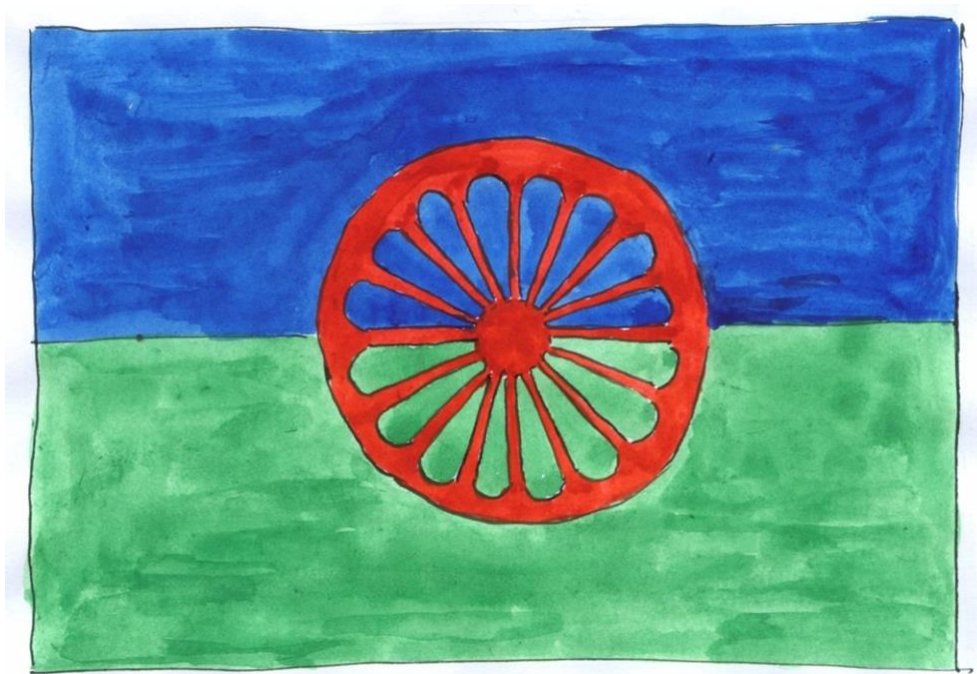


# Resilience: Roma children with a parent in prison



## Project overview



This is a [Children of Prisoners Europe](#) project carried out with COPE member [Romodrom o.p.s](#) (Czech Republic).

## I. Project Description

The project will allow children who have a parent in prison to experience a sports afternoon combined with a cultural program. Romodrom predominantly work with families of a Romani ethnicity, as such the whole event will focus on the presentation of Romani music via a workshop in conjunction with sports events. The event will feature football games with parents (or caregivers) outside of prison, children, staff of Romodrom o.p.s. prison program and invited institutional representatives. The project focuses on two key activities:

1. **Organisation of a sports afternoon** - a football game will be organised at a selected sports ground in Liberec for parents and relatives of people in prison, their children and loved ones. As a supporting program, there will be workshops with other activities, including circus elements or a weight training/MMA workshop, according to the preference of the children, and other demonstrations of non-traditional sports.
2. **A musical and cultural program** will be part of the afternoon. There will be workshops on Romani music and dance, as well as art workshops, plus live music for participants. Indirect activities that are part of the event:
  - Presentation of Romodrom o.p.s.' prison outreach program and other activities.
  - Presentation on social media and official communication channels of Romodrom o.p.s. well in advance.

## II. Targeted groups

The main target group is **children with parents and relatives in prison**. The situation of children with parents and relatives in prison is exacerbated by stigmatisation, a worsened financial situation that often does not allow children to attend standard leisure activities and increased stress caused by the absence of a close person for a long period of time.

A secondary target group is the **child's caregivers**, who are affected by the absence of an imprisoned parent in much the same way as the child. In addition, there are the staff of Romodrom o.p.s., for whom the sports afternoon will give insight into the behaviour of participants in a different perspective, and representatives of the collaborating institutions, who will have the opportunity to interact with staff and participants in a different setting

## III. Objectives

The project's main concern is to meet the needs of children with limited ability to spend their free time productively and meaningfully due to limited family financial resources, stigma and shame associated with the incarceration of a parent or loved one, and the subsequent ostracization of the child's peer group.

The event is planned as a peer-to-peer event for children. The shared experience will be enhanced by sharing a situation that children otherwise have to deal with independently or only in a family setting. The shared experiences of people in prison will enable the person in prison to maintain a relationship with their family. Although we are unable to host a similar in-prison event as part of this project, we are in discussions with prisons to allow access to ensuing events. This event promotes sustainability of future events to come, involving the imprisoned parent.

