TEAM IS STRONGER THAN THE INDIVIDUAL

Interview:
Vesna Šijački

Successful Roma:
Zoran Mulić
INTRODUCTION

The end of the year is time to see what we have and have not done. There are promises that we gave to ourselves and the others. Usually we promise to be better in the upcoming year. Sometimes we are dissatisfied with the results we have achieved. If we look more closely into the year behind us some things will come up: some smiles that we provoked, tears we wiped and worries that we chased away. It is our greatest success and everything else should be left behind us. In the following year we wish to increase the number of provoked smiles and the tears and worries to become a memory. We wish to become better as we have promised. The success is guaranteed.

Editorial staff
The Roma Inclusion Office was founded by the decision of the Government of AP Vojvodina on May 24, 2006 with a goal to contribute to a better position of the Roma in the areas of education, housing, employment, health and human rights. The Office is governed by the Managing Director, the Board of Directors and the Supervisory Board appointed by the Government of AP Vojvodina. The Executive Council appointed Dusko Jovanovic, graduated engineer of agriculture for the Managing Director. The funds for the Office are provided by the Government of AP Vojvodina. During the first five years, the Office has implemented many activities, alone or in cooperation with the Council for Roma integration in AP Vojvodina, the Provincial Secretariat, local communities and non-government organizations. The most significant activities are those focusing on education, housing and employment.

The Provincial Secretariat for labour, employment and gender equality headed by Miroslav Vasin recognized the need to found an Office. „Unless Roma issues are not strongly supported and coordinated from one spot, the effects of everything we do will get lost. Today I think there is no dilemma about whether the Office has justified its purpose. The results so far have been accomplished by virtue of the office, while the rest of us were its followers”, explains Mr Vasin.

The budget for the Roma Inclusion Office for 2011 was 23000000 RSD. The budget plan and activity plan of the Office for 2011 matched. The coordinators are a link between users and the office and their work enables users to receive help provided by the Office. The funds were also planned for financial support to pupils and students. The support is one-time assistance for financially endangered pupils and students and is focused on supplying them with textbooks, school stationary, food costs and their placements in boarding schools and campuses as well as providing scholarships for preschool teachers in the Roma language at a College for Preschool Teachers „Mihailo Pavlov” in Vršac. The funds have been used to support the inclusion processes in local governments as well as employment of the Roma in public institutions. Subsidies for self-employment were given to 10 new companies. The budget was also focused on holding seminars for coordinators for Roma issues so that they could specialize and exchange knowledge as well as seminars for editorial staff of the periodical “The Roma Decade in AP Vojvodina”. The funds were provided for preparation and publishing of the periodical which is a good source of information for people in Vojvodina and other areas about the Office’s activities. It is very useful for other people who also work on processes of the Roma inclusion.

Ružica Nikolić

THE ROMA INCLUSION OFFICE IN 2011

Office staff

Working with the client
Sometimes we wonder if it is better just to take things in life and not return anything or should we follow a saying of our Nobel Prize winner: „Life gives back to us only what we have given to others“. Is it really true that man only gets as much he gives to the others? - we are about to discover from a young Roma girl Jelica Jovanov.

In a small village near Bačka Palanka lives a four member family of Jelica Jovanov. Her father has been a disability pensioner since 1986. Her mother is a housewife who sometimes does some seasonal work. Her elder sister finished high school but due to difficult financial situation their parents had no opportunity to provide her with further education. She is today a respectable wife and a mother of two. Like other teenagers who eagerly wait for a summer holiday Jelica also shared their joy but considering the condition of her family, she was forced to work with her mother in the fields during hot summer days when she was a schoolgirl and a student. Her parents sacrificed their lives for her and her sister to provide education and decent living.

„There were moments when they had to borrow money to buy a monthly ticket for public transport or books” explains Jelica. She finished high school “20. oktobar” in Bačka Palanka in Octobar 2001 - general knowledge department. But Jelica’s education had to wait for another two years because of lack of funds. It was a very difficult period for her because she had a great wish to study. Two more years passed after finishing high school and life showed its other side. With the help of Petar Nikolić and the Roma Inclusion Office Duško Jovanović helped her to find a temporary job as a trainee in the Secretariat. After passing the State Exam Jelica started working in Provincial Secretary’s Office. This has been a permanent job.

„The Office has helped me a lot during my studies. They also provided me with the scholarship. I would have never made it without the help of Mr Duško Jovanović”, Jelica says.

By recommendation of the Office, Jelica is going to enrol Master Studies in the Faculty of Management which enables free studies for 5 students of Roma nationality.

„Enrolling Master Studies means a lot to me as I wish to expand my knowledge and be successful. With my success I will demonstrate what is possible when people work on themselves. The Roma are as intelligent as other people and that is a fact. But due to prejudice it takes time to prove that and that is
what we, the young, have to do. We got the chance,” Jelica says.

While studying Jelica had great support of her family. Difficult moments in life and great consessions are left behind her and now the time has come for the effort and support of her family to be awarded and appreciated. Her knowledge is her fortune and she is the pride of her family and of the Roma Inclusion Office, which believed in her.

Ružica Nikolić

Ružica Nikolić

THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE ROMA

The high number of unemployed yet able to work Roma people is one of the main reasons for their poor social and economic status. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that of the high-priority segments of the Roma Decade exactly this—their employment. The Roma Inclusion Office in the AP Vojvodina Government has, so far, realized numerous programs and projects that regard the employment of the Roma in order to improve the existing state.

In the Local Hospital “Dr. Milorad Mika Pavlović” in Indija, Danijela Jovanović was employed on the position of a dental nurse. The Roma Inclusion Office financed three monthly salaries in the gross amount and after that, the hospital took the responsibility of financing it. One month after she was employed, the Hospital made the decision that all dental services would be free of charge for the Roma, including the local hospitals in Ruma and Beška where Danijela worked so as to encourage as many Roma people as possible to maintain their oral hygiene. The decision proved to be successful since the number of patients of Roma nationality was increased three times compared to the situation prior to the decision. Danijela Jovanović emphasizes that she benefited a lot from this employment; first of all in the material sense but also in the fact that her education was not futile. The position of a dental nurse is a clear message for the society that there is place for the Roma in the institutions.

Upon the initiative of the Roma Inclusion Office, a twenty-one-year-old girl, Ružica Miler was employed. On 19 July of the current year, Ms Miler signed a one-year contract with the Special Hospital for Psychiatric Diseases in Kovič. According to this contract, the Roma Inclusion Office paid the expenses of her salary for the first three months after which the hospital took the responsibility. The Hospital Director, dr Željko Rodić, a specialist in psychiatry, welcomed the invitation from Duško Jovanović to cooperate with the Roma Inclusion Office and in this way he demonstrated his willingness to get involved in the progress of Roma population. Both sides take great pride in this cooperation and Ms Miler’s wish to stay in her birth place came true.

The Office provided the existence of the first Roma library in Europe and financed the job position of a librarian for the whole 12 months of the year 2011. The library is situated near Novi Sad, in the Roma settlement Šangaj, and it represents the youngest branch of the City Library of Novi Sad. The librarian, Dragana Dimitrov, has achieved great success and she turned the library into an informal education center whose success is well-known. Upon the initiative of the Office, her job position is systemized and it will be financed from the city budget from next year on.

Inclusion of the Roma in the local administration is of immense importance for the Office, thus it pays special attention to employment of the coordinator for the Roma matters.

The Municipality of Bač and
The Roma Decade in AP Vojvodina

the Office reached the agreement on financing a coordinator for the Roma matters where the Office financed the salary in the first half of the year and the Municipality did so for the remaining half.

“For me, it is very important that the Office succeeded in getting the local administration involved in the processes of resolution of the problems that Roma people face in the Municipality of Ba in the way that they agreed to take the responsibility of financing the job position of the Roma coordinator.”, as the coordinator, Dragan Jovanović said.

