

The advocacy process

Advocacy training

“Learn how to fight for your rights”

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European Roma Information Office

The advocacy process

Advocacy is a **dynamic** process involving different stages. The advocacy stages should be considered as **flexible** because they may occur simultaneously or progressively or the process may stall or inverse itself.

The advocacy process

1. Identify the advocacy scope
2. Identify the issue or initiative
3. Identify audiences
4. Target arenas of influence
5. Develop key messages
6. Fundraising
7. Evaluate your efforts

1. Identify the advocacy scope

The first step when developing your advocacy action is to identify at what level you want to carry out your activities. You can act at **local**, **national** and/or **European** level.

2. Identify the issue or initiative

It is important that you identify a policy issue that needs to be addressed and that you would like to advocate for. The more familiar with the situation you become, the more persuasive you can be. This step involves some examination of the situation you want to address. E.g. by examining how the situation is now will help you identify how the situation should be. Once this analysis is done, you are then able to identify what and who needs to change and why the change is needed.

3. Identify audiences

After you have identified the issue and the goals, you must select the people or group you want to direct your message to. In order to have effective advocacy actions, it is essential to determine who are the most influential people and groups related to the activity in question.

A **primary audience** includes decision-makers with the authority to directly affect the outcome for your objective. **Secondary audiences** are individuals and groups able to influence the decision-makers (primary audience). They may be allies (people supporting your advocacy objective), neutrals (people who neither support nor oppose your advocacy objective) and opponents (people not supporting your advocacy objective).

4. Target arenas of influence

There are several areas that you might want to consider attempting to influence with your advocacy action(s). These areas are: **legislative, policy, executive, administrative**. You can decide to focus on one or multiple areas. You might want to consider the following areas:

- National and local levels: policy, executive and administrative
- European level: policy

5. Develop key messages

After identifying your target audiences, you need to develop specific messages for them. You might need to develop different messages for different audiences. If possible, your messages should be clear, simple, short and include persuasive statements about **what** should be done, **why** and **how**?

Use the “**What/Why/How**” approach.

“What/Why/How” approach

What?

Refers to what you want to achieve and the description of the problem to be addressed in your advocacy activity. Here you can make use of research findings to illustrate and support your case.

Why?

Refers to the reason and the importance to address a certain issue. Here you can mention the positive result of taking your suggested action and/or the negative consequence of inaction.

How?

Refers to the actual suggestions and recommendations on how a certain issue can be improved or changed. Here you can include some actions you want your audience to take.

6. Fundraising

Although many advocacy activities can be performed with little or no funding, some other activities involve some funding.

Funding sources depend on the level at which you are working (i.e. local, national or European). At **local and national level** some sources include local, district and national governments, the private sector, national and international non-governmental and inter-governmental organisations. At **European level**, the European Commission provides Operating Grants offering financial support towards the functioning of an organisation in performing its main activities or in order to carry out some others. Additionally, the Commission also supports the financing of specific projects through “Calls for proposals”, or “action grants”.

7. Evaluate your efforts

Evaluating your advocacy actions at the end, can help you improve your future campaigns. It is important to evaluate your campaign and your results in order to identify what works and what does not work, to improve your future actions.

Thank you!

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