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**Editorial**

ENAR and ERIO are holding their joint conference on Roma and Equal Access to Education this 28–29 April. What is important about ENAR and other lobbyists seizing this moment is the urgency of proving change can happen, especially in light of, for instance, the European Decade of Roma Inclusion.

This is the first edition of ENARgy dedicated to Roma issues and it presents a unique, eclectic range of articles – offering a sampling of a range of diverse issues and perspectives on the situation of Roma community and Roma rights in Europe.

From daring calls such as the proposed Roma/Gypsies directive and timely issues such as forced sterilisation in the Czech Republic as well as discussion into multiple identity, multiple discrimination in an interview with MEP Lívia Járóka and dialogue on tackling employment barriers; this edition of ENARgy offers a brief but telling indication of the multi-dimensional, all-encompassing up road battle that the Romani population faces to reach equality – that opportunity to attain the benefits and privileges that their EU citizenship should be entitling them to now.

At a population between seven to ten million, the Roma make up Europe’s largest indigenous minority group. This is equivalent to the population of Hungary, Austria or Sweden. Yet, always a political minority in every nation-state, Roma are a European population whose rights are not a priority to any powers that be. However, in a new Europe the idea of rights beyond borders is an exciting prospect to look forward to.

It is no coincidence that so many Roma organisations are based in Hungary. What we might be proudest of is that there are so many Roma lead initiatives in and from Hungary. Empowerment remains a fundamental challenge for them though. Despite these last ten years or so of agenda building, little has actually changed. As we can see from Hungary, it seems acknowledgement and shame are not enough to make leadership act on problems such as segregated classrooms, scraping unemployment rates and sliding scale social services.

An important reoccurring view in this edition, and one I think many share, is the importance of Roma voice in Europe. To achieve this, local grassroots Roma movements need to develop and local grassroots minority NGOs need to be supported and be allowed to blossom at the EU level. I think if this truly happens – in a genuine and committed way – it will reflect a Europe Roma are proud to participate in. But for now, let us not lose perspective; the road is still ahead of all of us. It’s time for us to start working together, so the journey is good and the destination doesn’t take too long to reach.

Esther Holbrook
Romá Press Center, Budapest
Board member for ENAR-Hungary
Would you say there has been progress in the situation of Roma in the past few years?

Unfortunately, there has been little progress. There are still widespread difficulties in enforcing the social inclusion strategies. The anti-discrimination directives are not transposed into national legislation across the board and where they are, they are not fully implemented in practice. There are very serious concerns about the high unemployment and the substandard health conditions Roma are facing. Children are sent to schools for the mentally disabled, families live in segregated communities and in unsanitary conditions, public officials and the media frequently make anti-Gypsy remarks, and Roma are racially targeted for violence and verbal abuse.

As for my own country, Hungary, though there has been a serious commitment for desegregation, up to now segregation in schools remains. Forced evictions continue, homelessness is increasing, and there still is a lack of policies to enforce diversity in the workplace. But the problems we see in the new Member States are also true for the EU15, not to mention non-EU countries and areas such as Kosovo.

I do believe a lot has been achieved in the field of awareness raising, demystifying and capacity building. There also have been some concrete achievements, for example with regard to forced sterilization. The Ombudsman of the Czech Republic recently published a report recognizing this phenomenon in the country and calling for action.

Can you tell us about initiatives at the level of the European Parliament (EP) with regard to Roma issues?

In April 2005 the EP adopted a Resolution on Roma issues. It focused on the elimination of discrimination against Roma and the encouragement of inclusion of Roma communities into society. It pushes Member States to implement the Race Equality Directive into national law, while helping Roma to gain access to equal employment, education and housing.

This term, Roma issues seem much more of a priority for all parties and committees. My own party, the European Peoples Party (EPP), just adopted a resolution on Roma focusing on issues of equal access to employment and education, free from discrimination. It is clear that Roma rights are a main priority on the party’s agenda, and this is a huge step given that the EPP is the biggest political party of the EU and that therefore its commitment will influence the discourse on Roma at the European level.

