

PRESS TRAINING FOR LAWYERS AND LEGAL PRACTITIONERS

BY JL

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Betnava Hotel

In 2023, the Association EPEKA, Soc. Ent., is organising a training for lawyers and legal practitioners in the framework of the PRESS project. The event is organised in cooperation with lawyer Slavko Vesenjāk.

The project Promoting Roma Equality in Slovenia and Slovakia – PRESS, in which EPEKA Slovenia is a partner, aims to promote and protect the rights of Roma facing discrimination by raising awareness among society and stakeholders, improving the implementation of non-discrimination legislation and empowering Roma to seek legal aid in Slovakia and Slovenia.

More specifically, we aim to: strengthen knowledge on anti-discrimination legislation and access to justice among lawyers, civil society organisations, Roma mediators, activists and decision-makers/politicians; strengthen the capacity and willingness of lawyers to provide legal assistance to Roma in addressing discrimination; strengthen the capacity of civil society to support and represent Roma communities facing discrimination; and improve access to justice for the Roma community in both target countries.

The project aims to create a virtuous circle in which greater involvement of Roma in mechanisms for access to justice will lead to more and better cases, benefiting Roma communities and increasing confidence in legal remedies and lawyers, and stimulating even more cases. The initial research and the baseline study prepared by researcher Jerica Lorenci raised awareness of the different areas of discrimination against Roma and the obstacles to their access to justice among decision-makers at local, national and European level, civil society and the general public.

The main project methodology involves capacity building, which is at least to some extent sustainable if key qualified staff are still involved in the community in some way. Roma mediators working in the field will support Roma in a way that they will apply their knowledge gained in the mediator training and will be a contact between lawyers and Roma. As a result, they will be able to pass on cases they become aware of as long as legal aid is available for discrimination complaints/advice.

As part of the training, we will first train lawyers and legal practitioners and provide them with a legal manual, which will be produced by the project and presented to interested parties. Later, with the participation of some trained Roma mediators and lawyers, the project will identify cases of discrimination in the Roma community and provide legal assistance in cases of discrimination.

Participants will also receive materials related to the topics discussed.

PRESS Training Programme for lawyers and legal practitioners

- 13:00 – 14:00 Welcome and coffee and snack break
- 14:00 – 14:20 Welcome address by Štefan Simončič, President of the Association EPEKA, Soc. Ent., and presentation of the PRESS project and PRESS research by Jerica Lorenci
- 14:20 – 14:40 A brief history of the Roma
- 14:40 – 15:00 Situation of Roma in Slovenia
- 15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break
- 15:30 – 16:30 What legal remedies exist to fight discrimination
- 16:30 – 17:30 Discrimination policies and legislation: the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights and national legislation



- 17:30 – 18:30 Anti-discrimination (hate speech) legislation in Slovenia (basic cases), European Court of Human Rights, cases from Slovenia
- 18:30 – 19:00 Potential cases of discrimination against Roma in Slovenia and an overview of the EPEKA case
- 19:00 – 19:30 Conclusion, types of legal advice, combination of legal aid for Roma and representation
- 19:30 Dinner

You're kindly invited to look at the [Handbook for lawyers: the legal situation and discrimination of Roma in Slovenia – Quo vadis, Slovenia?](#) (in Slovenian language)

Further information related to the project can be obtained at epeka@epeka.si

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