



evropský
sociální
fond v ČR



EVROPSKÁ UNIE



OPERAČNÍ PROGRAM
LIDSKÉ ZDROJE
A ZAMĚSTNANOST

PODPORUJEME
VAŠI BUDOUCNOST
www.esfcr.cz

Nieuwegein



An integrated approach towards of Roma complex families in Nieuwegein



Marijke Bosma
Municipality of Nieuwegein
March 2014



Background of Roma in Nieuwegein

- 400 Roma in a city with 60.000 civilians
- 30 years: 3 generations
- Living in houses throughout the city
- History of help & support



Main problems

- Absenteeism from school
- Unemployment & dependence on social benefits
- Debt problems
- High crime rates
- Anti social behavior in living areas
- Health problems
- Discrimination



A new municipal approach

- No sustainable results after 30 years focus on care & help
- Start pilot project “ Wisselgeld/Exchange in 2009
- Commitment on an integral approach: all problems are interrelated
- Focus on individual families; no group-approach



Something in return; “Exchange”

- Balance between care/help & setting boundaries
- Integrated method; professionals working together

3 basic rules:

1. Doing nothing is no longer an option
2. Treat all persons equally
3. Cultural differences can never be an excuse for wrongful behavior



Main objectives of pilot project

1. Improving the schooling of Roma children
2. Decreasing the reliance on social benefits
3. Decreasing poverty
4. Decreasing anti social behavior in living areas
5. Decreasing of criminality.

No strict targets, learning by doing



Priority: education.

- Basis for participation and emancipation
- Looking at child care in a different way





Characteristics of complex families

- Families with problems in several areas: housing, unemployment, health, low level of education, etc.
- Problems differ per family, but are interrelated
- Families also have problems with the way the government and other institutions organize their services.



1 Family, 1 plan, 1 director



Partners

- Office of the public prosecutor
- Police
- 3 housing corporations
- Welfare/community work (Movactor)
- Social Work (Vitras CMD)
- Bureau Youth Care
- Council of child protection
- Public Health service
- Cooperation of primary and secondary schools
- Several municipal departments



Results of the pilot project

- Participation of 27 families
- All 5+ children attend primary school
- Cautious progress in secondary school
- Less dependency on social benefits, but still few Roma involved in employment
- Less anti-social behavior in the neighbourhood
- Higher participation in debt relief programmes
- Less culture-excuses & fear by professionals





Current situation

- **End of 2011: approval of the city council to continue the project**
- **From 2012: the approach is no longer focused on Roma families only. 25% is of other background**
- **From 2013: the team of mediators/case managers has been extended to 4 and became a permanent team within the municipal organization**



Recommendations

1. An integrated approach of “ setting boundaries as well as offering perspectives” is essential to achieve progress in participation of Roma complex families



Recommendations

2. A general local policy or approach towards Roma will not be useful in improving the participation of Roma citizens. An individual approach is the only way.



Recommendations

3. The local municipality can't do it alone. It is necessary to build a local and regional network of multi level organizations co-operating together in a consistent and consequent way.



Recommendations

4. There will be no quick results: the problems of Roma are complex and have a long history. It will take many years to solve these problems and therefore it is necessary that both local and national governments commit themselves to continue with their integral programmes for a long time.