As Deputy Coordinator of the Committee on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), I’m satisfied to see that Roma women are one of the top issues on its agenda. The report on the situation of Romani women in the EU, for which I was the rapporteur, highlights the experience of multiple discrimination that Romani women face in employment, health care, education and housing, while also underlining issues such as the forced sterilization of Romani women and the problem of trafficking. The text is asking for compensation for involuntary sterilised women, following the Swedish example, where general compensation was paid in such cases. The text also highlights the importance of small & medium enterprises (SMEs) and capacity building for Roma women.

I’m happy to say that after the introduction of the report in last month’s committee meeting, much enthusiasm was raised for Romani women’s rights. All parties responded very positively and welcomed the report. It will be voted on at the end of May at the plenary session in Brussels. I’m positive that, just like the Resolution on Roma in 2005, this report will receive a great deal of support. So, something has started in the direction I have always intended to push forward the Roma issues in the EU: demystifying, distributing knowledge, replacing paternalism with
professional discourse and pushing for real action and change.

I believe that the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup, of which I am a Vice-President, is also a good place to raise awareness on Roma issues. As a multi-party group it enhances cooperation between parties and it is a base for MEPs to build consensus. This year the Intergroup, with the contribution of ENAR, will include a focus on anti-Gypsyism.

What is your assessment of the European Commission campaigns and projects to improve the situation of Roma in the past years?

There are some positive signs from the Commission in terms of real commitment to change the situation of the European Roma. I had the chance to meet President Barroso, who assured me that the Commission will take the necessary steps in this field. The Commission’s Roadmap on equality between women and men also contains strong references on multiple discrimination. Yet we need a green paper, a European strategy on Roma and we have to make sure that the Commission becomes the real advocate for Roma inclusion. The Commission does not always have the ability to directly influence Member States’ actions, but it can set examples through its own actions. For example, the Commission, as an employer, could adhere to ethical hiring practices to establish a diverse workplace. Also, it could require applicants for public tender to implement diversity plans. These are just two examples of how the Commission could demonstrate its commitment to diversity.

Initiatives such as the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All and the 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue are good tools to raise awareness of Roma issues.

As for programmes aimed directly at the situation of Roma, pre-accession projects like PHARE were aimed at providing funds to ensure the inclusion of Roma in society. Many PHARE projects were designed to train adults, hoping to ease the often 80 to 90% unemployment rate. From the evaluation of the PHARE projects and also from my own experience, we can say that these projects were not always very successful. Very often Roma were trained to learn useless skills and were not provided with any further job possibilities, even though it often was a requirement for the project tenders. Roma organizations often claimed that they were only used as consortium partners on paper, but not involved in project planning or the executions of the project. Other PHARE projects meant to decrease the number of Romani children in special education. The evaluation shows that here also very little has been achieved.

The problem was that these programmes lacked adequate monitoring, that the aid was not allocated to the places where it was most needed. Although financing projects can be a good tool, in practice they unfortunately were not effective enough. I believe that there are many lessons to be learned from the evaluation of these projects.

What are the most pressing issues which the EU should address?

First of all, discrimination in employment must be eliminated. The Roma are the largest and youngest minority in Europe, and their inclusion in the economy would contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy. This largely untapped labour force should be taken advantage of as it would help bring about sustained economic growth. The young Roma population needs adequate education to help integrating them into the employment market and for them to be effective in the work force.
Secondly, discrimination in education and housing must be addressed. Segregation in schools is a problem in almost every EU country. In many, Roma children are unjustifiably sent to schools for the mentally disabled. Early drop-out rates are very high for Roma children throughout Europe; students face verbal abuse in school. As for housing, many Roma live in terrible conditions without electricity, sewage or clean water. They are forcibly evicted from their homes.

Which particular challenges may the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU pose in terms of Roma issues?

It is no secret that these two countries have a history of human rights abuses with regard to Roma, and many of these problems continue to this day. However, because of the size of the Roma populations in Romania and Bulgaria, their accession could influence the EU to focus on unresolved Roma issues. On the other hand, once Romania and Bulgaria join, there will no longer be the pressure to conform to the Copenhagen criteria, and efforts at including Roma in society may lag. This is a phenomenon we are facing with the current new Member States as well.

