

## Training for the Social Professions and Romany Integration Projects

### Situation

Tuzla's 150'000 inhabitants make it one of the larger cities in Bosnia-Herzegovina. During the war, refugees from Srebrenica – mainly women and children – came to Tuzla fleeing military violence. Today the streets are lined with child beggars, most of them from the Romany communities.

Because they are poorer than the rest of the population, many Romanies live precariously in temporary camps. The children are sent out to beg, instead of to school. Girls are married off and bear children at a very early age. Romany tradition and the patriarchal extended family structure prevent women from integrating into the broader society. Many of them are unaware of the importance of education.

In some parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina the unemployment rates are as high as 70%. University students are not taught the practical skills necessary to begin professional life. In particular, graduates of the social or educational faculties face huge difficulties when it comes to starting work and school drop-outs are on the increase.

Besides helping with humanitarian aid, our partner organization Amica Educa has been organizing medical and psychosocial care. They have recently started a counselling service for traumatised women and girls. Amica Educa offers educational training for workers in social centres, orphanages, schools, kindergartens, remedial schools and special needs institutions, many of whom suffer from symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorders themselves.

### Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tuzla



The practical training of social workers includes creative therapies such as art therapy.  
Photo: Amica Educa

## Aims

Provide professionals and students with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience and improve their psychosocial and educational methodology so that they are able to offer their clients a high quality of service. This approach aims to improve the psychosocial and educational services in Tuzla while focussing on the needs of the local population.

Working with Romany women, a sensitive and cooperative approach is used to develop appropriate psychosocial and educational programmes that support Romany mothers and improve the education of their children.

## Target Groups

- Professionals working in the social and educational fields
- Romany women and children in the rural areas around Tuzla
- Students of the social and educational professions
- Clients receiving psychosocial care or special education in the social centres, such as orphans or children and adults with developmental disorders and psychological problems
- Responsible officers in institutions and the ministries for health, education and social services

## Activities

- Seminars for professionals and students in the social and educational fields: family constellation work, family and couple therapy, non-violent communication skills, therapeutic art work  
Education concerning sexual abuse
- Training courses on communication skills, problem solving and project development with key persons and multipliers
- Psychosocial support for Romany women with group and individual counselling to improve empowerment and child development
- Special workshops for Romany children in order to playfully teach social conduct, conflict resolution and to bring the dangers of drug abuse and prostitution to their attention
- Developing communication material
- Public relations work
- Political lobbying

## Partner organisation

Amica Educa  
[www.amica-educa.com.ba](http://www.amica-educa.com.ba)

## Country, region, town:

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tuzla

**Duration of project:** since 2010

**Financial support 2010:** CHF 47'000

**Direct beneficiaries:** some 200 women and children per year

**Person responsible:**  
Annette Dietschy

## How your donation helps:

**25 Swiss Francs** pay for a session of individual counselling.

**45 Swiss Francs** cover the fees for one seminar day.

**120 Swiss Francs** enable an expert to hold a seminar lasting one day.



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Empowers women. Opens up perspectives.

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