CEB

COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK

CEB ACTIVITIES IN FAVOUR OF ROMA

In Europe, Roma* are amongst one of the most disadvantaged minorities.

Indeed, they suffer the highest unemployment rates, low levels of education as well as health and difficult housing conditions.



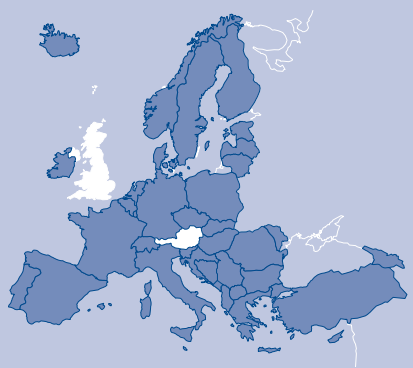
PRESENTING THE CEB

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) is a multilateral development bank comprising 40 Member States.

Placed under the authority of the Council of Europe, the Bank's main objective is to promote social cohesion. It is a key instrument of solidarity policy in Europe.

Set up in 1956, the Bank finances projects in its 40 Member States including, in particular, 18 Central and Eastern European countries.

Since its inception, the CEB's statutory priority has been to contribute to financing projects in favour of refugees, migrants, minorities, as well as victims of natural or ecological disasters.



www.coebank.org

THE CEB'S POLICY

CEB's policy aims in particular at:

- supporting governments and/or local authorities in their efforts to foster Roma integration by means of medium/long-term investment loans on favourable terms, particularly in the education, housing, health and job creation sectors.
- promoting Roma participation in the design and implementation of projects.
- monitoring the social impact of such projects which are sensitive by nature and difficult to implement.

For the last fifteen years the CEB has been involved in improving the living conditions of Roma communities.

THE CEB'S OPERATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

The Bank's principal tools are medium/long-term loans granted on attractive and flexible terms for social projects and programmes approved by the Administrative Council.

The Bank usually finances up to 50% of the total cost of the proposed investment. This limit may be exceeded in the case of certain priority projects, subject to approval by the Administrative Council.

The **Selective Trust Account (STA)**, fed from the CEB's profits, makes it possible to grant interest-rate subsidies for projects with a high social impact. The loans granted in favour of the Roma population have benefited from these interest-rate subsidies. On an exceptional basis, the STA may also be used to make donations.

The Bank's unique social mandate, which has attracted the interest of donors, and the increasing complexity of CEB projects have led to the establishment of other **trust accounts**: the Finland Trust Account (2001-2005), the Norway Trust Account (since 2004), the Human Rights Trust Fund (since 2008, in partnership with the Council of Europe, Norway, Germany and the Netherlands) and the Spanish Social Cohesion Account (since 2009). These accounts are also available to facilitate the preparation and financing of a wide range of pilot projects, including some in favour of Roma.

*The term «Roma» refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale, Travellers and related groups in Europe, and aims to cover the wide diversity of groups concerned, including the groups which identify themselves as Gypsies (according to The Strasbourg Declaration on Roma).



CEB ACTIVITIES IN FAVOUR OF ROMA

THE CEB AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON ROMA ISSUES

The Bank cooperates with the **Council of Europe**, as an observer, within the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers known as the «MG-S-ROM». The two institutions are complementary: the Council of Europe assists Member States in the drafting of national strategies in favour of Roma while the CEB supports governments by co-financing priority projects at national and local levels.

The CEB actively supported the creation of the **«Roma Education Fund»** by co-organising the Donors' Conference held in Paris in December 2004 and by providing financial support for the launching of this new institution.

The **«Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015»** was officially launched in Sofia in February 2005 to provide a forum for governments and international partners in order to accelerate the process of improving Roma living conditions in four chosen priority sectors: housing, education, health and employment. The CEB participates in the meetings of the International Steering Committee (ISC), the Decade's decision-making body.

The Bank also cooperates with:

• The **European Commission** and is closely monitoring the efforts undertaken by the Commission to achieve a better link between the Structural Funds and Roma inclusion initiatives.

• **The World Bank.** The CEB co-financed the conference «Roma in an expanding Europe», held in Budapest in July 2003 through a donation from the Finnish authorities. This conference was organised by the World Bank with the Open Society Institute (OSI) and supported by the European Commission. Following this conference, two initiatives were launched: the «Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015» and the «Roma Education Fund».



• **UN agencies** such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNICEF. These institutions act as implementing agencies for the projects approved and financed with CEB donations.

• **Non-Governmental Organisations** active on Roma issues, such as SPOLU International, Rraje (Roma Rights and Access to Justice in Europe), a Dutch NGO active in the Czech Republic, Bulgaria and Romania, and the *Fundación Secretariado General Gitano* (FSGG), a Spanish foundation with a long experience in the implementation of projects in Spain and Central and Eastern Europe.

The **«EU Roma Summits»** in Brussels in 2008 and in Cordoba in April 2010 contributed to accelerating awareness concerning the issue of Roma inclusion.

The CEB participated in the **«Council of Europe High-level Meeting on Roma»**, held on 20 October 2010 in Strasbourg. In particular, this meeting enabled the adoption of the «Strasbourg Declaration on Roma» promoting actions aimed at improving the living conditions of Roma communities.

The CEB also took part in the **«Summit of Mayors on Roma»** held on 22 September 2011 in Strasbourg. Participation in this event was twofold, consisting of a presentation of the Bank's action within the framework of the session devoted to financing activities in favour of Roma inclusion and an information stand.