In your view, what kind of government actions could make a difference? And in what way can civil society organisations contribute to changing the situation of Roma?

At the government level, policies to include Roma in society as well as a focus on mainstreaming Roma issues are needed, so that they are a priority in institutions across Europe. Governments also need to monitor the implementation and performance of certain policies, practices and legislation; enforce positive measures to correct structural inequalities in employment and education; and instigate adequate data collection to check whether policies are really working.

At a non-governmental level, I very much welcome the work of civil society NGOs.

Roma organisations should establish cooperation with big international human rights NGOs, which have a great responsibility to work at connecting the government and the people. They need to clearly formulate the problems that Roma people are experiencing and bring this to policy-makers at all levels of European and state government. By using tools such as lobbying, civil society can influence policies for the benefit of marginalized social groups.

NGOs concerned with Roma rights must work hard to gain the attention of governments, since other more mainstream NGOs and lobbyists have the advantage of a long history influencing policy. There is still one missing link, and that is a grassroots movement. As we struggle for social inclusion, it is necessary to support and empower the Roma citizens of Europe. Through a real powerful grassroots movement, Roma could have a voice in the policies that are affecting their lives. Parallel with the paradigm shift in Roma issues, we have to strengthen and give possibilities to the next generation of young Roma leaders, many of them women, by empowering Roma at the local level. A self-reflecting, progressive and dynamic Roma grassroots movement is the base of the changes we all want to see.

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The Intergroup’s website: http://www.enar-eu.org/anti-racism-diversity-intergroup/
EU activities in support of the Roma, Gypsy and Traveller community across Europe

Roma communities in Europe have been subjected to discrimination and persecution for centuries. Estimates suggest that there are 3-4 million Roma living in today's European Union (EU), with a further 2-3 million Roma due to become EU citizens following the accession of Bulgaria and Romania.

Research carried out for the European Commission and other international organisations shows that Roma have substantially lower levels of education, much higher rates of unemployment, significantly lower levels of income and poorer health than the rest of the population.

It is essential to emphasise the important work that NGOs are carrying out in this field. The Commission is delighted that ENAR has fully integrated the situation of Roma in its work programme, as well as developing new forms of cooperation with organisations like the European Roma Information Office (ERIO). This should help to promote joint efforts, as well as exchanges of experience between Roma NGOs and organisations working with other ethnic minorities.

The main responsibility for action to promote the social inclusion of Roma lies at the national, regional and local levels. But EU programmes and policies provide support for these efforts.

Anti-discrimination legislation and policy

Roma communities benefit from the protection offered by the EU’s legal framework created to fight discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin. With the two anti-discrimination directives (Directives 2000/43/CE and 2000/78/CE) the EU can help Roma to defend their right to equal treatment in accessing employment, training, education, social security, healthcare, housing, goods and services.

Under the Directives, Member States are obliged to give victims of discrimination the right to make a complaint through a judicial or administrative procedure. NGOs also have the right to act in support or on behalf of victims of discrimination.

As well as helping to defend the individual rights of victims, bringing cases will help to clarify and publicise the protection offered by EU and national legislation. That is why the Commission is funding a range of projects designed to provide anti-discrimination training to NGOs, as well as awareness-raising initiatives to inform people about their rights. Roma representatives have played an active role in many of these projects. In addition to the financial support received by ENAR, the Commission is also offering core funding to a European network of Roma NGOs.

EU funding

Over €275 million of EU funding has been invested over the last five years in projects specifically targeting Roma. Two EU Structural Funds are directly relevant to Roma populations: the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF).

The ESF supports a number of projects in both the 'new' and 'old' Member States to improve the access of Roma to employment, especially through better education and training.

In addition, a large number of projects for helping Roma have been supported by the EQUAL Community Initiative, which is financed by the ESF and seeks to test new approaches to fighting discrimination and inequalities in the employment market, to disseminate good practice and to ensure subsequent mainstreaming.

