

Law Enforcement Initiative for Roma and Disadvantaged Youth

Objectives

The ICDT has had its active share in launching a new initiative that aims at promoting the participation of young Roma and disadvantaged people in law enforcement mechanisms. Our aim is to activate young Roma people in the fields of peer support, self-knowledge, prevention, law enforcement, and sports. The expected results of the program are on the one hand to exert an efficient prevention and community-building effect on the youth, and on the other, to send an emphatic message to mainstream society, refuting negative stereotypes about Gypsies. The objective is to remove young people from their potentially unfavorable environment, to convey a system of values, and to show them that there is a way out. It is important that they should consider policing as a career.

Background

Young people with different cultural backgrounds need to be integrated into the files of law enforcement organs. The Hungarian police have been trying for years to help Roma youth to have access to police work. In order to make this happen, in 2010, agreements were signed with sixty-two Roma secondary school students as part of tenders. Another four Roma youths studying in higher education can become police officers as a result of their agreements with the police. It is highly important that there should be members in the police force who know and understand the cultural traditions of Roma communities.

Project

To achieve the goals of the project, local forums are organized in parts of Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County where the Roma form considerable part of the population: Jánkmajtis, Tiszabecs, Botpalád, Méhtelek, and Rozsály. Beyond organizing sessions for the people, information packages are also distributed. The local authorities are also regularly informed about the project. The expected result of the project is that the Roma population and the possibly participating authorities be aware of what a future big-time project consists of.

The program is being carried out in close collaboration with the Public Association for European Roma Law Enforcement (Európai Roma Rendvédelmi Bajtársi Közhasznú Egyesület, ERRBKE) and is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of The Netherlands. During the initial program, workshops and explanative sessions will be held for Roma people so that they be aware of the efforts that are made in the matter.