



Book review

MARIEA IONESCU, SIMONA MARIA STĂNESCU, PUBLIC POLICIES FOR THE ROMA, 2014, BUCHAREST: PRO UNIVERSITARIA

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Increasing importance is attached at the national and international levels to the design and application of public policies for the Roma, which to yield beneficial results for the improvement of their situation. It is therefore recommended to record updated and periodical data in order to reveal the progress acquired by the public policies for the Roma and to outline the complex frameworks of intervention and cooperation within the European area. From the detailed evaluations of particular projects and programs addressing the Roma it is important to make comparative analyses of the policies implemented for the Roma.

To this extent, the book “Public policies for the Roma”, published in Bucharest (ProUniversitaria, 2014, 118 pp.), is authored by Mariea Ionescu and Simona Maria Stănescu, whose relevant experience contributed to the development of a reference book. Thus, Mariea Ionescu – counsellor and doctor in sociology, makes a significant contribution by her professional practice within the professional activities of the National Roma Agency, and by the expertise she acquired within her relations with the structures of the civil society; Simona Maria Stănescu – researcher and doctor in sociology, gives a rigorous methodological framework by the expertise she acquired within the Research Institute for Quality of Life, and by her coordination and implementation of many projects.

The book consists of two parts, written by the two authors. Thus, Mariea Ionescu documented and wrote part I “Evaluation report of the national programs financed by the European Union, targeting the inclusion of the Roma people living in Romania”, while Simona Maria Stănescu documented and wrote part II, “Comparative report on the financing programs for the Roma minorities; success and failure: Albania, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania, Serbia and Hungary”. The book provides a complex national analysis by presenting detailed aspects of financing the public policies for the Roma; additionally,

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the book makes a comparative analysis of the success and failure recorded in six European countries, among which Romania. The book, published by ProUniversitaria publishing house, is an outcome of the project “*Efficient programs for the active/inclusive integration of the Roma in South-Eastern Europe*”. Priority axis: Development of transnational synergies to support the areas with sustainable growth, financed by the European Commission (CE), through the program of transnational cooperation South-East Europe, implemented by 18 partners from 8 countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Italy, Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Serbia and Slovakia (the partners from Romania are the National Roma Agency (ANR) and the Agency for Community Development “Together”).

As mentioned in the Introduction, the purpose of the book is to “identify and analyse the successes and failures of the public policies from the partner countries, with the purpose to identify the strengths and weaknesses, to analyse the financing frameworks of the projects aiming the social inclusion of the Roma, and to formulate recommendations for the European and national stakeholders which to promote the improvement of the financial programs and national strategies” (p.19).

The book, composed as a comprehensive research report, relied on the use of two research methods: desk analysis of official documents relevant for the research topic, and the desk analysis of the information provided by the subject experts in the national reports from the mentioned project. The first part of the book consists of four chapters which analyse the public policies and the stakeholders whose objective is the integration/inclusion of the Roma minority, the mechanism of coordination, implementation and monitoring of the public policies for the Roma, to present the results of the opportunities explored by the identified stakeholders and the lessons learnt, whose purpose is to prepare the process of developing the national policies and the European regulations for 2014-2020. This part also has a part of conclusions and general recommendations. The second part of the research report consists of five chapters which approach the issues of acknowledgement of the Roma minority in the surveyed countries; public policies – institutional framework and regulations regarding the Roma minority; (inter)national financing programs for the Roma in each of the surveyed countries; key elements and discrepancies in education, occupation, healthcare, dwelling and structural requirements; learnt lessons in terms of the successes and failures in those countries; recommendations for the improvement of the subsequent programs.

The book integrates the analytical attempts to identify the public policies for the Roma financed from non-reimbursable sources of the European Union, within the context in which the absorption of the structural funds is an important subject of analysis of the recent national analyses (Cace C. et al. 2010a; Cace C. et al. 2010b; Cace C. et al. 2011; Cace C. et al. 2012).

The book is the outcome of the implementation partners from Romania of the mentioned project, the National Roma Agency (ANR) and the Agency for Community Development “Together”. The abundant information is the result of an effort of collection, aggregation and synthesis of the main dimensions of the public policies for the Roma from Romania and from several other European countries.

References

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