The Roma Inclusion Office has signed a contract with the European Commission on realization of a two-year project “Improvement of Employment in AP Vojvodina”.

The Roma Inclusion Office has the obligation to work on the improvement of employment of the Roma in the territory of AP Vojvodina in 20 municipalities through the following three activities:

1. Establishment of 20 companies and provision of at least 30 subventions worth 200,000 dinars per subvention.

2. Job training for at least 150 people upon which they will be given certificates that they can enclose when applying at the National Employment Agency.

3. Employment of the Roma in well-known companies.

This competition is open for people of Roma nationality who are registered in the National Employment Agency, who attended training sessions organized by the Roma Inclusion Office. The training sessions were held for the purpose of education in creating business plans, for the sake of economic feasibility of all ideas for the company’s benefit and to give the candidates a crystal clear picture of the functioning of their future company. Prior to opening the competition for provision of subventions, the Office organized tribunes in all 20 municipalities that are included by the project and found a great interest of the people. They were interested in both the subventions and the job training.

50 people with 50 ideas regarding establishment of companies applied for the subventions competition. There are 155 people interested in the job training, all of whom have chosen particular jobs that are stated in the project documentation. In the first year of the project, 10 companies have been set up, and 15 subventions have been provided. The plan for the next year is to set up 10 more companies and to provide at least 15 more subventions. In March 2012, it is expected that 150 people from 20 municipalities will start job training and get jobs.

Ružica Nikolić
In the Government of Vojvodina contracts on self-employment of the Roma through the realization of the project “Improvement of Employment of the Roma in the AP Vojvodina” were signed. The contracts were signed between Duško Jovanović, the Director of the Roma Inclusion Office and 10 newly opened companies, whereas the “start-up” packages were delivered to the contract signers by dr Bojan Pajtić, the President of the Government of AP Vojvodina. The ceremony was attended by the Province Secretary for Work, Employment and Genders Equality, Miroslav Vasin. The priority of the Government of Vojvodina is to resolve all the problems that have existed for decades and centuries in Roma community, at the same time. These are the problems of employment, health-related problems as well as the problems of accommodation and utilities. So far, the Government has succeed in opening about fifty companies that are owned by and employ the Roma, and together with the European Union, 10 more companies will be opened and 16 more subventions will be given so as to provide the members of Roma community with an opportunity to provide themselves material means of existence. Apart from the material support, the support is also given in the sense of computer equipment, accounting and marketing services – this is, in all that is necessary for one company to start operating. Roma community is in a vicious circle in which people cannot obtain education because they do not have an opportunity to work and do not have the means to finance this education; therefore the province Government encourages education and employment parallel, as the president of the AP Vojvodina, Bojan Pajtić, pointed out. The Province Secretary for Work, Employment and Genders Equality, Miroslav Vasin, emphasized that the complete activities related to the improvement of the position of the Roma in Vojvodina have been recognized by the European Union as one of the best in Europe which in turn results in the project of visits to European countries and demonstration of the project of resolution and improvement of the position of Roma community on Vojvodina, which is expected to be realized in 2012. This model affirms education, employment and accommodation of the Roma and its goal is integration of Roma population in the social community.

The Director of the Roma Inclusion Office, Duško Jovanović, expressed his delight in the fact that one hard year ends in this way. He pointed out that every new job position opening and provision of an opportunity for the socially endangered categories of citizens to develop in economic and material sense is actually incorporated in the policy of the Government of the province and of the state as well. The project that has been conducted for the past two years has an objective to educate 150 people of Roma nationality. On the other hand, there is the obligation to start-up 20 companies and firms in the scope of this project, as it was done today. In this calendar year, this has been done for the first 10 companies and the spring will see opening of another competition with the purpose of setting up another 10 companies and firms followed up by the start-up package in the amount of 200,000 dinars. Our intention is, by realizing this European project, to show that Vojvodina has the capacity to lead and devise European projects which is the precondition for another passage to be opened for these and similar projects in the future.

* preuzeto sa sajta Vlade APV
THE ROMA AND HEALTH CARE

By the Constitution of the World Health Organization, health is defined as the state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not just as absence of illnesses or inability. Reaching the highest possible standard of health is set as the basic human right that every individual is entitled to and it is what the international community is seeking. Huge discrepancies between the health condition of vulnerable groups and their being deprived of the right to obtain health care are most often consequences of violation of some other right prior to these ones. This is proved by the position of Roma ethnic minority in the Republic of Serbia. The Roma represent one of the most endangered social groups. Its members are the ones who are most commonly deprived of accessing the basic health care and numerous other instances of the right to health.

The Office has, in cooperation with Local hospitals throughout Vojvodina, realized numerous activities that are different because of the specific nature of the problem and the target group. Duško Jovanović, representing the Roma Inclusion Office, supported the donation of the German foundation “Westerwald” in provision of medical equipment and aids for Municipalities of Ruma, Pančevo, Pećinci, Bački Petrovac and Novi Kneževac.

In cooperation with the German foundation, the president of the non-governmental organization” Roma Tone”, Dušan Jovanović, provided medical equipment worth more than 250 thousand euros that was given to local healthcare institutions in Vojvodina. “Our NGO’s long-lasting and quality cooperation with German foundations has resulted in realization of donation in the way of provision of medical equipment, hospital beds, orthopedic aids, wheelchairs, hospital lockers and closets”, as Dušan Jovanović said.

The event of delivering the medical equipment to healthcare institutions was attended by, Alexandar Baumann, the president of the German foundation, the president of NGO Roma Tone, Dušan Jovanović, as well as by officials from the Roma Inclusion Office led by the director Duškom Jovanovićem. „It is the Roma Inclusion Office of the AP Vojvodina Government that supported the realization of all the activities from the very beginning, from delivery to distribution of the medical equipment to healthcare institutions”, as it was pointed out by Duško Jovanović. When addressing the ones present at the local hospital in Pećinci, Alexander Baumann emphasized that the transparency in work, cooperation with NGO and institutions, the direct support of the AP Vojvodina Government and the Roma Inclusion Office yielded these results together.

Prevention equals health

The Roma Inclusion Office in association with “Milorad Pa-
The Roma Decade in AP Vojvodina

vlović” local hospital in Indija, organized the activity of visiting all Roma children aged 18 and less and informed their parents on the importance of taking the MMR vaccine as the only certain protection from small pox. An epidemiologist, dr Gajić, presented the realistic picture of a situation in which children do not take vaccines, that there are two cases of the small pox disease in the hygiene-deficient Roma settlement in Ruma and that all the settlements in the municipality of Indija must be visited as soon as possible. By field visits, it was registered that there are Roma children who had not taken the vaccine. On the basis of problem analysis, it was planned to: inform all local hospitals in the towns about vaccination of Roma children, to take contact details of all Roma families through one form – immunization calendar, to give vaccines to Roma children without the healthcare booklet and to introduce them into the register and give them the healthcare booklets; to assign a doctor who would make filed visits in order to inform parents on the consequences of the small pox and the importance of vaccine taking; to provide free vaccines, to provide vaccination in all local hospitals in order to avoid the rash after taking the vaccine because someone was not in the position to go to the local hospital in Indija.

During this activity, Roma families in towns in Indija, Novi Karlovcı, Beška, Slankamen, Krčedim Maradik and Čortanovci were visited.

The Roma Inclusion Office in association with the Local Hospital in Indija, conducted a successful campaign of vaccination of Roma children which should be seen as a model of good practice for other municipalities in Vojvodina.

Ružica Nikolić
NEW BEGINNINGS IN THE ROMA SETTLEMENTS

Poverty and unhygienic conditions are reality for most Roma people in Serbia. They spend their days struggling to make a living. Cardboard boxes, muddy roads and shabby houses are synonyms for the Roma settlements.

