

# E-Romnja (Association for the Promotion of Roma Women's Rights)

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Activity Report  
2017



# Who are we?

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**E-Romnja** (Association for the Promotion of Roma Women's Rights) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, founded in 2012 by a group of activists of both Roma and Romanian ethnicity. E-Romnja is a feminist organization that fights for the respect, dignity, and diversity of Roma women on both local and national levels.



# What do we do?

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Our approach is intersectional. From the beginning, E-Romnja has worked with grass roots methods in four Roma communities in the southern and northern part of the country. E-Romnja forms groups for local initiative activities, composed of Roma women, together with which they work to organize acts of mobilization, civic engagement, and cultural events. The aim of these acts is to increase access to social services, healthcare, information about reproductive rights, domestic violence, etc. We are in solidarity with different causes that combat any kind of discrimination.

# Organizational Chart E-Romnja

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- ❑ General assembly
- ❑ Board director
- ❑ President
- ❑ Departments
  - ❖ Roma women and engagement
  - ❖ Monitoring and Advocacy
  - ❖ Financial systems

# Funding

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- ❑ MamaCash Foundation
- ❑ Open Society Foundation Budapest
- ❑ Helsinki Deaconess Institute
- ❑ Donations and sponsoring from private sources (firms, individuals)
- ❑ In 2017 our revenues amounted to **528 403 lei.**



# Networks, coalitions, and groups of which E-Romnja partakes in

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1. The Coalition for Gender Equality
2. The Housing Block
3. The Network for the Prevention and the Fight against Violence in the Family
4. The Consultative Council of the National Agency for Roma
5. Roma Sounding Board of the World Bank
6. Breaking the Silence on Sexual Violence
7. Roma Forum
8. Romanian Woman Lobby

# Strategic domains of E- Romnja

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2017



**Advocacy and monitoring:** we fight to bring awareness of the problems Roma women face to the local, national, and international authorities and to put it on the public agenda. The image of the women should be accurately portrayed without using racial or gender stereotypes in local and mass media. The interests of this platform have been transposed to the authorities, focusing on violence against women, institutional discrimination, reproductive rights, combating early marriages, fighting against the abandonment of schooling, and migrant women's rights.





- Participation in local councils
- Petitions
- Marches







Since reproductive health and hygiene is a subject E-Romnja has identified as an issue and a necessity for Roma women, we tackle the problem in the communities we work with. On February 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 2017, the women of Valea Seaca participated in a workshop which focused primarily on this subject. At the end of the session, the women received hygiene packages and a calendar designated for family planning.

**VREAU EDUCAȚIE SEXUALĂ ÎN ȘCOLI. TU?**

**DĂ ACEST MESAJ MAI DEPARTE!**

Source: Coalition for Gender Equality



Movement through Europe for seasonal work/begging is a phenomenon that is apparent in the communities we work with. With the support of the Finnish Embassy in Bucharest, E-Romnja organized the debate “Economic Migration or Mobility?”, through which specific incidents were presented and discussions took place about the way in which Romanian authorities, as well as the destination European countries should put in place measures of protection, security, and support.







*Photo Source: Wikipedia*

E-Romnja participated at the 67<sup>th</sup> CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) session in Geneva in July 2017, where they presented an alternative report organized by NGO's fighting for women's rights.

For this purpose, a Shadow Report was organized, drafted by the following NGO's: The Coalition for Equality and Gender, E-Romnja, The Network for the Prevention and Fight Against Violence against Women.

On July 24<sup>th</sup> 2017, CEDAW published conclusions upon Romania's evaluation, which contains important recommendations for women's rights in the sphere of violence, multiple discrimination, access to healthcare, and fighting forced marriage.



## October 14th – The March against Violence against Women





## The March to Commemorate the Holocaust







## BUCHAREST



## MIZIL



## VALEA SEACĂ

On International Romani Day, we organized the «8 Aprilie Revendicativ» protests. Roma and non-Roma women, children, and men shouted for solidarity, respect, justice, equal rights, etc. Women of the initiative groups from Valea Seacă, Mizil, and Giurgiu joined the marches for housing which took place in Bucharest, Cluj, and Timisoara.



