social status of Roma in Europe.

2. Mission and Vision

The mission of REU-JEKHIPE is to empower Roma communities through education, legal support, and active participation in social processes, enabling Roma to become equal members of the society in which they live. The organization strives to create conditions where Roma have equal access to education, employment, healthcare services, and basic human rights.

The vision of REU-JEKHIPE is a Europe free from discrimination, where Roma are recognized and respected as full citizens. The organization aims to build a European society where Roma rights are fully protected and where the cultural diversity and richness of the Roma community are recognized as an inseparable part of European identity.

3. Strategic Objectives

REU-JEKHIPE defines the following key strategic objectives for the period 2024-2028:

1. Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction:

- Development of programs that assist Roma in accessing social services, housing, and social benefits.

- Connecting with national and local authorities to improve living conditions and reduce poverty among Roma.

2. Education and Empowerment of Youth:

- Promotion of inclusive education and combating segregation in schools.
- Scholarships and support for the education of Roma children and youth, as well as organizing training to enhance digital skills and employability.

3. Employment and Economic Empowerment:

- Development of vocational training and entrepreneurship programs among Roma.
- Cooperation with employers and institutions to create jobs and reduce unemployment in the Roma community.

4. Healthcare and Access to Health Services:

- Educating Roma about health, disease prevention, and the importance of accessing health services.
- Organizing campaigns for vaccination, health screenings, and pandemic prevention, with a special focus on vulnerable groups.

5. Legal Support and Human Rights Protection:

- Providing free legal aid to Roma facing discrimination and human rights violations.
- Advocating for Roma interests before European institutions and international organizations.

6. Fighting Discrimination and Promoting Equality:

- Campaigns to raise awareness about combating racism, hate speech, and violence against Roma.
- Advocating for Roma rights in the media and promoting a positive image of the Roma community.

7. Cultural Promotion and Identity Preservation:

- Organizing cultural events, festivals, and workshops that promote the rich cultural heritage of Roma.

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- Supporting artists and cultural activists from the Roma community.

8. Empowering and Forming Roma Organizations:

- REU-JEKHIPE aims to collaborate with existing Roma organizations, helping them strengthen their capacity and influence.
- Initiatives for forming new Roma organizations, especially in countries where Roma are underrepresented in the non-governmental sector.
- Training and mentoring for the leadership of Roma organizations, aiming to improve their activities, transparency, and sustainability.

4. Programs and Activities

REU-JEKHIPE will implement a range of programs and activities directly linked to the strategic objectives:

- **Educational Programs:** Workshops, seminars, and mentoring for young Roma aimed at improving their educational outcomes and preparing them for the job market.
- **Health Campaigns:** Projects to improve health literacy, including programs on reproductive health, HIV prevention, and support for mental health.
- **Environmental Initiatives:** Projects that promote sustainability in Roma communities through recycling, renewable energy sources, and education on environmental protection.
- **Support for Roma Entrepreneurship:** Initiatives for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises within the Roma community, focusing on training, mentoring, and financial support.
- **Formation and Strengthening of Roma Organizations:** Support in registration, management, and strategic planning for new and existing Roma organizations, aiming for them to become effective advocates for Roma rights at local and international levels.

5. Partnerships and Cooperation

REU-JEKHIPE develops strategic partnerships with governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and the academic community. A special focus is placed on collaboration with Roma organizations across Europe, as well as supporting the formation of new organizations to enhance the representation of Roma in all aspects of society.

The goal of partnerships is to create a support network that enables better funding,

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technical assistance, and access to resources, so that Roma organizations become stronger and more effective in advocating for their communities' rights.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Establishing a monitoring and evaluation system will be key to tracking the progress of the strategy. Through regular evaluations and data analyses, REU-JEKHIPE will ensure that programs achieve the desired results and will adjust strategies according to the needs of the Roma community.

Monitoring will cover all aspects of strategy implementation, including assessing the impact on Roma communities, engaging local and international partners, as well as analyzing the costs and benefits of each activity.

7. Financing

As a non-profit organization, REU-JEKHIPE will be funded through donations, European Union funds, grants from international organizations, and contributions from the private sector. Transparent financial management and accountability to donors are key principles of the organization's operations.

REU-JEKHIPE will actively work on diversifying funding sources, including developing sustainable models through social entrepreneurship and project financing, to ensure long-term stability and continuity of activities.

8. Conclusion

The strategy of REU-JEKHIPE represents an ambitious yet realistic plan for improving the status of Roma in Europe. Through coordinated actions, partnerships, and innovative approaches, REU-JEKHIPE will continue to work towards achieving its mission and vision, empowering Roma communities and creating a fairer and more inclusive world for all.

Through this strategy, REU-JEKHIPE aims not only to improve the current situation of Roma in Europe but also to strengthen the capacities of Roma organizations and form new ones, so that the voice of Roma is strongly represented at all levels of decision-making. This lays the foundation for the long-term improvement of the status of Roma through inclusion, education, and continuous fighting against discrimination.

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