The Roma Inclusion Office, aware of the housing conditions of the Roma, paved three streets in Novi Bečej. The investment was supported by the Capital Investment Fund of AP Vojvodina. The value of investment was 24 million dinars. The Office managed to put the smiles back on some faces because now children can start their school days without muddy shoes. It is easier for parents and other visitors to approach the settlement and the lives of families who got paved road in front of their houses are a lot easier. The activities of the Office do not stop there. They are planning a pilot project of street lighting in the Roma settlements powered by alternative sources of energy.

The Roma Inclusion Office cooperated with provincial secretariats as well as with the Roma Inclusion Office. The Roma settlements in Bangladeš, Đurđevo, Žabalj municipality and Opovo got new roof coverings, housing premises, equipped bathrooms which were made functional.

Ten years experience in working with the Roma in AP Vojvodina, in the Republic of Serbia has resulted in a fact that RRC today applies one of the rare and successful participatioinal models of work and cooperation with the Roma community. The RRC has developed special methodology of dealing with existing infrastructure problems in the Roma settlements as well as with the problem of property legalization.

Ružica Nikolić

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The Office leaves another year behind. The changes they have made are obvious and easily visible. About the plans for the next year we are going to find out from the Managing Director of this institution: „We are facing the continuation of project „Improvement of employment of the Roma in AP Vojvodina“, which includes opening another 10 new companies as well as training courses for 150 people of Roma nationality for certain occupations. We are planning to initiate a housing project of 150 Roma families in three municipalities in Vojvodina, to establish an Institute for Roma Culture in Vojvodina, to try to introduce the Roma language as official language in certain municipalities as well as to continue to employ Roma people in provincial and local institutions“.
The Institute for Gender Equality is an institution of the Province founded in 2004 upon the Resolution of the Parliament of the AP Vojvodina. By founding the Institute and making the Declaration and Resolution on Gender Equality, the system of institutional mechanisms on the level of the province was completed and all this also created solid legal framework for accomplishment of gender equality in the territory of Vojvodina in the fields that are within the scope of authority of the Province.

This Institute was founded as an expert administrative instance with the purpose of the efficient execution of monitoring within the scope of gender equality and creation of suggestions for the integration of the gender perspective within politics in general, activities and programmes that are made and performed by the Government.

We spoke to Ms Vesna Šijački, the Director of the Institute about the interest of Roma population in using the resources of this institution

* What kind of help does the Institute for Gender Equality of AP Vojvodina provide for its clients?

The Institute conducts research, educational and promotional programs within the scope of gender equality. This means that it collects current and accurate data on the position of women in certain fields (in politics, economy, rural areas and Roma communities…) and it defines conclusions and suggestions for the improvement of their position. It devises and organizes trainings and education that increase their level of knowledge and the capacities of certain groups of women for the sake of their political and economic empowerment.

* How can people get informed about the competitions opened by the Institute?

The Institute informs target groups about the competitions in the public media, through the mailing list „Ženska posla (Women’s Matters)”, on the Institute site and by inviting target academic groups to participate. The Institute for Genders Equality conducts programmes in all municipalities and towns throughout Vojvodina. This, in fact, is the main reason for the Institute foundation: more efficient promotion of the politics of the gender equality in the territory of AP Vojvodina and enabling the decision makers and the staff in local administrations to actively execute the politics of equal gender possibilities.

* Are Roma women clients of the Institute?

Roma women are double-discriminated women and they are the focus of the attention of the Institute because of the numerous problems their encounter. One Programme was realized with the donation from UNDP (United Nations Development Program). The Project of 2008 was devised so as to encourage and enable Roma women to represent their rights independently in front of local institutions that are not sensitized enough for their problems, as well as in front of the Roma community that also discriminates girls and women of Roma nationality in most cases.

The Programme of 2010 made it possible for us to map the capacities of free legal counseling in AP Vojvodina, education on various types of discrimination that Roma women face as well as the models of support that are supposed to be given to Roma women by the offices for free legal counseling, especially in the field of employment. What was also organized were sessions of trainings on the types and capacities of the free legal counseling.

The Programme devoted to chances and choices for Roma girls in the scope of education was devised with regards to the fact that the education is the essential condition for exiting the circle of poverty.

The aim of the Programme by which we mapped the capacities of Roma women organizations in Vojvodina was to create one accurate and up-to-date database of Roma organizations.

* What is the type of help that is mostly sought by Roma population?

The Roma women we have cooperated with so far have responded to all invitations for education and were completely cooperative. Being interested in and open for communication is obvious and every way of cooperation has yielded results and changed the standard of their living.

Snežana Dimić
**Interview**

**the Mayor of Beočin, Bogdan Cvejić**

**SYSTEMATIC AND PLANNED**

On the right bank of the Danube and on the northern slopes of Fruska Gora, 17 km from Novi Sad there is Beočin municipality. It includes 10 settlements and about 17 000 inhabitants. Bogdan Cvejić has been the Mayor of this municipality since August 2008. He introduced us to the population structure of this municipality and activities aimed for the Roma national community.

* Can you please tell us about your municipality and its population structure?

The municipality of Beočin is a multinational community which according to 2002 census consists of 22 nationalities that is 16,086 inhabitants. In this municipality the most numerous national minority are the Roma. There are 1,048 Roma people here.

The Roma settlements in this municipality are „Šljivik“, „Kolonije“ and „Filija“. The Roma also live in a local community Susek, which does not have a separate Roma settlement.

After the bombing in 1999 this municipality was inhabited by internally dislocated people of Roma nationality from Kosovo and Metohija, but people from western countries are also coming back, so called repatriates.

* How do you manage funds in the municipal budget which are aimed for the Roma people?

Based on the Decision of the Municipal Assembly of Beočin, a local action plan for improvement of education of the Roma in Beočin municipality for 2011-2015 was adopted. For realization of that local action plan a sum of 500 000 RSD was planned as a part of The Roma Decade project. The project “Inclusive Roma Education” is underway, which was signed by 56 municipalities of the Republic of Serbia.

* Who are your partners?

Partners of Beočin municipality in the process of the Roma inclusion are the Roma non-government organizations in the territory of Beočin, two elementary schools, a pre-school institution, Social Work Centre, Radio and television Beočin (a local TV station), Serbian National Employment Service and the Roma inclusion Office of the Government of AP Vojvodina.

* What are your plans for the following period?

The plans for the next year include making of a local action plan for employment, health and housing.

Petar Miler

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The plans for the next year include making of a local action plan for employment, health and housing.

Petar Miler
The coordinator for Roma matters Jasmina Padrunek

HER BATTLE GOES ON

The coordinator for Roma matters in the Municipality of Bela Crkva has been on this position for more than two years. The position of a coordinator has not been systematized yet. Bela Crkva is among underdeveloped municipalities and it has no right to take on new staff. For this reason, the systematization has not taken place yet, although the officials from the local administration have rather good cooperation with the coordinator and they give their best to help as much as it is possible in the given circumstances.

When asked what they pay most attention to, the coordinator said:

- Education is one of the priorities in my work. I believe it to be the best way for our people, the Roma, to escape the vicious circle of poverty and misery. Therefore we applied for the DILS project about the state and the needs of the local administration regarding the improvement of education of the Roma. The project has been approved thus we have initiated a number of activities so as to improve the state of education of Roma children. The local administration is willing to help us in this as much as possible; one instance of this is the organization of the free transport for the students who attend high school.

The coordinator said that it is not possible to make any advances in the field of employment for the time being due to the fact that there are no job openings available in the municipality of Bela Crkva. The majority of people in the municipality are unemployed and nothing more can be done at the moment until the situation becomes better.

In the scope of accommodation, a small advance has been made since the Municipality has adapted several Roma houses that were in poor state, all for the sake of improvement of living conditions. The roofs were adapted, the chimneys were built, and the ceilings were mended by adding re-plaster boards. “Undoubtedly, there are many other houses that require adaptation but since our assets were limited and rather modest, this is all that has been done for now. And we sincerely do hope that the near future will see more of these actions”, as the coordinator said.