A range of activities will be presented at this event, including the official launch of the new 'Dads Reading to Children' project, which has already started and the first read-aloud story for children of men in prison will be presented at the time of the event. The event will thus be logically connected with other activities of the Romodrom o.p.s. prison programme.

#### **IV. List of Activities**

- Sports activities
- Musical accompaniment and music workshop
- Information dissemination
- Leisure activities – upon child's choice (cirque artist, other sports, atr and comcs workshop ets.)
- Involving children in decision-making
- Feedback and follow-up

#### **V. Child participation**

Romodrom will ensure a strong involvement of children who have parents or caregivers in prison.

Concerning sports activities, the main line will be a football match with streetfootball rules (i.e., referee is not set, teams keep the rules themselves and in case of disagreements a vote is allowed, substitution is not limited, the time arrangement of the match is again chosen by the teams themselves, most often played for 3x 20 min).

As for musical activities, children will be part of the organisation of the workshops, which will be planned according to their current musical interest (e.g. rap, use of beats or musical instruments).

In case of unclear or unrealistic expectations of the children from this event, a focus group will be prepared to determine the design of the event.

As for the leisure and accompanying activities, their choice will be fully designed according to the children's preferences. Staff will hold a semi-structured interview to determine the children's needs (e.g., referred time period — fall break, Saturday, Sunday, after school, etc.). If their expectations of the event are unclear or unrealistic, a focus group will be held to determine the design of the event.

The semi-structured interview will be with children with whom the fieldworkers are in contact and have a service contract with the parents. The interview with the child will be conducted in the presence of the parent and with his/her permission. The minimum number of respondents is 15.

#### **VI. Ethics**

This project aims at the horizontal principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination. Sensitivity to gender inequality is cultivated in Romodrom o.p.s. through regular training (this topic is treated in the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Directive), and there is also an area in the Code of Ethics dedicated to this topic; every employee is obliged to comply with this code. Specifically in this project, increased attention is paid to the area of relatives and close persons of those in prison, who are mainly women. In this case, then, most organisational duties fall solely on them and they can find themselves facing double stigma— as a single mother and with a partner in prison.

Sport is a natural connector. At the event there will be an increased focus on respect for the rules and non-discrimination for all participants. The event removes barriers to leisure activities for children who do not have opportunities to engage in such activities or a supportive family background. To help fulfill the non-discrimination element, jerseys will create a sense of team spirit regardless of the child's entry requirements.

As a civil society organisation, Romodrom is dedicated to creating opportunities for people and children with disabilities and thus contributing to the elimination of discrimination. Romodrom o.p.s. is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation established for the purpose of removing barriers and causes of discrimination— all staff and projects always aim at removing or eliminating the causes of social exclusion.

## **VII. Child Safeguarding**

The project is sensitive to child safeguarding risk management and includes measures and strategies to address difficulties.

Starting from accompaniment during the event, children will be escorted to the finish station to reduce the risk of injury or other hazards. Some Romodrom staff will be on hand during the event to assist independent participants. Should a child be of an age that does not allow independent participation, staff are prepared to put such a child in contact with carers.

In case of manifestation of inappropriate behaviour by a parent or caregiver, staff are prepared to step in and create a proctor to safely de-escalate the conflict. To face risks of injuries, all Romodrom o.p.s. staff regularly undergo mandatory first aid training and are able to provide first aid in case of injury, including the following steps such as contacting a caregiver, calling the emergency services, etc.

Regarding media promotion without the consent of the child or legal guardian, the PR department will monitor and publicize the event according to the schedule. The basic rule for media coverage of children is to primarily avoid portraying them, but if the caregiver AND the child give permission, illustrative shots may be used. Awareness of protecting the child from stigma is a priority here.

Finally, regarding prevention of crossing boundaries, staff will undergo training in prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. When violations occur, the measures set out in the documents will be applied, including termination of the employee's employment.

**VIII. Estimated budget**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount (EUR)</b>
Venue rental	1387
Performer & instructor fees (football instructor, musicians)	2378
Basic refreshments — snacks, drinks	317
Coordination and administration	475,5
Merchandise, jerseys, banners, flyers	277,4
Project promotion & sustainability	5165,1
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>10,000</b>

-----

Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) is a pan-European network of non-profit organisations working with and on behalf of children separated from an imprisoned parent. The network encourages innovative perspectives and practices to ensure that children with an imprisoned parent fully enjoy their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and that action is taken to enable their well-being and development.

Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) [contact@networkcope.eu](mailto:contact@networkcope.eu)  
<http://childrenofprisoners.eu/>

© Children of Prisoners Europe 2024

Children of Prisoners Europe is a non-profit organisation registered in France under French Association law 1901.

SIRET: 437 527 013 00027