The ERDF is one of the EU’s principal instruments for regional policy and is of direct relevance to Roma populations. The ERDF is helping to finance the building of roads and other basic infrastructure, such as clean water supply and main drainage systems, and renovation of schools and hospitals, as well as the creation of small businesses.
Other EU funding instruments are very important in addressing the situation of Roma. These include the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), which provides support for disadvantaged communities in rural areas, and the enlargement programmes: PHARE (preparing for EU entry), CARDS (support for the Western Balkans) and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

The Community Action Programme to combat discrimination runs from 2001 until 2006 and has three main objectives:

- Improving understanding of issues related to discrimination through analysis and evaluation.
- Developing capacity to combat and prevent discrimination through building and strengthening inter-organisational dialogue.
- Promoting values underlying the fight against discrimination through awareness-raising activities.

The EU also supports different programmes in the fields of education, youth and research such as LEONARDO DA VINCI (vocational training), COMENIUS (European cooperation in school education), YOUTH (young people exchanges and individual voluntary work), and GRUNDTVIG (projects to improve their employability and enhance their capacity to enter formal education).

New initiatives benefiting Roma populations

To address the multidimensional challenges faced by Roma the Commission launched a study in 2004 to analyse the situation of Roma in the enlarged EU and to review relevant national policies. In response to the recommendations of the study, the Commission set up a special Inter Service Group which brings together representatives of 15 Commission Directorates General. The Group has 3 main objectives: facilitate exchange of information and experience between Commission services; improve policy coordination and coherence within the Commission; and establish a dialogue with external stakeholders.

In addition, a High-level Advisory Group on social and labour market integration of disadvantaged ethnic minorities (including Roma) has been created as part of the European Commission’s framework strategy for tackling discrimination. The Group, which met for the first time on 13 February in Brussels, will focus on issues such as good practices in the integration of disadvantaged ethnic groups in the labour markets and it will report back to Commissioner Spidla with its recommendations in 2007.

The High-level Group is headed by the President of the German Parliament, Rita Süssmuth, and comprises ten eminent personalities from business, local politics, civil society, the academic world and the media. The European Commission is delighted that ENAR’s President, Bashy Quraishy, has agreed to be a member of the Group.

The European Commission has also decided that 2007 will be ‘The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All’ as part of a concerted effort to promote equality and non-discrimination in the EU. The European Year is the centrepiece of the Commission’s framework strategy designed to ensure that discrimination is effectively tackled, diversity is celebrated and equal opportunities for all are promoted. The role of the NGOs will be key to the success of this Year of Equal Opportunities for All. Although the Year will cover the full range of discrimination grounds set out in Article 13 of the EC Treaty, the situation of Roma will certainly be one of the issues to be highlighted.

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Further information concerning EU policies and programmes to support Roma can be found at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/roma](http://europa.eu.int/comm/roma)
By e-mail: empl-antidiscrimination@cec.eu.int
Equality for Roma in Europe – A Roadmap for Action

The following is a summary of a recent publication prepared by Lanna Hollo (with the contribution of Sheila Quinn) and published by the Open Society Institute (OSI) on behalf of the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), the Interdisciplinary Research Cell in Human Rights and the Migration Policy Group (MPG), January 2006.

The report is based on research that examined a significant body of literature representing the current learning on the situation of Roma in Europe and draws on this learning to map out the cultural, policy and legislative changes that need to be realised in order to make progress at the national and European level.

The Adoption by the European Union (EU) of Directive 2000/43/EC – “implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin,” and Directive 2000/78/EC – “establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation,” constituted significant steps toward guaranteeing the principle of equal treatment throughout the EU. The challenge now facing the EU and member states is how to transform these formal guarantees of equality into concrete reality.

It is clear that efforts to date to ensure equality for Roma in Europe have failed to produce any significant improvement. The challenges have been and remain enormous: deeply embedded institutional discrimination within government structures, widespread anti-Gypsyism, extraordinarily high levels of poverty and social exclusion, and segregated systems in housing, education and social welfare.