Regarding the healthcare matters, the Municipality has established the position of a healthcare mediator who improves the healthcare of Roma population. Numerous families have been helped, but the coordinator wished to draw light on one in particular, that was especially dear to her. It is about the Mitrovic family. They have three children of minor age; they are unemployed and were not able to provide their daughter Dragana with the means for bus ticket to Pančevo where she attends High School of Medicine, Nurse-Technician Department. The ticket costs 21,000 dinars and with the help form the Municipality, we succeeded in providing the necessary means so that the girl could continue attending classes regularly.

Bela Crkva is a very tolerant environment where all human rights are respected, regardless the nationality or religion, thus there was not much work to be done for the coordinator.

The role of the coordinator is a demanding one but Jasmina Padrunek proves that the energy she invests in it, returns: “I cannot pick just one situation since I cherish all of them equally, but I would like to point out the wonderful feeling that I have when I manage to help people in accomplishing something that they were not able to do before on their own. The memory of the happiness and satisfaction on their faces helps me to go on and motivates me to try ever harder, even when the chances I will succeed are poor.”

Dragana Dimitrov
DISTRIBUTION OF HUMANITARIAN AID SUPPLIES

Only if the Roma children become more educated than their parents, they will not have to wait to get help but they will be able to manage at a cruel stage of life themselves and provide funds for themselves and their families. Now most of them have to wait to get support from others in order to make progress in any field. Unless they can be helped for good, any kind of short-term help will help them as well. That is exactly what has been done in the municipality of Bač where a hundred and seventy food packets of humanitarian aid supplies have been distributed. Those humanitarian aid supplies have been provided by the coordinator for the Roma issues of the municipality of Bač Dragan Jovanović with the help of the mayor of the municipality of Bač and the Roma Inclusion Office.

Teachers took part in distribution of school stationary. Jan Trusina, an entrepreneur, demonstrated his humanity by giving slippers to all Roma children.

Mr Jovanovic, the coordinator is pleased because the non-Roma population is getting more and more acquainted with the Roma problem and says: We need the support of the non-Roma population. Thanks to their understanding and help, we have started to make progress. Now we kindly ask them to be patient and to wait for the changes to become visible. They will not fail, I am certain.

Dragana Dimitrov

Distribution of school stationary

Bač municipality is the initiator of the project “The beauty of being different” which deals with educational side of the Roma inclusion.

Their partners in this project are three elementary schools, a pre-school institution and a nongovernment organization.

In Selenča, in the elementary school „Jan Kollar”, a celebration was organized in the end of November 2011 to distribute school stationery to forty-two children of the Roma nationality. The principal of this school Svetlana Zolnjan expressed her satisfaction because the interest of the Roma parents is increasing and they monitor the progress of their children with greater attention.

Source: coordinator of Bač municipality archive

Coordinator, school principal with pupils
Given the fact that education is one of the biggest problems of the Roma, the Ministry of Education since 2008, in the Roma education system involved pedagogical assistants. In the past school year they hired one hundred and seventy-eight pedagogical assistants of Roma nationality. One of them is Maja Jovanović from Deronje. Maja on this mission works conscientiously and diligently. All the results achieved so far speak in favor of it.

**An important link in the chain of education of Roma**

Their role is mediating. They represent the link that connects students and parents with educational institutions. Are recruited by open competition for employment, and they defined the role of Nisan, the Law on Basic Education and Training and the Rules of the training program for pedagogical assistants. His work managing director of the school or school leadership team member who is elected by the director. In addition to the compulsory completion of the fourth high school level, teaching assistants must attend a five-day. Pedagogical assistant is assigned to preschool and school institutions, which attended by children from poor backgrounds or marginalized social groups in which they are not fluent in the language of instruction, children with special needs, disabled, with disorders in behavior that are caused by the tragic circumstances. The Roma pedagogical assistants is a big responsibility. They work with Roma children, who need extra help in learning and general language development, participate in the process of their integration into the peer group and encourage enrollment of children in primary school.

**Begining of the way**

The OSCE Mission in Serbia, the 2007th the first recognizes the needs of Roma children and announced a competition for Roma assistants. Maja Jovanovic competition goes and becomes a Roma assistant. The following year, through a public announcement of the Ministry of Education, Maja gets a job in a pedagogical assistant Vuk Karadzic elementary school in Deronje. The team competition in 2008, the RTAs were renamed in pedagogical assistants, as the area expanded their activities and the non-Roma children, which need help. May the first pedagogical assistant in their municipality. His work paved the way to their heirs and successors. Today in the territory of its municipalities have been engaged two more pedagogical assistants, one in Bogojevo, others in Odzaci.

**Activities during the school**

Maja works with sixty children of lower school age, from first to fourth grade. Help you to overcome them with teaching materials, features her, he says, the basic and most important activity. Helping children through individual work with them, but if more of them have the same problems, Maja organize group work.

Also, attend classes of other teachers who help her in identifying problems and selec-
tion methods for their efficiency later as a solution, and that it greatly facilitates the work.

Work field

Apart from teaching, is an essential part of Maja’s work is field work. If the parents respond to the call for parent-teacher meeting or call to talk with the teacher, Maja goes to them, a home visit. Working in the field say is not easy, but it is certainly the most effective way to attract the attention of parents. It should be conducted more frequently, not only when a problem occurs. In an interview with the parents, Maya does not speak only about the difficulties that children face, but he met with the parents of all achievements and successes of their children, and how, and she says, do not bypass praise. In this way, parents receive a boost, and even willingly attend school. Besides visiting his parents, Majas field work includes the promotion and affirmative action enrollment in preschool and elementary education. This activity is carried out independently of the teaching staff, and the results they achieved, especially proud. Some children in this way I discovered, was found. They took it as a non-existent. They had no documents, nor did they know to speak, write or count. The continued work with them, with the support of teachers, we have to be literate, and today they are completely equal with their peers-pointed with pride Maya.

Extracurricular activities

From 1998. in the elementary school Vuk Karadzic seems recitation section. In her work, Maya part of the beginning. First, by her father, Ranko Rajko Jovanovic, who then headed this section, preparing for competition, for which she participated during her primary and secondary education. For two years he represented as a pupil municipality at the provincial festival in Secanj reciters. West and the fact that a Roma is a municipality in this competition, according to Maya, surprised many and challenged its former image of the Roma, is changing for the better.

Now, Maya, instead of his father, leads this section. At the provincial competition for the reciters in the Romany language, which was organized two years ago, participated in its six students, four of which won first place.

Successful students

May proudly points out that this September in the high school bench to enter four of its students. One of them, Kica Jovanovic, winner of the prize fund Ivana Aleksic. The award is given for the achieved success, appropriate behavior and a remarkable relationship to the teaching staff. With the diploma, the student received a cash prize and, as a motivation to continue its success. Kiča for this award is proposed Teaching larger school and that is what is a clear indication that the integration of Roma children into the education system has made great progress. Maja says it is happy, but also is aware that there are many challenges before it.

Teacher of Romani language

In elementary school Vuk Karadzic, Maya teaches an elective course Language and national culture of Roma. Permission is given for it by the school administration. Students from first to eighth grade, divided into three groups, attending this course.

The interest in this matter for May, the biggest prize.

Let’s grow up together

Jovanovicva as a pedagogical assistant and participated in the project, which is called to grow, implemented at the local level, in partnership with elementary school Vuk Karadzic, Deronje and the National Library of Branko Radićević...
Odzak. How did the idea for this project? Year after year, through the action of pedagogical assistants, more and more Roma children enrolled and out of the city library. This library workers, attract attention and expressed their desire that they, and all other citizens, who wish to become more familiar with Roma culture. Together with Maja and the elementary school where she works, agreed to organize the play Roma wedding, which will promote and afirmisi Roma culture, traditions and customs. The preparation and implementation of performance in addition to the Roma, participated and non-Roma children, who are themselves expressed a desire to be part of it. This project was entered in the ten most notable cultural projects in Serbia in the past year. This result is important for two reasons, says Maya, because the affirmative action Rome in the best possible light at the national level, but also because it is giving impetus to the all new projects, because it’s nice to know that someone sees and appreciates what you do.

