

## The mediator...

**1** respects the human rights and the dignity of all persons and acts with honesty and integrity in performing his/her duties

*By showing clearly this human rights perspective and respect for human dignity, the mediator will have the trust of both Roma community and public institution, and will be respected as a professional with specific tasks. The mediator will thus be also a role model for members of Roma community and for the staff of the institution interacting with Roma.*

**2** works to ensure equal access to rights while respecting legal requirements and administrative procedures

*The main mission of the mediator is to ensure that members of the Roma communities enjoy full access to their rights and are supported in overcoming the possible barriers which can hinder real equality in rights. This means sometimes that special measures need to be taken in order to take into account the specific needs and possibilities of the Roma. However, these measures should not be individual exceptions from complying with administrative requirements. When it is necessary, the mediator should indicate to the institutions concerned that a change in a specific procedure is needed. This approach is the only one compatible with the principles of democracy and rule of law*

**3** is responsible to help those concerned find mutually satisfactory solutions but does not have the responsibility to provide solutions to all problems raised by beneficiaries or by the staff of the institution

*The mediator will listen to the needs of the members of the Roma community and of the staff of the institution and will help them understand each other. The mediator does not have look for "who is to blame", to decide what is the best solution, nor to tell to the Roma or to the staff of the institutions what to do. His/her role is to ask those concerned how they want the situation to change, what they can do for this and what support will be needed from the mediator. This makes the mediator impartial, but not uninvolved, and careful to address in a balanced way the needs of Roma and of the staff of the public institution. This also prevents abusive requests and unjustified pressure from both parties.*

# Code of Ethics for Mediators

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## **4** is proactive, has prompt reactions and develops sound prevention activities.

In many cases, Roma people do not know the rights they have and how to enjoy them. Thus, the mediator will be proactive, will not just wait for a problem to appear but analyse permanently the situation and raise awareness of all stakeholders on the issues identified. Prompt responses are given to all cases and situations signalled by community members or staff of the institutions. The analysis of the various challenges and solutions found leads to ideas for well planned prevention activities, avoiding repetition or extension of problematic situations.

## **5** keeps confidentiality of the information obtained in the course of professional activities

All information obtained in the process of work will be kept confidential, will not be disclosed to other persons or institutions, unless there is an explicit agreement of the person who provided the information, and with the only exception of situations when the safety of a person is threatened. Those who speak to the mediator should be informed about the commitment to confidentiality. No person, even the head of the institution employing the mediator, is allowed to ask the mediator to break confidentiality. Information obtained which is of general interest can be communicated in a way to preserve the anonymity of the source, with the agreement of the source

## **6** does not use his/her role and power to manipulate or to harm others

The role of the mediator provides access to information and a series of contacts within the community and the institutions. The mediator should not use the power generated by this information or the prerogatives connected to the role of mediator to manipulate or harm other people.

**7** respects the traditions and culture of the communities, provided that they are compatible with the key principles of human rights and democracy. Some communities have specific traditions, ways of life and cultural norms, different from those of the majority society. The mediator will get to know these traditions and norms, respect them, and support outsiders or understand and respect them as well. The only exception is when some community norms or customs are not compatible with the principles of human rights and democracy.

## **8** will treat all community members with equal respect and disclose publicly situations of conflict of interests

Regardless of their gender, age, status in the community, etc, the mediator will show equal respect to all beneficiaries and deal with their requests in a transparent and fair way. When somebody is given a priority on a matter, the reason has to be clear for all and justified. When relatives of the mediator or other persons close to the mediator are involved in a conflict, the situation should be indicated and external support for mediation should be requested.

## **9** makes a clear distinction between professional and private activities

It is necessary for the mediator to make explicit the boundaries between professional activities and private life. Having a strong commitment for the problems of the community does not mean being available at all times for requests of community members. Community members should be informed about the work schedule of the mediator and about the ways to contact the mediator.

## **10** collaborates with other mediators and with other professionals

The mediator is a professional which needs to maintain strong collaboration with other professionals (health professionals, social workers, teachers, etc) in order to accomplish his/her tasks. Mediators will support each other in their work. All mediators will use opportunities available to them for exchanging experiences and for sharing successful solutions and useful information