The situation has been given increased attention on the political agenda. It must be acknowledged, however, that a lack of real political will is one of the main reasons why such little progress has been made.

There are signs of an emerging period of new opportunities. The analyses and recommendations from the range of bodies charged with monitoring adherence to human rights laws are receiving more attention. There is growing recognition that governments need to learn from the efforts to date and apply a more strategic approach. The Decade of Roma Inclusion represents renewed political will on the part of the eight governments with large Roma populations (Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, FYR Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia) to overcome the gap in opportunities and living conditions between Roma and non-Roma through targeted and coordinated action over a 10-year period. Finally, there are opportunities within EU policy arenas that have the potential to move forward an enhanced plan of action for equality for Roma in Europe.

The report is based on research that examined a significant body of literature representing the current learning on the situation of Roma in Europe and draws on this learning to map out the cultural, policy and legislative changes that need to be realised in order to make progress at the national and European level.

Factors limiting progress toward Roma equality

Current research and analysis point to a number of fundamental factors that have limited progress to date. These are:

1. Lack of strategic focus of funded initiatives;
2. Low levels of Roma participation in public life;
3. Insufficiently robust legislative frameworks;
4. The need for an integrated approach;
5. High levels of anti-Gypsyism;
6. Challenges to the preservation of Roma identity and culture;
7. Lack of political will.

Recommendations

➢ to National Governments:

   o Devise national strategies for Roma, operationalised through national Action Plans.
   o Develop comprehensive legislative frameworks, with a view to (i) providing accessible and appropriate means off redress for individual Roma who suffer discrimination and (ii) proactively promoting equality so as to bring about the necessary institutional change.
to EU Institutions:
- Adopt a Framework Strategy for Roma integration, providing the necessary mechanisms for the coordination of all Commission activities and facilitating the alignment of EU and national policies.
- Improve existing EU policy frameworks. The EU High-level Group for the social and labour market integration of ethnic minorities should be given a strategic role in this area.
- Enhance legislation compliance and monitoring, in particular the full transposition and effective implementation but also extension of the scope of the Race Equality Directive.
- Complement the existing legal framework, taking into account the hurdles for the attainment of equality for Roma found within the existing legislative framework.

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A Directive aiming to achieve the integration of the Roma/Gypsies

In its Report on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union and its Member States in 2002, the EU Network of Independent Experts on Fundamental Rights proposed a Directive specifically aimed at the integration of the Roma/Gypsy minority in Europe. The Network took this position considering the specificity of the socio-economic condition of the Roma/Gypsy minority, which requires not only protection from discrimination but also affirmative desegregation, in particular in employment, housing and education.

According to the Network, the urgent need to adopt a specific Directive based on Article 13 EC in order to encourage the integration of the Roma/Gypsy minority, not only stems from the grave concerns that have been expressed in the evaluation reports on the situation of this minority in several Member States of the European Union, and not just in the acceding States where the question of integration of the Roma/Gypsies arises with particular acuteness. The urgency also stems from the inappropriateness in several respects of Race Directive 2000/43/EC. This Directive may indeed in certain respects fail to address the specific needs of the Roma due, first, to the structural discrimination they are facing and to the need for a strategy aimed at ending segregation in housing, education and employment; second, to the need to ensure an adequate accommodation of the specific lifestyle of the Roma who have preserved a nomadic or semi-nomadic tradition.

The proposed Directive should
- Be based on studies documenting the situation of the Roma/Gypsy population, and take into account the relevant rules of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities as well as the interpretation of this instrument given by the Advisory Committee established under its Article 26.
- Provide that effective accommodations will be made to ensure the Roma/Gypsies will be able to maintain their traditional lifestyle, when they have chosen the nomadic or semi-nomadic mode of life, without being forced into sedentarisation.
- Take into account the need to effectuate the desegregation of the Roma/Gypsy communities where this is required, especially in employment, housing and education.
• Address the question of the inaccessibility of certain social and economic rights due to the administrative situation of Roma/Gypsies to whom administrative documents are denied or who are considered stateless.