On the occasion of the eighth-April World Roma Day

According to Majas words, the teacher eighth April each year at least one hour devote the World Day of the Roma. On that occasion, the children are familiar with Roma culture and history. May in the election organized by Public class of cases. On this occasion, the children recite the Romany language. Attendees can listen to them, and see an exhibition of student art works about Roma occupations past and present, and the life of Roma. In addition, on this occasion in the school is organized and lectures for teachers on the topic of culture, tradition and history of Roma, as well as lectures on reproductive health for the Roma population. In terms of lectures and workshops on abortion, early marriage, sexually transmitted diseases and so on.

Maja said that all this would not exist excellent cooperation with the school director, Branislav Ninkov, who is always ready to assist in the implementation of all activities aimed at the Roma population, their integration and affirmation.

The view in the future

Maja says she would like to continue dealing with the integration of Roma and implementation of the Roma language in the education system. Patience and the will, which is necessary for it, has said, enough. The ideas she never lack. They are found in working with children. They are her inspiration and her drivers. finds motivation in all of those talents that during his work revealed. He points out that the genetic code of the Roma are great qualities for music and acting. They are just born with it. Many of them do not even know they have talent. That is why I am here. To help them discover their talent and nurture it-with a smile speaks Maja. Previous work by Maja Jovanovic testified that the effort necessary precondition for success. As a young, emancipated and successful Roma women gives an example of their compatriots. She along with other educational assistants pave the only way to achieve Roma vision of progress and inclusion. Education of Roma is the only leading in the direction forward.

Maja Jovanović and her pupils

Source: Maja Jovanović archive

Jovana Davidović
The idea of starting „Romaversitas” program in Novi Sad. He had great support in this from Nataša Kočić Rakočević REF programme representative in Serbia and from University of Novi Sad, which supervises this program. The idea also relied on the existing initiatives for high education of the Roma in Vojvodina, started 20 and more years ago by Matica romska and Trifun Dimić, Svenka Savić PhD and Petar Novica Nikolić. The supervisor of the program is Slobodanka Markov PhD. The mediators are Aleksandar Jovanović and Milan Beljić. Basic characteristic of the program is mentoring and support to students in order to complete their studies successfully. Students are being talked to and they are informed about everything this program offers and if they wish they can take part in it and use its resources.

Within this program students have equipped space for studying and fun, additional lessons with teachers – mentors, psychological support, books expenses covered, English and Roma language lessons and training in information technologies.

**Support to the Roma students**

Dorde Jovanović initiated the idea of starting „Romaversitas” program in Novi Sad. He had great support in this from Nataša Kočić Rakočević REF programme representative in Serbia and from University of Novi Sad, which supervises this program. The idea also relied on the existing initiatives for high education of the Roma in Vojvodina, started 20 and more years ago by Matica romska and Trifun Dimić, Svenka Savić PhD and Petar Novica Nikolić. The supervisor of the program is Slobodanka Markov PhD. The mediators are Aleksandar Jovanović and Milan Beljić. Basic characteristic of the program is mentoring and support to students in order to complete their studies successfully. Students are being talked to and they are informed about everything this program offers and if they wish they can take part in it and use its resources.

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**Monitoring the work and needs of the Roma students,** the managers of this project came up with a brilliant idea:

**English language courses**

**Testing Roma students**

„Romaversitas” is implemented in several countries in the region and since May 2011 has also been taking place in Serbia.

The goal of „Romaversitas” program is to help Roma students in their studies and to connect or network them. Through this program students are encouraged to help other Roma and new Roma students more actively and to bravely embrace their Roma identity and to feel responsible for the future of the Roma. „Romaversitas” Serbia is financed by the Roma Education Fund from Budapest.
- „Considering the fact that education is one of the most important things in life and that we live in a world based on knowledge, I think that emancipation of the Roma community depends on how many of them finish education and then we realized that the Roma students lack the knowledge of English language, which is a world language number one. Therefore we came up with an idea to organize English language courses for the Roma students. Our ambition is that students start talking in English, do some research and take part in international conferences,” says the supervisor of the project Slabdanka Markov, PhD.

A cooperation between Faculty of Philosophy and a team which manages „Romaversitas” program resulted in the wish of Jagoda Topalov M.A. (Foreign Language Instructor – Department of English Studies) and her 15 students to volunteer and teach English language to the Roma students.

- „I applied to teach because I can spare some time to help students and to take part in something really good. I am doing now what I have already chose before, I am teaching and tutoring,” says the teacher.

Entry tests took place in November and all students who wanted to study English through „Romaversitas” program could take part in it. Testing should demonstrate their level of knowledge and help the teacher and students – volunteers to divide students into groups made according to their level of knowledge.

35 students came to testing and they were very excited and happy because they will be able to learn English for free at times convenient for them. The organizers were pleased by the number of students interested because it was a confirmation that they satisfied their needs.

- „I applied to teach because I can spare some time to help students and to take part in something really good. I am doing now what I have already chose before, I am teaching and tutoring,” says the teacher.

Enis Saitovski, a freshman at Faculty of Law in Novi Sad emphasizes that today if you do not the basic things in English you can not socialize or make any progress in society.

“We are living in the era of globalization where English language means a lot and we have to learn it in order to achieve certain level in communication in a foreign language. I am very pleased to be a part of this program,” he said.

Dragana Dimitrov enrolled two courses in Master Studies – at Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad and at a private Faculty of Management. We met her at the testing and asked her why she needs the knowledge of English language. She said: „I am more and more often in a situation to communicate in English and I can not let myself not master it well. My high education I consider as commitment to keep making progress and work on myself. On the other hand a lot of quality literature has not been translated from English into Serbian and that is a reason more to improve my knowledge of English language.
For the past thirteen years, the NGO “Rumunka” (“Romanian Woman”) from Bački Monoštor has contributed in general emancipation and integration of the Roma. We spoke to Mr Ivan Petrović, the President of the organization about its beginnings, activities and projects.

The first and the dearest project

When asked what the most important project that has been conducted up to now is, Ivan Petrović said: “The first project of our organization is at the same time the most important and the dearest one conducted. It is the “Step By Step” Project realized in cooperation with the Open Society Foundations. The result of this project is the kindergarten for Romany children and the children from socially endangered families that has existed since 2000. Also, we had donators engaged in the execution of the project such as Concern, The Center for Interactive Pedagogy and the Red Cross of Sombor.”

Education is the only solution

The organization is especially proud of its activities in the field of education, especially for the fact that the key of resolution of all problems that the Roma face is in education. “The Roma do not attend schools because they are poor and since they are uneducated, they cannot get jobs and they remain poor. That is a labyrinth that they can only escape through education. Exactly for this reason, our organization is focused on the very education. As an example, I could say that last year, we enrolled fourteen children in high school, whereas nine of them passed the final exams and finished education in crafts,” Petrović said.

Cooperation with local administration

Our cooperation with the local administration is on a rather high level. The organization has signed the Memorandum on Cooperation with the Local Administration. Together with seven other Roma non-governmental organizations it founded the Forum of Roma Non-Governmental...
The Elderly Roma Club

This organization also conducts projects that regard social matters. Last year saw the finalization of a project called “The Elderly Roma Club”. The Club was open for four years through Novi Sad Humanitarian Center and it was financially supported by the IOM (International Organization for Migration). For one year the club was managed by Rumunka and it was financially supported by the BCIF (Balkans Fund for Local Initiative).

Together against discrimination

The organization is currently engaged in realization of a significant project for the international cooperation within the IPA program, together with or-
The Roma Decade in AP Vojvodina

Organizations from Pécs (Hungary), Beli Manastir (Croatia) and Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina). The objective of the project is overcoming discrimination in the field of education and employment. Organizations from Hungary and the “Roma Bejaša Rumunka Bački Monoštor” organization are focused on overcoming the discrimination in the field of employment whereas the organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia are focused on education.