The CEB will continue to support these initiatives in co-operation with all interested parties. The Bank stands ready to finance suitable loan projects in accordance with its mission, operational tools, and financial possibilities.

Resources allocated for Roma by the CEB*	
Loans	25.90 million euros
Donations	2.67 million euros
Total	**28.57 million euros**

*Except projects in favour of disadvantaged populations resulting in indirect benefit to the Roma (cf. page 4).



CEB DONATIONS

From the Selective Trust Account

In 1999, 1 120 000 euros allocated to a project implemented by the UNDP in «the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia» and aimed at improving the water distribution network in two villages that had taken in refugees of Roma origin from Kosovo.

In 2001, 300 000 euros in favour of Roma and Serb minorities from Kosovo, for a project coordinated and implemented by UNHCR.

Purpose: to finance two sub-projects, one worth 150 000 euros to establish a bus service for the Serb community and the other, also worth 150 000 euros, to improve housing conditions for some 160 Roma families.

In 2003, 450 000 US dollars for a project coordinated and implemented by the local UNICEF office in «the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia».

Purpose: to finance a project to improve access to formal education for Roma children, girls and young women, including notably the rehabilitation of schools for 15 000 children on 11 sites, and health education for 6 000 families.

In 2004, on an exceptional basis, the Bank made a contribution of 560 000 euros to the «Roma Education Fund»; 500 000 euros of this amount came from the Selective Trust Account and 60 000 euros from the Finland Trust Account.

In 2005, 150 000 euros for the Municipality of Nova Zagora (south-eastern plains of Bulgaria) to improve access to formal education for Roma children.

Purpose: to finance renovation works on three kindergartens in Nova Zagora and in the neighbouring villages. In addition to these construction works the project provides for the training of teachers and staff at the kindergartens with boarding-school arrangement and other outreach activities within the Roma community in order to increase school enrolment of Roma children.

From the Norway Trust Account*

Since 2004, donations in favour of three pilot projects have been approved in favour of the «the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia» for a total amount of 207 000 euros:

- The first project is aimed at community development in four Roma communities and conducted in cooperation with SPOLU International (Dutch foundation).
- The second project concerns improvements in the employment of Roma women through the granting of micro credits, in cooperation with the Open Society Institute (OSI).
- The third project involves the development and testing of a new loan product, namely micro-credit for Roma housing. It is a joint initiative between the Horizonti Foundation (an institution specialised in micro-credit) and Habitat for Humanity (active in the housing field). The two institutions have established a «Housing Fund for Roma and Marginalised Groups».



* The Norway Trust Account (NTA) was set up in 2004 on the initiative of the Norwegian Authorities in order to provide for the implementation of various activities in favour of the Western Balkans.

CEB ACTIVITIES IN FAVOUR OF ROMA

CEB PROJECTS

In 2000, a project worth 3.3 million euros was approved in favour of the Municipality of Sofia, Bulgaria, with a guarantee from the Bulgarian Government. It was the first pilot project to be part of a municipal scheme to promote the inclusion of the Roma community in the city, in line with the national integration programme.

Purpose: to finance the construction of housing and infrastructure for 1 600 Roma living in Slatina, a disadvantaged district of Sofia.

In 2001, two projects were approved:

• 5.4 million euros in favour of Bulgaria, through the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works.

Purpose: to finance the construction of 284 family dwellings and basic infrastructure for 2 300 Roma inhabitants of two disadvantaged districts in the city of Plovdiv.

• 4.2 million euros to *Caja Madrid*, for the Acceder Programme (Spain), managed by the *Fundación Secretariado General Gitano* (FSGG), a public foundation with social aims.

Purpose: to provide vocational training for 20 000 young Roma in Spain, thereby enabling 4 000 of them to find employment over the period 2001-2006.

In 2005, the first comprehensive pilot project was approved within the framework of the «Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015».

A loan worth 5 million euros was granted to Hungary via the Ministry of Finance, which was entrusted with overall responsibility for the project. The project was implemented by the Department for Roma Integration at the Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

Purpose: the primary focus was to improve housing conditions for Roma families living in several municipalities and to promote social integration through accompanying measures aimed at improving the health and education status of such families.

In June 2010, following on from a project set up in 2001 in favour of the Acceder Programme (Spain), and managed by the *Fundación Secretariado General Gitano* (FSGG), a project worth 8 million euros was approved via *Caja Madrid*.



Purpose: this new project, for the period 2010-2013, is articulated around three complementary thrusts:

• to offset the effects of the economic crisis, including the increase in unemployment.

• to take action in the education sector to prevent early school leaving and strengthen educational attainment.

• to foster the social and vocational integration of the Roma population.

In 2011, two important projects were approved in favour of vulnerable population groups, including Roma:

• **28.5 million euros** to finance the construction, renovation and refurbishment of student halls of residence in **Serbia**. The Roma are among the beneficiaries of the quota of places reserved for vulnerable populations.

• **150 million euros** for the financing of prevention and reconstruction work following two major disasters that occurred in **Hungary** in 2010. The large sedentarised Roma community in the worst hit region are among the disadvantaged inhabitants targeted by this project.

Contacts:

www.coebank.org

For further information, please contact: info@coebank.org

Vision Unit Paris - Photos Jean-Luc Mège

December 2011

CEB
COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK

CEB - Council of Europe Development Bank
55, avenue Kléber - FR-75116 PARIS, France
Telephone: +33 (0)1 47 55 55 00 · Fax: +33 (0)1 47 55 03 38 · www.coebank.org