Roma and Travellers in education

A key European value is equality of opportunity. This applies particularly in education, which influences future life chances and acts as the main vehicle for social mobility. Education is also a key instrument for promoting social cohesion, which is one of the main three objectives of the Lisbon strategy, because, apart from providing knowledge and developing skills, education shapes attitudes and empowers young people to adapt to rapidly changing social and economic conditions. As the European Commission has stressed, efficiency and equity are mutually reinforcing.\(^1\) It is therefore essential to ensure that educational systems are equitable so that their benefits can be enjoyed by all without any discrimination.

The data and information collected by the European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) and analysed in its annual and relevant thematic reports show that, despite efforts by the Community and its Member States, the educational situation of Roma and Travellers in the public education systems of all EU Member States continues to be characterised by severe inequalities in the access to and benefits from education traced in overall poor enrolment, attendance and performance figures. These inequalities arise from the operation of a variety of discriminatory mechanisms of exclusion and segregation.

There is a paucity of official statistical data regarding Roma and Traveller education and Member States should urgently improve data collection in this area and develop harmonised statistics through the use of common indicators in order to improve data comparability. This will allow an effective and accurate assessment of the impact of policies, measures and initiatives taken at Community, national and local level.

The available data nevertheless show that Roma and Traveller enrolment and attendance in primary education remains extremely low in comparison to the general population, while absenteeism is a persistent, common and serious problem. Roma and Travellers rarely continue to secondary general or vocational education and dropout rates increase with age. Statistical data on the educational performance of Roma and Traveller pupils especially in reference to the national average are particularly scarce, but the available evidence, mostly from surveys,

Joana Karapataqi/OSCE
indicate that they perform worse than average and thus have a lower chance of attaining an educational qualification leading to worthwhile employment opportunities.

Formal and informal practices of segregating Roma pupils persist, despite strategies and policies that have been developed to combat them. Although systematic segregation no longer exists as educational policy, segregation is practised by schools and educational authorities in a number of different, mostly indirect, ways sometimes as the unintended effect of policies and practices and sometimes as a result of residential segregation. Segregation also takes place within schools with arrangements to instruct them in separate classrooms or within classrooms but by sitting Roma pupils in a different part of the room. Schools and educational authorities may segregate pupils on the basis of a perception of “their different needs” and/or as a response to behavioural issues and learning difficulties. The latter also leads to the frequent placement of Roma and Traveller pupils in “special schools” for mentally disabled children, although steps are being taken to review testing and placement procedures taking into account the norms and behavioural patterns of their social and cultural background. In 2005, the European Parliament called on Member States “…in which Roma children are segregated into schools for the mentally disabled or placed in separate classrooms from their peers to move forward with desegregation programmes within a predetermined period of time, thus ensuring free access to quality education for Roma children and preventing the rise of anti-Romani sentiment amongst schoolchildren.”

In their efforts to address these issues some Member States have taken steps to reform their educational provisions as well as their overall Roma strategies. However, progress is often slow and difficult mainly due to resistance by local government and pressure from non-Roma parents. Member States differ in their approach to education policies for Roma: some have developed and implement a variety of education policies specifically targeting Roma and Traveller pupils, while others address them within a wider anti-discrimination or intercultural education policy framework. In both cases, however, the information available regarding measurable impact and sustainability of these policies is very limited.

A variety of innovative projects have also been implemented in several Member States often with Community financial support (e.g. through Leonardo, Socrates-Comenius, Grundtvig, ESF-EQUAL and other programmes). In particular the PHARE programme was extensively used during the accession phase of the ten “new” Member States with some positive results, which eventually influenced policy decisions.

International civil society organisations, such as the European Roma Information Office (ERIO) focusing on lobbying and advocacy and the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) focusing on litigation, advocacy, research and policy development and human rights training have also contributed decisively to raising awareness and drawing attention to the human rights situation of Roma and Travellers, as well as achieving significant legal victories.

