



Greek Ombudsman’s communication and public awareness activities in 2013 – 2014, within the framework of the EU Progress Programme

Between April 2013 and March 2014, the Greek Ombudsman has carried out a set of communication activities that were funded by the **Progress Programme** of the European Union. In detail, these activities were the following:

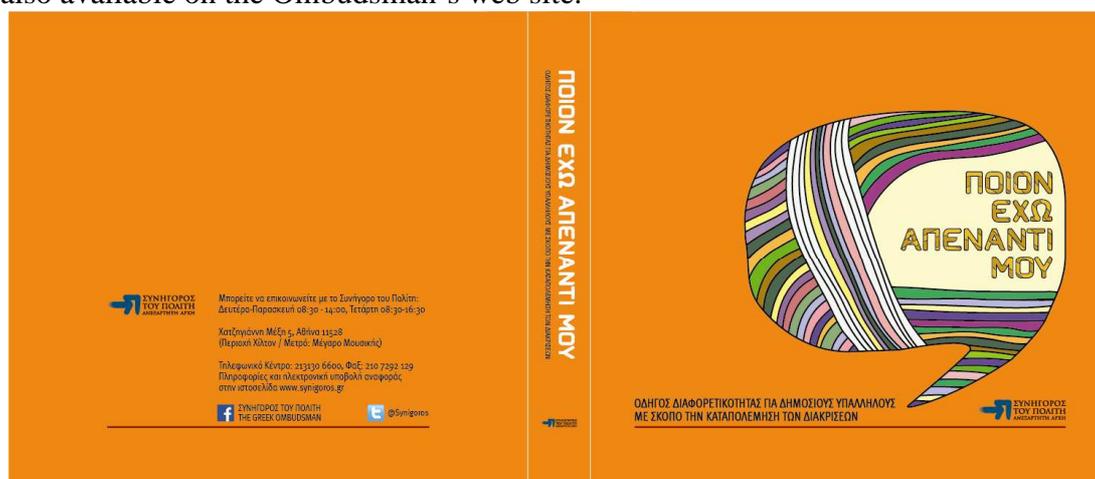
- **Publication of leaflets** describing the GO competence on discrimination issues, how the institution mediates in cases falling within its mandate as well as the procedure of submitting a complaint. The leaflet is available in the Ombudsman’s reception area in its offices and in every contact opportunity with the wider public (information events, field missions, conferences, festivals etc.). The target was the provision of information to the wider public on the mandate of the Ombudsman as a Specialized Equality Body for the promotion and implementation of the principle of equal treatment in the public sector. Also, through the use of this tool, the Ombudsman informs targeted audiences on the types of discrimination that are covered by the legislation and the means of remedy, with the view to increasing visibility by raising awareness. Two thousand leaflets were published, half of which have been already disseminated. The leaflet is also available at: http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/toolip/doc/2014/03/07/sinigoros_2013_discrimination.pdf



- **Public information days** on anti-discrimination legislation
 This activity involved four (4) missions of GO staff in Greek provincial capitals (Ioannina, Patras, Thessaloniki, Volos). It was based on the long experience and common practice of the GO institution in implementing public information events with the participation of local administration, NGOs and local media. There was also a parallel operation of a citizen’s reception desk where citizens could receive personalized information and could submit their complaints *in situ*.
 This was an effort to decentralize the Ombudsman’s services, but primarily the aim was to inform the local societies on the mandate of the GO and to raise awareness of potential

victims of discrimination. The events attracted considerable media attention. Particular mention needs to be made of the event in Patras (18/3/14) where the Ombudsman's Human Rights promotion activities, combined with the local administration and local society activities, resulted into a full day of parallel events, dubbed as "Day of Rights in Patras".

- In the beginning of 2014 the Ombudsman has also produced and disseminated an **information manual for the public administrators on issues of "otherness"**. This refers to the creation and publication of a manual on issues of discrimination, especially designed to help civil servants in the treatment of sensitive cases involving discrimination issues. This publication is in the form of a dossier, which can be easily enriched with future add-ons or data adjusted to the needs of the targeted service. The goal is to deliver [the manual](#) to all head offices of the country's administration. Meanwhile it is also available on the Ombudsman's web site.



- Organization on 28 March 2014 of a **Roma inclusion national event** on a central location in Athens (i.e. in the "Europe Direct" facility of the municipality of Athens, which is a cultural facility) for the purpose of presenting best practices, research material and exchange on the issue of implementation of EU and national strategy for the Roma inclusion. The meeting brought together stakeholders of the central state mechanism and specialized NGOs which are members of the GO cooperation network for Roma issues. Also, the event incorporated international expert participants who are members of the specialized workgroups on Roma in which the GO participates.
- **Integrated interventions on Roma hot – spots settlements.** This activity involved four (4) on-spot investigations in problematic settlements of Roma populations around Greece (specifically in the areas of Kalamata, Thessaloniki, Karditsa, Lefkada). Meetings were held with Roma and local authorities on the current issues creating social frictions. Also, there was a collection of data on Roma populations, their housing situation, school attendance and other factors related to their social inclusion, such as local initiatives and possible projects to be implemented. Presentation of the collected data is available on the GO's [web pages on Roma issues](#). The aim of the GO was, on the one hand, to contribute to the promotion of solutions for critical cases of social exclusion and address them in relation to the implementation of the national action plan for the integration of Roma, while also collecting field data and disseminating them through the GO reports and internet resources.

- **Expansion of the GO special web pages on Roma issues**, dubbed as “Ombudsman for the Roma” and their translation in the English language. These pages contain an interactive mapping of the problematic areas, as they are deduced from the GO’s long experience. This is also a place of promoting good practices in the field. The Greek language home-page of these resources, which contains the full updated version of the GO Roma material is available at: <http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=maps.el>, and the English language home-page is available at: <http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=maps.en>