A failure of an agreement

Not everything goes smoothly, as it is confirmed by what Petrović told us about one project that is still where it was in the beginning. “Three years ago, we initiated a project with “Brodoremont”. We thought it would be a great one. We signed contracts, more precisely, the children signed the contracts that stated they will work in “Brodoremont” upon finishing education, and that the company will participate in financial support to their education. They were paying for monthly bus tickets for six of them, accommodation in students’ residence and all the expenses related to education. The children were obliged to work in the company for seven years in order to re-pay the scholarship. However, the company went bankrupt, entered the liquidation procedure and no one knows what the future holds. I sincerely hope that the situation will improve in the spring and that project will be continued.

Igor Dimić

Bodrog fest

Since 2005. year, every second Saturday in August, held ethno-festival „Bodrog fest.” The significance of this festival is reflected in the preservation of Monoštor tradition and culture, and natural resources of the village. In the north of Vojvodina, Sombor, near what is today, in the Middle Ages stood the famous city Bodrog. It was founded by Hungarian King Stephen to have determination and is the center of the county, at the crossroads of important roads. It even mentioned the fortress and Bodrog Monoštor Bartanj. The city is mysteriously disappeared into the Danube, and these areas are deserted after the Turkish invasion in the 16th century. At that time, they settled Šokci from Bosnia, led by the Franciscans, who founded the school. They gathered the children and taught them on the panels to read and write. In honor of the past, this festival carries just the name of this medieval city. The festival is the fruit of good international relations. The Roma community at the festival presents its folk dances, traditional foods and crafts.
The Association Čiriklji Bački Petrovac was registered on 10 February, 2010 at the Agency for Business Registers of Republic of Serbia. Upon registration, there were about one hundred and seventy-six members’ admission forms signed. Since the very establishment of the Association, the function of the President has been given to Danijela Boganović. In the beginning, the Association had media presentations on the local level.

The first activity of the Association was setting up the folklore section in March of the same year. It has been active continuously since then and it involves the young in the Association.

**Local action plan for the education of the Roma**

On 28 May of the same year, the Local Action Plan for Education of the Roma was adopted. The plan was devised in two months by a chosen work group that included the members of the Association. The plan includes improvement of the preschool, elementary and high school education as well as empowerment of the Roma community together with respect for the differences and multi-cultural character.

**Awarded students – members of the Association**

A member of the Čiriklji Association, Ivana Igić, was one of the 40 best Roma students. On 19 April, 2010, Minister Čiplić awarded her with the praise note and a lap top as a reward. On this occasion, there was a press conference held on the local level. Her great results made this student a role model for the young.

On 23 December 2010, the best Roma student Dijana Nećić, from Maglići, a member of Čiriklji Association, was given a computer as a reward for the success she achieved in education. The event was attended by the director of the Development Fund of AP Vojvodina, Snežana Repac and the president of the Municipality of Bački Petrovac, Vladimir Turan. Dijana Nećić was awarded as an eight-grade student, the owner of the Vuk Diploma and the owner of a large number of awards won in various competitions.

The Association also provided scholarships for members of Association who obtained excellent marks at school, in cooperation with the Roma Inclusion Office during 2010.

In the school year 2010/2011, four members of the Association enrolled in high school. Ivana Igić enrolled in High School of Economy, Dijana Nećić enrolled in High School of Medicine, Miloja Brančić enrolled in High School of Traffic Management and Biljana Račıpovović enrolled in High School of Economy. In the same year, another member of the Association, Božana Igić, enrolled in the first year of Business Studies College in Novi Sad.

**One-day summer art colony for children**

2001 has seen realization of a project called One-day Summer Art Colony for Children. The project was realized by the Province Secretariat for Education, Administration and National Communities. The lecturer at the colony was our well-known painter and professor Ivan Križan,
who celebrated fifty years of his work by this event. The success of this manifestation lies primarily in the fact that the children learned new painting techniques and at the same time, they learned about tolerance and multicultural character through spending time with children from other non-governmental organizations.

Educational inclusion of the Roma

The Municipality of Bački Petrovac has entered the DILS project during the year, the subject of which is Educational Inclusion of the Roma, conducted by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the Roma Education Fund from Budapest. The assets were provided by the World Bank. The objective of this project is improvement of availability and quality of education and bringing-up of the Roma on the local level and all in accordance with the Law on the Basis of Education and Upbringing System and resolutions made regarding systemic and institutional management in the field of inclusive education. What is also planned by the program is support of the municipality mentor in devising a long-term plan of school enrolment of Roma children, local action plans, preparation of project suggestions etc.

Cooperation with the Jarmila Fund

During this year, the Association has signed a protocol on cooperation with the Youth Parliament of the Municipality of Bački Petrovac, as well as with the Citizens’ Fund Jarmila. The director and the president of the fund, Jarmila Bohuš organized an event in which she awarded best Roma students, on 12 July.

The Association Members as Ecologists

On 22 April, the Čiriklji Association, in association with the youth association E. Y. B. L. organized ecological action of planting trees. On this occasion, the young form the both Associations planted tree sprouts. In this way, the importance of the team work, preservation and protection of the environment, multicultural character and tolerance were promoted.

In August of the same year, a protocol on cooperation with the Ecology Movement of Bački Petrovac was signed.

A course in computer science for the Roma

A course in computer science for the Roma is a project by Čiriklji Association that was approved and realized by the Province Secretariat for Work, Employment and Genders Equality. The project involved training in working on computer for seven Roma men and women aged between 18 and 35 all for the purpose of gaining computer literacy and thus becoming more easily involved in the modern ways of life. After they successfully finished the course, the students were given certificates that will surely prove to be useful when applying for a job.

The first donation of the Association

The Čiriklji Association, in cooperation with the Roma Inclusion Office, has made its first donation. It is the donation of medical equipment (infusion stands, wheelchairs, double closets with shelves etc.) to the local hospital in Bački Petrovac.

The Čiriklji Association is a young one. It was founded last year and a large number of its members are the young, children and students. However the results this Association has achieved so far are a clear proof of its matured will to help Roma population on their path of integration into all pores of the society.

Jovana Davidović

Photo: V. DMIĆ

Danijela with association members

The Roma Decade in AP Vojvodina
**BOOSTING YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM**

The immune system is a complex system of our body whose aim is to defend us from various outside and inside causes of illnesses like viruses, bacteria, parasites, toxins and cancer cells. There is non-specific and specific immune system. Non-specific immune system protects us at the beginning of the illness and targets all causes equally, and specific immune system targets certain causes of illnesses. The elements of the immune system are white blood cells which protect us systematically, a great variety of cells located in the tissue and a comprehensive chemical complex which is in our bloodstream. Those three systems are coordinated and together make the entire immune system.

**Proper nutrition is in the first place**

In order to have active immune system ready to fight the illness the most important thing is proper nutrition. Fresh fruit and vegetables are very important, especially in winter when we do not have great variety of choice. Every day we have to eat a variety of foods in order to input a lot of vitamins and minerals into our body which positively affects our immune system. Vitamins function like antioxidants which means they protect us from harmful things and place themselves instead of our cell components. Minerals like selenium and zinc, which are in fresh food, are a part of a cell immune system. From all other minerals, they affect our immune system the most. Although we need a small amount of those elements, there is very little quantity of them in single groceries. Therefore everyday input of fresh fruit and vegetables is important. From winter season vegetables, cabbage and all its types are important, various types of beet if you like it, celery, horseradish, onion, garlic and all pickled forms of vegetables. There is more fruit to chose from so you can choose according to your own taste. Citrus fruit are very important in cold winter months, because they contain a lot of vitamins, mostly vitamin C, antioxidants which are not vitamins and fibres which facilitate digestion which is also related to our immune system. A banana is a good source of copper and diet fibres, potassium and iron. A kiwi is one of the richest sources of vitamin C in winter months. Use it often. Everything you can find on the shelves of a supermarket or a street market you can use. It is very important to know that by cooking (over 60°C) many vitamins get destroyed. Therefore cooked food is not as healthy as fresh food. Procedures like that should be avoided and it is the best to eat fresh fruit.