The EU and its Member States face a difficult challenge in ensuring respect for the fundamental right of Roma to equal access to education. Strong political leadership will be required to engage governments, local and educational authorities, as well as schools and Roma and Traveller communities, in order to develop and implement sufficiently resourced policies that can bring about the necessary systemic changes in the national education structures.
In 2004 the EUMC published a report on educational measures for migrants and minorities based on studies drafted by the RAXEN National Focal Points. A complementary report on national strategies for minority schooling based on national studies and covering the then eight Central and East European accession states and the then candidate countries of Bulgaria and Romania was also published with PHARE financial support. The EUMC will soon publish a new report on this issue based on short studies produced by the National Focal Points of its RAXEN network, bringing together the most recent evidence from all Member States of the European Union in order to present an overview of the current situation and propose concrete measures.

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Disclaimer: The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the EUMC.

European Court fails ethnic and religious minorities

In recent years, Europe has gone a long way to underscore its commitment to equality. In 1997, Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty empowered the European Council to act against discrimination, including on grounds of racial or ethnic origin. In 2003, the EU Race Directive came into force mandating equal treatment in many spheres of public life. 2007 has been proclaimed the European “year of equal opportunities for all”.

In a welcome change from the past, officials in increasing numbers acknowledge that discriminatory practices have a price. The new head of the European Commission’s anti-discrimination unit has warned, “There is a danger and a human cost to discriminating against people.” Exclusion is something that Europe “can’t afford … any more.”

Gianfranco Deramo/OSCE
But one European body seems not to have gotten the message: the European Court of Human Rights, the continent’s authoritative voice on law and justice. On 7 February, the Court decided the case of D.H. v. Czech Republic. The judgment represents a major setback for Roma rights, and for the larger cause of equal opportunity in Europe.

The case was brought by 18 Roma children from the Czech city of Ostrava, assigned to remedial special schools for the mentally disabled. In some countries special schools or classes may allow more individualized attention for children with special needs. In central and eastern Europe, however, they are often just an educational dead end for the region’s Roma. Curricular standards are well below those in normal schools. Graduates are relegated to vocational employment. Higher education is not generally an option.

The evidence showed that over half the Roma child population in Ostrava was placed in special schools, and over half of the population of special schools was Roma. All told, Roma children are more than 27 times more likely than non-Roma to be placed in such schools. As a United Nations expert body has declared, this is racial segregation, plain and simple.

But the Court – by a vote of six to one – was unmoved. It recognized that the claimants raised “a number of serious arguments” – including, in the view of one judge, “[t]he danger... that, under cover of psychological ... tests, virtually an entire, socially disadvantaged, section of the school population finds itself condemned to low level schools, with little opportunity to mix with children of other origins and without any hope of securing an education that will permit them to progress.” But the Court concluded its role was not to address these issues. Without showing an actual racial bias in the minds of testers and administrators – virtually impossible to prove – the Court held that the pervasive reality of racial disadvantage was not unlawful.

It is not often these days when Europe lags the United States in the field of human rights. But in wilfully ignoring overwhelming patterns of discrimination, the Ostrava decision recalls the blindness of American judges to the plight of African-American children before Brown v. Board of Education.

The applicants are filing a formal request with the Court asking that the case be referred to the Grand Chamber. The Strasbourg Court’s ruling is troubling precisely because the judiciary is often the last resort for vulnerable groups overridden by majority prejudice. While politicians cater to constituents, courts enforce the rule of law, even when it’s not popular. As Europe wrestles with the challenges of growing diversity, this is a signature moment.

James Goldston, Executive Director and counsel to applicants in the Ostrava case – Open Society Justice Initiative www.justiceinitiative.org

Footnotes
Roma and equal access to education: from segregation to integrated schooling


As described in the previous articles, many Roma, Sinti and Traveller (for reasons of brevity, hereafter referred to as ‘Roma’) children throughout the EU suffer from unequal access to mainstream education because of discriminatory practices and prejudices in the educational system, which lead to exclusion and segregation. Lack of adequate schooling not only diminishes their opportunities for further education, but also affects their ability to find employment.

