

Romania: Public administration and accommodating diversity

Two meetings discussed how to develop wider understanding among civil servants of the role of public administration in accommodating diversity and developing good governance practices at local level, in order to address the needs of minorities.

Romania has made considerable progress in recent years in elaborating instruments to accommodate diversity. However, initiatives in relation to ethnocultural minorities do not go beyond existing legislation and its implementation. This was the background to EDRC's decision to organize two meetings in November 2006, to discuss with civil servants their communication strategies for dealing with members of different ethnocultural groups and to draw their attention to the relevance of this topic in view of widespread mobility and migration.

Participants in the meetings, which were held in Cluj-Napoca, were drawn from local authorities and from decentralized services of the Romanian government, including the county inspectorates responsible for labour, education, public health and interethnic relations, as well as the county office of the National Roma Agency and representatives from minorities' organizations. Discussions revealed the involvement of public administrations in a series of initiatives, especially ones relating to the situation of the Roma, mostly within the framework of the Romanian government's national strategy of improving the condition of the Roma.

The meetings showed the continued need to build capacity at local authority level with a view to the better accommodation of diversity and developing good governance practices, beyond that required by existing legislation. In order to address this shortcoming, two training sessions will be held with representatives from public administrations to increase local public servant capacity in addressing minority needs and accommodating diversity.

For further information, please contact Monica Căflăușer,
Project Coordinator,
EDRC, Cluj-Napoca
mcaluser@edrc.ro
www.edrc.ro