

# BUILDING A NATIONAL ROMA PLATFORM

*News 3/2017*

## What's going on in the project Building a National Roma Platform

Dear reader,

This is an information package summing up the topical matters in the project Building a National Roma Platform. In this newsletter our project events are described from two perspectives:

- Ville Keränen from the training company Monkey Business describes his involvement as facilitator and host in the regional events organised in spring 2017.
- Jenni Kettunen and Ramona Grönstrand recount their experiences as participants and organisers of the regional event in Kajaani.

This is the last newsletter of the project. All the project newsletters and other materials are available on our website at [www.romani.fi/sanoista-tekoihin](http://www.romani.fi/sanoista-tekoihin).

---

## Shared understanding and new insights – and good vibes!

I had the honour to be part of the team planning and facilitating the regional events of the project Building a National Roma Platform during the winter and spring of 2017. A successful and inspiring conversational meeting held at the European Commission in autumn 2016 gave the Finnish team courage to test a similar method back home.

### Building a National Roma Platform: from Policy to Practice

“Building a Roma Platform: from Policy to Practice” is a project financed by the European Union. The aim of the project is to promote and monitor how well the National Policy on Roma (ROMPO) is known at local and regional levels, to create local and regional networks between Romani people, authorities and other stakeholders for the implementation of ROMPO, and to disseminate information of good practices for local and regional implementation. The project is carried out together with regional Advisory Boards on Romani Affairs.

In autumn 2016, I held a brief demonstration of conversational methods for the main team and the regional actors of the project Building a National Roma Platform. We continued the work in January 2017 when we planned the framework for the consultation events in spring 2017 using conversational methods. In the end we chose the World Café method which relies on well-crafted questions discussed in small groups.

We worked on each event even further during online meetings with the relevant people. In these meetings we formulated questions for the World Café and discussed lessons learned from previous events.

The consultation events of the project Building a National Roma Platform were held in Helsinki, Kuopio and Kajaani. Here are a few insights into why we were successful and why the World Café method works.

# BUILDING A NATIONAL ROMA PLATFORM

*News 3/2017*

## Why did we succeed?

- Each event attracted a fair number of people from different kinds of backgrounds who are interested in or involved with the affairs of Roma. They wanted to join in on the discussions.
- We wrote a good invitation and distributed it widely. The organisers sent personalised invitations. It is important to make it clear in the invitation why and for whom the event is organised. Sometimes it is advisable to have one main question which serves as the basis for the other questions discussed during the day.
- The theme chosen for the events was an issue that matters to people.
- We had well-crafted questions.
- We had competent facilitators, and sufficiently time for discussions and for sharing collective discoveries.
- Before each event we took a closer look at the previous event to make the next one even better.
- The facilities we chose fostered collaborative dialogue. We chose to use meeting rooms with flat floors and plenty of room so that we could arrange the tables and chairs for small groups so that the space looked like an actual café.
- Communications during the events: We wrote and draw our messages on flipcharts instead of using PowerPoint presentations to make the events more relaxed and welcoming.
- With sufficiently casual welcoming addresses, warm-up questions and presentations we created a space where people could relax and trust each other and discuss freely in small groups.
- We captured the harvest in illustrative and impressive ways that reflected both the discussions and people's feelings.



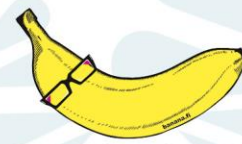
## Why does the World Café method work?

- Method gives everyone equal opportunities to join the discussion. All participants are equal.
- Several small groups of people discussing the same topics means that more people can participate at the same time: more ideas and questions will arise compared to a discussion held in an auditorium, for example.
- People also get acquainted. Mixing groups up between rounds of conversation means there are more meetings between people.
- The World Café is a good mix of conversation and listening. First there is a brief introduction to the topic and method, and then the small groups can start discussing. Between rounds of conversation each group shares their key ideas with everyone.

" In the World Café, girls in secondary school can converse easily with development directors of listed companies, as happened in Kajaani."

- Well-crafted pertinent questions empower and spark energy, enthusiasm and more questions. Since the conversations are based on the participants' own experiences, they facilitate mutual understanding and learning.

Text and picture: Ville Keränen, Monkey Business



# BUILDING A NATIONAL ROMA PLATFORM

*News 3/2017*

## Looking ahead with a can-do spirit

We were part of the team planning the consultation event in Kajaani. We felt positive and successful especially because the invitation was widely circulated among the target audience and attracted a lot of active people with an open approach to the event to discuss issues concerning the Roma and the targets of the National Policy on Roma and their implementation in Kajaani. We were happy to notice that the local Roma were extremely well represented, and people came to the event with an active can-do spirit.

The methods introduced by the people from Monkey Business were efficient and inspiring. From start to finish there was a true feeling of getting things done. In the planning stage we were free to express our own ideas and local perspectives, and we got just the right amount of support and guidance to organise the event. We have a lot of useful material in store from the spring. For example, we still have the round-up from the Kajaani event, and we have already used it on many occasions, for example when planning projects.

All in all, we remember best the feeling of mutual understanding and the joy of working together!

Text and picture: Jenni Kettunen and Ramona Grönstrand, Local Roma Action group (Kajaani)



## The project will end - the work in Roma integration continues!

The project Building a National Roma Platform will be concluded at the end of August. All the project materials will be available on the project's website at <https://romani.fi/sanoista-tekoihin> even after August. All materials are freely available, and you are welcome to use and share them.

Our warmest thanks to all those who contributed to the project!

Sarita, Henna, Taina and Leea

### Contact details

Henna Huttu, Ministerial adviser  
[henna.huttu\(a\)stm.fi](mailto:henna.huttu(a)stm.fi)  
 Ask me about: Building Roma platform -project, National Policy on Roma (ROMPO), drafting of a new Policy on Roma and National Advisory Board on Roma Affairs

Leea Rautanen-Muhli, Project coordinator  
[leea.rautanen-muhli\(a\)stm.fi](mailto:leea.rautanen-muhli(a)stm.fi)  
 Ask me about: Building Roma platform -project, website ([romani.fi/sanoista-tekoihin](https://romani.fi/sanoista-tekoihin)) and events of the project

Sarita Friman-Korpela, Consulting officer  
[sarita.friman-korpela\(a\)stm.fi](mailto:sarita.friman-korpela(a)stm.fi)  
 Ask me about: Building Roma platform -project and Roma policy in the EU

Taina Mutanen, Departmental Secretary  
[taina.mutanen\(a\)stm.fi](mailto:taina.mutanen(a)stm.fi) / [ronk\(a\)stm.fi](mailto:ronk(a)stm.fi)  
 Ask me about: National Advisory Board on Roma Affairs, travel and finance management