

The Most Roma Friendly Mayor Award

18/05/2022 European Parliament, 16:30 – 19:30

Room 3D - Third Floor Multimedia

The concept of “**The Most Roma Friendly Mayor**” award is a local advocacy component of the project **Romani Women Power of Change in the Western Balkans and Turkey (Power of Change)**.

“**The Most Roma Friendly Mayor**” is envisaged as a regional campaign aiming to mobilize Roma communities and strengthen their ability to engage in dialogue with public authorities. Boosting the dialogue with public authorities, the project partners focused on further raising awareness in municipal administrations of Roma issues when electing the “The Most Roma Friendly Mayor”.

The Power of Change project is implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey. The local advocacy took place in all the Western Balkans region and Turkey, and the selection panel selected among the nominated mayors, only one - The Most Roma Friendly Mayor - to receive the award in Brussels.

The award ceremony will take place in the frame of the Roma Week, from 16:30 to 18:15 in the European Parliament. The award ceremony will be hosted by MEP Romeo Franz and opened by a representative of the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).

The peak of the campaign in Brussels aims to create strong synergies with the actions that took place across the Western Balkan and Turkey, but also the EU Member States at the local and national level.

The Power of Change project coordinated by Roma Active Albania and ERGO Network will bring to Brussels 7 Most Roma Friendly Mayors and the project partners representatives of Roma Civil Society organisations.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



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Outline of the ceremony

16:15 **Registration**

16:45 **Welcome address**

Romeo Franz Member of the European parliament, Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance, Chair of the Delegation for relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo Co-President of ARDI Intergroup

Video message from **Mr. Olivér Várhelyi**, European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement

Ms. Marta Garcia Fidalgo, Advisor, Roma Integration Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission

Gabriela Hrabanova, Director ERGO NETWORK

Adriatik Hasantari, Director Roma Active Albania, General Manager of **Power of Change**

17:15 - 18:15 **Awards to the Most Roma Friendly Mayors** from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey

Ms. Michela Matuella, Acting Director for Western Balkans, Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission (hand over awards)

18:15 **Closing remarks and photo** of the award ceremony participants

19:00 **Networking cocktail** ERGO Network (venue: Kamilou- Address: Rue Joseph II 36, 1000 Bruxelles)

The event is by invitation only.

Please confirm your participation on the event, via email to the address: info@ergonetwork.org

For more information about the event, please contact Jamen Gabriela Hrabanova, Director ERGO Network, g.hrabanova@ergonetwork.org, +32 0489 974 753 and Adriatik Hasantari, Roma Active Albania, a.hasantari@gmail.com, +35 569 205 8782.



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