**Additional healing substances**

There are additional healing substances which we take into our body with food like fruit, vegetables and dairy products. Dairy products are very important because of their bacteria. Those bacteria, when imported in our body affect our digestion by protecting us from patho-
genic bacteria which are also imported by food. It that way they reduce the necessary activity of immune system so that our immune system can work on other areas of defence, it has more strength and soldier cells. From dairy products - yoghurts, kefirs, fresh and mature types of cheese are very important. We have to use them in our nutrition.

There are substances which are not part of our everyday nutrition, but can be imported in order to boost our immune system. They include propolis, honey, royal jelly, pollen, extracts of echinacea, aloe vera, noni, acerola, ginseng, vitamin and mineral complexes, separate complex of vitamins C, A, E, selenium and zinc.

Propolis is a bee product which bees collect from the trees and plants to protect their hive. It is one of the most popular bee products. It works against viruses, bacteria and increases the activity of the immune system. It is important to know that it can not come in contact with metal objects because it loses its activity. It is always packed in glass or plastic containers and the spoons must be wooden or plastic. It is has bitter taste so children do not like it very much. If you wish to give it to a child, you can mix it with honey. There are also alcoholic extracts, which are only for adults. Propilenglicol extracts are also useful for children because in that way we prevent harmful effect of alcohol. It should always be kept in cold places, far from sunlight.

Royal jelly is food for the queen bee and it is said to be more healing than propolis. It contains a lot of vitamins and minerals and chemical substances which activate the immune system. It is the best to take lyophilisated royal jelly that is dried in a special way, because substances in royal jelly are easily dissolved when it is kept at room temperature. If it is not lyophilisated, it must be kept in the refrigerator at 2-8°C. The next important thing is its import. It is highly recommendable to import it by placing it under the tongue so that it can be reabsorbed. If possible, do not just swallow it. It is scientifically proven that the efficiency is greater if imported this way.

Echinacea is a plant whose extract activates the immune system. It works by increasing the number of lymphocytes in bloodstream and causes the increase of interferon made by lymphocytes. (Interferon is a substance which helps us defend from viruses.) It is recommended for children from three years of age in the form of a syrup and to older children and adults in the form of 80% drops. You should start echinacea drops treatment at the first signs of illness and continue until the illness is reduced. This plant is not recommended for everyday prevention from illnesses, it should be taken only in case of illness. It should only be taken preventively in case of influenza epidemic or if a person is in a very bad general health condition.

Aloe vera is a kind of cactus which has numerous healing features and which among other things boosts immune system. It can be used in the form of a liquid or a gelly. It is effective against viruses, bacteria and fungi. It is recommended...
for people suffering from malignant diseases.

Ginseng is a Far East plant used to activate immune system and to enhance endurance. It is most often in the form of capsules where the root is encapsulated unchanged. It increases energy, awakens and affects boosting of immune system.

**Vitamins and minerals**

It is important to import enough vitamin C through nutrition or through diet supplements. Daily dose of vitamin C is 250 mg, although larger dose is recommended in case of illness from 500 mg to even 1000 mg. Larger quantities can be harmful for the stomach because vitamin C is an acid. People who have problems like gastritis or ulcers should take this vitamin in many separate doses of 250 mg until they reach 1000 mg altogether.

Vitamins A and E are also antioxidants. Each of them has its role in cell immune system. There are vitamins in all yellow and orange fruits and vegetables (carrots, pumpkins, oranges, grapefruits). There is vitamin in eggs, milk, nuts and sunflower and olive oil.

Selenium is a mineral mostly found in meat, fish, shellfish, cereal, cabbage, celery, kinds of liver. These kinds of food should be at our table in order to keep our immune system strong and to defend ourselves from illnesses that attack us in these cold days.

Zinc is an important mineral which is a part of many enzymes of our body. It plays an important role in our immune system. Zinc can mostly be found in food of animal origin like liver, meat, fish and in smaller quantities in hazelnuts and other kinds of nuts.

One of domestic recipes for boosting immune system is to squeeze one grapefruit (red or yellow) and two lemons and sweeten that with a lot of honey and drink it before a meal if you do not have any stomach problems. If you have stomach problems you should drink that after a meal.

Food and diet are first and basic way of boosting immune system. Everything else is just an addition. It is important to eat healthy and various food, with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables with fish and meat with offal. Meat is an important source of iron, folic acid, vitamin B12, selenium and zinc. Those substances are easily reabsorbed from meat and they make our body healthier. It is useful to keep at home some honey with propolis and royal jelly so that when we feel that our immune system has declined we should take a spoonful or two of that pleasant healing substance. Preservation and boosting of our immune system depends on us alone. We have at our disposal a wide range of food and healing substances which we should use correctly.

*Zita Farkaš*

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**How do you know that your immune system has declined?**

If you are feeling tired and sleepy, if you are pale and can not do everyday activities as usually, you do not have energy and you easily catch a cold - those are all clear signs. When your immune system is strong, you do not catch a cold easily whereas when it is weak you do.

Source:

http://davidbozek.net
http://klinikperintal.com
http://wwwastmaxmasrishranamicnim-lec.jpg
http://wwwcapital.baradionice-za-sek-tore-voca-i-povrca.bmp
http://wwwgardenguides.com
http://wwwnmodernmedicalguide.com
Zoran Mulić B.A. speaks about his composing and experience in working with students. In his creative opus the special place is dedicated to a liturgy in the Roma language and his cooperation with the best choir in the world, “Glinka” choir of St Petersburg. In his composing and teaching, according to his words the most important part is love for music and when this love becomes deeper, music becomes life.

- I always have to emphasize that that is „first second liturgy“. Fifteen years ago, thanks to consent of Bishop of Bačka Irinej and to a gentleman who is unfortunately no longer alive, Trifun Dimić, the Roma language become the official language of the orthodox liturgy. Most Roma people in Vojvodina, especially in Bačka are orthodox. Trifun Dimić translated the Bible, the church book “Službenik” and the divine liturgy of St John Crysostom into the Roma language with the consent of Bishop Irinej. The first liturgies were a compilation. There were parts in the Roma language, in Serbian as well as in Church Slavic. Those first liturgies were the trigger. The idea was born, now I can say that, when I met one amazing man in Šabac many years ago He is an orthodox priest, father Rade. I met him by accident and he told me it would be nice to make a liturgy in the Roma language. The idea grew and ripened in me. I was writing only during fasting days. It took me about five years to create it.

Entire preparation of the liturgy is a matter of lucky coincidences. Firstly, I managed to get in contact with the best choir in the world „Glinka” choir of St Petersburg and their Maestro Vladislav Černušenko. The link

* You composed the entire liturgy in the Roma language. How did you think of something like that?

- I try to compose pieces of music which will leave some trace, which will satisfy the basic criteria of proper and good composition. That is my basic intention. As for inspiration, that is a big question. In my opinion, inspiration is a romantic idea. One great writer, when asked: "What is music?" answered: “Music is a lyrical cobweb which joins together rational and emotional part of our personality, that is the head and the heart. “. It was so wonderfully said. I have to admit that as I get older and enter some more mature life stages, the base of my thinking in composing and making music is the original folklore music. It is nothing new because everyone is going back to that eventually. We live in Vojvodina where there are a lot of national, religious and other influences, therefore it is so natural that all of that is reflected in music and art generally. In a composition I try to use the musical folklore of our area and of course of my Roma nation. I try to incorporate Roma music, which is in Roma genes and Roma musical idiom into my compositions. Nowadays in this era of decadence, not only in music but in other areas of culture and art as well, the fresh blood can only be the national idiom. Only the national idiom can make quality step forward in music and art generally.

