

Exploring pathways to Roma participation

Brown bag lunch seminar

*Angela Kocze,
Recent PhD, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology*

The presentation is based on a dissertation, which explains and analyzes the manifestations of gender, ethnicity and class in contemporary Romani women's life. It closely observes 'women's issues' at the transnational and the local level, as well as discourses and activities through which they promote 'Romani women's rights' and 'human rights and democracy' under the banner of 'empowering Romani women'.

The focus is on transnational and local (particularly Hungarian) Romani women's political activism and social status, from the structural through the discursive and biographical level. In my presentation I would like to focus on my field research which relied on a feminist activist participatory research project. The participatory research project is a method to connect a community's participation and collaboration to social change projects. I believe, like many other feminist social researchers, that we should conduct and produce research in a way that the subjects, particularly women are active in it as well as are able to benefit from all the processes and findings. The research itself should become a tool to challenge existing inequalities.

*Joanna Kostka,
PhD candidate, Department of Public Policy*

The European cohesion policy makes its financing mechanisms, the Structural Funds, contingent on 'partnership principle' that calls for the involvement of an increasingly wide range of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of regional development plans. A defining feature of such interagency partnership is the manner in which skills, knowledge and expertise are shared in order to maximize the appropriateness, quality and efficiency of structural provisions. Such modus operandi has provided Roma-inclusion stakeholders with an unprecedented opportunity to integrate specificity of Roma needs in the regional development agenda and to become important beneficiaries of European funds.

This presentation examines partnership arrangements in the context of Roma-inclusion policies. Given that conventional channels of political influence do not represent Roma interests, the focus is placed on the efforts undertaken by the civil society to influence regional reform agendas and deliver SF to the target group. Looking at partnership in Spain and Slovakia I will argue that need or demands for participation opportunities cannot be effectively met without a corresponding increase in capacity of government to supply these opportunities and to respond to external stakeholder input.

Time: 14 November, 2011, 12.50 PM

Location: Central European University, Monument Building, Popper Room