

Social inclusion through employment: learning from Roma integration - The Tavistock Institute

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Research and guidance on good practices for policy makers and practitioners.

In partnership with Ealing Council and Creating Effective Grass Roots Alternatives (C.E.G.A) Foundation in Bulgaria, the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (TIHR) was commissioned to research the barriers to integration faced by the Roma community in Bulgaria. This included exploring measures to effectively support Roma and other excluded groups into education and employment. The aim was to study experiences in Bulgaria and to explore what the practices and policies on social inclusion are transferable to work with vulnerable groups in West London and the UK.

The overall methodology for the study was based on a 'realist synthesis review'. This approach takes evolving policy and practice contexts into consideration, by exploring how interventions are intended to work (their underlying rationale), alongside evidence of what works for which people and in what circumstances. The realist review maps the direction and journey of a policy or practice, with a particular focus on how 'context' influences any change, and how other factors such as changing structures, partnership and staff interactions, affect that journey. This is particularly important to ensure that research findings on best practice are transferable to local UK services, and given the diversity of Roma communities and other excluded groups.

The study has its limitations. A key challenge was that when discussing and examining relevant policies, programmes and projects in Bulgaria we found that monitoring and evaluation were neglected historically due to limited resources (though the situation is now changing). At the same time, there is also limited research and evaluation in the UK in the areas studied. Consequently, this paper is more based on 'soft' evidence as revealed to us through the small window provided by our research methodology. Where relevant statistical data was available we embedded it in the case vignettes. However, we hope to have provided the reader with rich material for thinking and working with, including thick descriptions of processes, mechanisms and practices. Alongside the final report, there is a map of further reading and organisations working in this field, as well as five practitioner briefings on the following topics:

- Adult Learning and Vocational Training
- Multi-Agency Needs-Based Practice
- Prioritising Education and Training
- Linking with Businesses and Tailoring to Employers' Needs
- Supported Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprises

Resources:

- [Good Practices in Social Inclusion through Employment- Final Research Paper](#)
- [Final Briefing 1 – Adult Learning and Vocational Training](#)
- [Final Briefing 2 – Multi-Agency Needs Based Practice](#)
- [Final Briefing 3 – Prioritising Education and Training](#)
- [Final Briefing 4 – Linking with Businesses and Tailoring to Employers Needs](#)
- [Final Briefing 5 – Entrepreneurship](#)
- [‘What if the job centre was reinvented by young people, for young people?’](#)

For more information on the research please contact [Dr Milena Stateva](#) or [Laura Stock](#).

For further practitioner expertise on Roma issues in the UK, please contact the [Roma Support Group](#), the UK's leading Roma-led charity at www.romasupportgroup.org.uk

For other rich resources and links to relevant organisations, see the Annexes of the paper.



Roma



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