* You are one of the most productive musicians. How do you find inspiration for your works?

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in our cooperation was my great friend Svetislav Nićetan.

The liturgy was performed on October 12 in Almaška Church in Novi Sad under the sponsorship of the Government of AP Vojvodina, with great support of Bojan Pajtic PhD. It was the first time in the history of Christianity that entire liturgy, all priest parts and choral parts were performed in the Roma language.

* What was the cooperation like with the „Glinka“ choir of St Petersburg?

- The cooperation with the „Glinka“ choir has been a great experience for me. It was not just business cooperation but also quality human relations have been made. I will tell you only one thing the conductor of the choir and one of the greatest musicians of today Vladislav Černušenko said: „Zoran, we are not going to do that for me, nor for you but for the glory of God”. And they did exactly like that. Their system of work is perfect. Those are human voices which sound like the organ, a real fantasy. Those who have not heard them can not even imagine how that sounds. What Berlin philharmony is in instrumental music, that is the „Glinka“ choir in vocal music.

They dedicated themselves completely to that and they worked with love. The preparations lasted almost a year with everyday rehearsals. I occasionally went to see them and I was astonished with how much they had studied the Roma language. No accent was wrong.

How much this all meant to them shows the fact that they wish to perform this liturgy in St Petersburg area where about 400 000 Roma live. The plan should be realized this or the next year. They have already initiated the matter. Working together like this established a human dimension. It is my biggest reward. Material matters have never been the most important, it has always been only about music.

* In addition to being a musician, you do some pedagogical work. You teach at Academy of Arts, university of Novi Sad and College for Preschool Teachers in Vršac. What is the most important thing in working with students?

- It is clear that people who chose to study at the Music Academy already love music. Working with them we need to deepen that love so that music becomes the part of their lives. The time people spend studying is quite short on average 4-5 years and the time goes by quickly. If the love for music is not great and deep enough then it is impossible to reach any other spheres. Secondly, they need to be taught skills. I teach very specific subjects like orchestration and composition. At the very beginning I tell them: “I can not teach you how to be composers. A man is or is not born with it. But I can teach you some style characteristics of certain ages, especially of contemporary art as well as some matters of skill. And you have to feel yourselves how and what to do later on.” Those are some basic things which I am trying to accomplish in my pedagogical work at the Music Academy.

As for my work at College for Preschool Teachers in Vršac, I am very pleased because there is a department for Teacher Education in the Roma language. Working with students there is different from working with students at the Music Academy. It is a lower level of musical education. I am trying to develop their love for music. My opinion is that the base of music is the music from where you originated. And in the end comes the classical music as its highest level. Therefore I am trying to implement the love for real folk music which they will later transfer to the children they will work with one day.
*What is your experience in working with the Roma students so far?

- At the Music Academy most students work in reproductive art. Most of them play string instruments. They have proved to be great talents. Sometimes, something happens to them. I do not know why and they get lost a little. There are some indices that many great world artists were of the Roma origin but it is another story why people know so little about that.

So far I have had only one Roma student who studied composition. He proved to be a great talent. However his life took him elsewhere. He writes and works less than before.

As for working with the Roma students in Vrsac their knowledge of music is not the most important thing therefore I can not fully comprehend their talent and work.

*What has still remained a wish for you as an artist and as a man?

- My great love which also originates from Vojvodina, is tamburitza. My wish is to make a big tamburitza orchestra consisting of the Roma people. It is very difficult to gather them at one place because as soon as they learn how to play they try to make a living on their own, no matter how talented they are. There is an idea to organize a New Roma Song Festival for the next World Day of the Roma. However my wish is that a thing like should not happen only once but to make it a tradition to present Roma culture on a highly artistic level and that we cease to be always the Roma – the entertainers. World famous violinist Marina Jašvili once said „If there is nothing musician-like in your music, then you should not play at all”. And we, the Roma, have that.

My other wish is to make great tamburitza orchestra of Vojvodina, because the tamburitza is characteristic feature of Vojvodina.

Let me tell you a story. When the “Glinka” choir was here, we organized a reception at the Government of AP Vojvodina. On that occasion I organized a small surprise. I gathered eight to nine tamburitza players and when they started playing the entire choir with the conductor were amazed. They could not believe that such noble and tame sound exists. They have never heard anything like that before.

I have tried many times to find a way to establish an institution dedicated to tamburitza and its music. We can never reach Berlin or Vienna Philharmony because we do not have the tradition nor financial background, we simply can not reach their level. But we could gather about twenty good tamburitza players in order to make the tamburitza orchestra of Vojvodina which will represent and be an ambassador of our culture.

As for my composing I would like to write some more pieces but let that remain my secret. I will reveal only that it is about music of my people and it will be a synthesis of contemporary art and the Roma idiom. The Roma mentality which is demonstrated through music is challenging for many people. So far it has not been represented on highly artistic level, but if you look through history many great works of art have been inspired by the Roma way of living. Let that remain a secret what kind of scene I am creating in my imagination. With God’s help I hope I will manage to create something about my people.

Jovana Davidović
THE MUSEUM OF ROMA CULTURE

Every nation if it wants to be a nation, has to have its institutions. If a nation does not have its institutions, it does not have its schools, museums, radio stations or radio shows. If it has no language, books, the Bible or the Quran or any other literature works or paintings then it is not a nation at all. “The Roma will have their media and solve all their problems the moment they acquire all elements of a state.” D.A.

Today the Roma community is facing a series of problems yet to be solved but they are on the right way of solving them. That we have been told by many but there are also visible results which we can read, see and examine. Today we can pay a visit to the Museum of Roma Culture and see everything that gives this nation the features of a nation. Our journalist opened the door of the Museum and is going to present its exhibits by talking to its founder.

A museum in your computers

The first Museum of Roma Culture was founded in 1991 in Brno. On October 21, 2009 a Member of Academy of Arts and Sciences Dragoljub Acković opened the Museum of Roma Culture in Belgrade. At the beginning there were 100 000 exhibits in the museum, which was not much, but as our interviewee says: “It is like bringing up children”. Acković collected a few hundreds of exhibits in the past 30 years. A plan and content of this museum might sound like true science-fiction at this moment, but Dragoljub Acković and his colleagues have been trying to create an original piece of work. In order to enhance the existing action, they started taking pictures of all the exhibits they could not find. In 2011 their collection of exhibits increased significantly. They collected 150 000 digitalized exhibits and started creating something which sounded very abstract to all of us, a virtual museum. It is not imaginary museum, something created out of nothing, but a true virtual museum containing photographs of existing objects. It is a photograph taken in someone’s home or it is a photograph of an exhibit from a museum.

“Containing 5000 exhibits, the Museum of Roma Culture would require 2 hectares of land which we do not have right now. According to the times we are living in and advanced technology virtual museum is something new and different we can offer to our visitors without depriving them of any new exhibit, a painting or a work of art,” says Mr Acković and also adds: “For example we do not need to have entire mint exposed. We can only two hammers to show how they looked like and everyone will know what we are talking about. But our visitors can see 500 hammers which we took pictures of. Our obligation is to offer original artifacts in their best form to be able to show even to a visitor from Alaska how the object looks like, to describe it in the language people understand. If it is a tune, we should record and transcribe it so that a man sitting in his armchair somewhere in Alaska can click on it and say: “This is Roma culture.” In order to enter a foreign country you need a passport, in order to enter a virtual museum you need a password which we are going to give you. With a password and one click you can enter into a completely different dimension of art which has a lot of steps and on each step you can find something that in-
terests you – a area in culture or perhaps the first Roma library “Trifun Dimić” or a European library whose application has 100000 digitalized documents. You should never think negatively about something you do not know. If you do not know one man’s language, you can not say he does not have one. Someone once called someone whose language they did not know “a German”. So do not let yourself become that “someone” who did not give themselves a chance by using a password and a click to experience the touch of Roma culture at a higher level.

Snežana Dimić

Exibits