



ELPIDA

Roma Women Association
of Drosero, Xanthi, Greece

Drosero in numbers

- Drosero is a Roma community of approximately 5000 residents
- it is located just 1 km south east of the centre of the town of Xanthi, still considered a ghetto
- the first few families settled in Drosero during the 1950s
- 18% of the population is 1-4 years old
- at the age of 14 most females are getting married
- 6% of the population is aged over 55
- there are 2 primary and 1 high school in Drosero exclusively for Roma students, still not enough
- 74% of the adults are illiterate
- only 2 out of 5000 have got a university degree
- 32% of the households have no plumbing, not even one faucet
- 100% of the establishments do not have proper building permits

"I am proud of what we have achieved until now and of what we feel we are capable to create in the future, especially for the next generation.

It was a dream come true for all women in Drosero to have our gathering place, where we could talk freely, express our worries and find the solutions for our everyday concerns.

You give birth to a child and you watch it grow. This is what "Elpida" means to me."

Sabiha Suleiman
President of "Elpida"



Contact details

Address: "Elpida", Drosero Xanthi,
67100 Greece
URL: www.drosero.com
e-mail: sullogoselpida@gmail.com
telephone: +30 6950 387418
+30 6979 661112

"Elpida" is Greek for "Hope".

The Roma Women Association of Drosero is a Non Governmental Organization (NGO). It was founded in 2006 by twenty Roma women who live in Drosero, in the region of Xanthi, in Northern Greece.





What are the main objectives of "Elpida"?

- to empower women to support their role in their families, as well as in the community
- to fight illiteracy and to focus on children and their proper education
- to assert their rights for better livelihood conditions
- to create opportunities for a better future for their children
- to build networks with other Roma NGOs
- to develop social consciousness about Roma in Greece



What are "Elpida's" main activities?

- nursery school with Roma mediators
- activities to combat school dropout (door-to-door consultancy)
- evening lessons for children, teenagers and adults



- training for women to improve professional skills (hairdressing, tailoring etc.)
- socialization and participation in the neighbouring town festivities
- social and psychological support by specialized professionals
- infrastructure projects
- networking and political involvement
- vaccination, examinations and health care
- cultural activities (theatre, dance etc.)



Awards

- 2007: "Elpida" was awarded by the Citizen's Movement and the Greek Guiding Association for its voluntary work. The award was bestowed by the President of the Hellenic Republic, HE Mr. Karolos Papoulias.
- 2009: The President of "Elpida" was honoured as a nominee for the Department of State International Woman of Courage Award by the U.S. Consulate General of Thessaloniki.
- 2010: The President of "Elpida" was chosen by the U.S. Mission in Greece to participate in State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program.
- 2013: "Elpida" was awarded by the Rotary Clubs of Thessaloniki for its long-standing contribution.

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