**Grassroots work:** by supporting and expanding the six initiative groups from four counties in Romania: București, Bacău, Giurgiu, and Prahova, we wish to get active Roma and non-Roma women to get involved with issues like reproductive health, domestic and sexual violence, gender equality, early marriages, abandonment of schooling, housing, and civic and political engagement. Most of the issues that are approached through grass roots methods are identified by women in the respective communities



In 2017 we continued to organize assemblies on a local level with the initiative groups from the four counties, in which we proposed to introduce new topics of discussion such as: sexual violence, children abandoning schooling, early marriages, and reproductive health. We organized exchanges between groups of women to identify solutions for problems in common. Also, in July we organized an exchange with a group of Roma women from Slovakia, who were active in their communities on different subjects, including political engagement, domestic violence, and education.





We organized meetings with the initiative groups, where we planned debates and discussions with the authorities. The women brought awareness to the authorities of the different problems they face: infrastructure, institutional discrimination, access to education, and educational segregation.





**Intersectionality** – The concept of intersectionality became a part of our work, as we realize that we as Roma women do not have an all-defining single identity, but are in fact a cumulation of identities which determines different experiences. We believe that the problems of Roma women can be related to in any field affecting women's lives, from infrastructure, forced evacuations, ID documents, as well as violence, sexual harassment, and reproductive rights.



# Solidarity/Sorority

The organization of a cooking activity with the aim to consolidate relationships between women of the groups and to develop the feeling of solidarity between them





## Exchanges of Experience

Along with the concepts of intersectionality, we also adapt our work in regards to the differences between the women in the communities we work with, which is why we have created spaces in which the groups can and meet and discuss the different problems which they face and their own individual experiences.





**The organization of a community activity to create solidarity among women on various issues**





# Financed and Implemented Projects 2017



**Phenja: Violence does not have a color** – The project „Phenja-Violența nu are culoare” was a pilot project financed by the Open Society Institute in Budapest, implemented in 2014. Currently, our initiative is taking place in partnership with the Filia Center and the Policy Center for Roma and Minorities in the Giurgiu, Ferentari, and Valea Seacă communities. The activities of the project follow an integrated approach, put in practice based on the local context of each community, and using similar instruments, such as: developing/organizational activities, local campaigns to combat violence against women, trainings with the authorities, and theater forums.





**Ketanipen** – The empowerment and participation of Roma girls and women, financed by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute during the term April 2017 – March 2018. The project takes place in the Valea Seacă and Mizil communities and is an integrated model of action which offers services for community organization, so that Roma women and girls can have access to services without being discriminated upon, but also so that they can learn to exercise their rights.





**Mamacash** – The project proposed to approach the Roma communities' problems in Mizil and Sector 3 of Bucharest, and the support of these causes through integrated approach. Our aim was to increase the engagement of Roma women at the community level, through grass roots work, which allows women to have a better future.





**ID Documents-** Since 2016, E-Romnja has lead a campaign for facilitation of the process of drafting of identity documents and to support for people who do not hold identity documents, with the support of the Helsinki Deaconess Institute. Up until January 2018, we identified and furthered the process for over one hundred records in multiple counties of the country, in order to obtain late birth certificates for adults and children, as well as ID cards. For this action to benefit more people without identity documentation, we have made agreements to collaborate with town halls, and have held a series of meetings with representatives of both local and national authorities.





# Initiatives of E-Romnja

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2017



Consultation meeting initiated by E-Romnja in which activist colleagues and friends from different feminist NGO's in Romania participated, NGO's that work in the sphere of promoting gender equality, as well as the members of the initiative groups E-Romnja works with. The central topics of discussion were feminist leadership in communities, violence against Roma and non-Roma women, intersectionality and intersectional feminism, reproductive health and rights, and early marriages. The aim of this meeting was to trace and settle a Roma feminist movement's agenda.





Intersectional 8th of March– Event that took place during two days, comprised of a series of workshops on issues related to intersectional feminism. From a feminist perspective, we discussed with the local initiative groups we work with, about how Roma women get involved on a local level for the revendication of their rights, for social justice, and for the fight against racism.

**7 MARTIE 2017**

**SPAȚIUL PUBLIC EUROPEAN** (STR. VASILE LASCĂR NR. 31)

❖ **ORA 10.00**

**FEMINISM, INTERSECȚIONALITATE ȘI SOLIDARITATE**

ECHIPA E-ROMNJA: CARMEN GHEORGHE ANCA NICA, GEORGIANA LINCAN, STEFANIA VINTILĂ, DOINA VARGA, ROXANA IONIȚĂ



❖ **ORA 11.30**

**VOCILE FEMEILOR ROME PENTRU JUSTITIE SOCIALĂ, LUPȚĂ ANTIRASISTĂ ȘI DREPTURILE FEMEILOR**  
GRUPURILE DE FEMEI DIN MIZIL/GIURGIU/ SPANȚOV  
CARMEN GHEORGHE, E-ROMNJA



**ACTIVISM PENTRU POLITICI SOCIALE DE LOCUIRE**  
NICOLETA VIȘAN, ACTIVISTĂ ROMĂ DIN GRUPUL VULTURILOR  
FRONTUL COMUN PENTRU DREPTUL LA LOCUIRE

❖ **ORA 14.00**

**ABORDĂRI INTEGRATE PENTRU FEMEILE ROME ȘI ROMILE DIN COMUNITĂȚI MARGINALIZATE DE TIP GHETOU URBAN**

CLUBUL MAMELOR DIN FERENTARI  
RALUCA NEGULESCU – DIRECTOARE POLICY CENTER FOR ROMA AND MINORITIES

**MEDIUL URBAN ȘI LOCUIREA GENIZATĂ**  
CARMEN RADU, COALIȚIA PENTRU EGALITATE DE GEN

❖ **ORA 16.00**

**VIOLENȚA NU ARE CULOARE: STEREOTIPURI ASUPRA FENOMENULUI**  
ANCA NICA, ASOCIAȚIA E-ROMNJA

**CONSIMȚĂMÂNT, VIOLENȚĂ SEXUALĂ ȘI HĂRTUIRE ÎN ROMÂNIA**

SIMONA CHIRCIU – DOCTORANDĂ ȘI ACTIVISTĂ  
HOLLABACK ROMÂNIA

**PROTECȚIA VICTIMELOR VIOLENȚEI DOMESTICE**  
MIHAELA MANGU – PREȘEDINTĂ ANAIS



7 - 8 Martie Intersecțional





## Visit to Casa Experimentelor (The House of Experiments) with the children of the “Mica Indie” community in Bucharest





In June 2017 E-Romnja participated at the ONG Fest, at which they organized different activities, such as: workshops about gender roles and power roles in the community, the promotion of the Romani language, and last, but not least, a flashmob with the groups of young people of the Giurgiu, Valea Seacă, Mizil and Bucharest communities.





Abandonment of schooling among Roma youth is a worrying aspect when talking about education and the chance for achieving their goals in life. In 2017, E-Romnja continued the partnership formed in 2016 with the local authorities of Giurgiu, through actions addressed towards the communities, as well as the groups of young people.





In December 2017, the E-Romnja team, together with a delegation formed of representatives of the local authorities of the city of Bacău and the village of Valea Seacă, in Bacău county, organized a work visit to Helsinki, Finland to hold a discussion with the representatives of the administration and local NGO's. The goal of this meeting was to discuss the mobility of people who migrate regularly to and from Finland, the phenomenon of begging, the type of necessary support for people who travel in this city, and the problems they face.





The “Ghetuța” campaign, initiated by E-Romnja along with the youth group of Valea Seacă which had as a goal the raising of donations in order to guarantee shoes for the children and youth from vulnerable families in the community. Thanks to a sponsor who wished to remain anonymous, we managed to acquire 115 pairs of winter shoes.



Cu ajutorul vostru am reușit să încălțăm 115 copii.

Mulumim că sunteți alături de noi în acest proces de egalitate socială!



înainte







Throughout 2017, E-Romnja has helped organize three groups of young Roma and non-Roma in the communities of Valea Seacă, Mizil and Giurgiu. These groups developed as a result of needing human resources on a local level, formed from a feminist perspective. Throughout the year, the youth organized different activities on a local level, motivated by finding a solution for problems such as: discrimination in schools, segregation, violence in schools, early marriages, the right to free choice, and gender roles.





**The Anti-Violence Group: group of young people that focuses on actions to combat violence in schools in Giurgiu**





**Assertion in the Village - group of young people from Valea Seacă, Bacău county who communicate about their experiences living in the village**





## Initiative Group of Roma Youth from Mizil, Prahova county, that tackles institutional discrimination







## E-ROMNJA THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF ROMA WOMEN'S RIGHTS

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