Roma education has been a major problem confronting EU countries for many years. Although it may be more known as an issue in Central and Eastern Europe, member states in Western Europe are not immune to the problem either. Measures taken at EU and national levels to remedy the problem of segregated schooling and unequal access to education clearly have remained insufficient and inadequate.

The conference also aims to act as a forum for the exchange of experiences and lessons learned with regard to combating ethnically based exclusion and mainstreaming equality in the educational system. As such, it hopes to contribute to an enhanced structured cooperation between Roma communities, European civil society organisations and EU institutions.

Roma education in the EU: the state of play

The first part of the conference presents an overview of existing schooling practices for Roma at primary and secondary school levels, looking at the concept of segregation and discussing the various patterns of segregated education in EU Member States and some accession countries.

The way forward at European level: strategies to stimulate policy making in the field of equality in education

Since the late eighties, the EU has funded numerous initiatives and projects designed to promote the social inclusion and educational attainment of ethnic minority groups, including the Roma. There has however been no thorough assessment of the impact of these community policies in redressing disadvantages affecting the education of these ethnic minority groups. In recent years, school segregation has been recognised as one of the root causes of the inferior educational level of the
Roma across Europe, and a new approach advocating structured policies aiming to dismantle segregated educational systems rather than project-based initiatives has been encouraged.

“The European Parliament calls on Member States in which Roma children are segregated into schools for the mentally disabled or placed in separate classrooms from their peers to move forward with desegregation programmes within a predetermined period of time, thus ensuring free access to quality education for Roma children and preventing the rise of anti-Romani sentiment amongst schoolchildren. [The EP] considers that ensuring that all Roma children have access to mainstream education remains a priority.”


The way forward at national level: policies to combat segregation and promote equality

During this session the national education strategies put into place so far to combat segregation and promote equal treatment for Roma children are examined, highlighting the important role played by NGOs. This is followed by a session which talks about the synergies with other inter-governmental initiatives and programmes such as the Roma Education Fund and the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

Developing equal rights based educational policies for Roma children and reflecting on the principles of equal treatment in the field of education

This final session, consisting of four parallel workshops, aims to stimulate exchanges between NGOs, policy makers and advisers active in the field of education. It examines the pathways to developing successful educational policies based on equal treatment for children of ethnically diverse origins.

The conference proceedings will soon be available on ENAR’s website: http://www.enar-eu.org/en/events/roma/index.shtml

The conference was organised jointly by ENAR and ERIO, and was financially supported by the European Commission, the Open Society Institute and the Roma Education Fund (World Bank).
Assigning positions

Roma and Travellers in Western Europe have known no period in history when they were relatively safe. They faced an accumulation of rejection and persecution, as well as two attempts of genocide. Their situation has worsened again in recent years.

For example, their right to live in trailers is threatened. The “Loi Besson” in France is not sufficiently put into practice; in the Netherlands the “Woonwagenwet” has been abolished; and there are “ethnic cleansings” of trailer sites in the UK; in Belgium only a few of the 10 provinces are making some progress. Roma are increasingly migrating from East to West without legal documents, thus joining the army of undocumented workers. In Flanders (Belgium), school registration of Roma/Travellers is done on an ethnic basis, knowingly supported by the so-called ‘integration services’. The accumulation of these discriminatory practices leaves deep marks in the hearts and minds of Roma and Travellers.

Claiming the position

This assignment of positions to Roma by majority society has far-reaching consequences. Research about societal vulnerability at the University of Leuven has identified the following “rules of thumb” as essential for the understanding of these consequences:

- The more meaningful positive social relations a person establishes with members of majority society, the bigger the chance for further participation.
- Once a person has been hurt, there is a significant increase of the chances that this person will be socially damaged more severely in future life. This marginalisation of persons and groups is mainly based on cultural features.
- Severely socially damaged people tend to seek support in peer groups, adhering to subcultures which often tend to turn into anti-cultures. They tend to claim the assigned position and develop their own specific “culture of the offended”.

Roma as an offended group

Working with Roma we observe the following specificities:

1. The gap

The most important feature by far is the gap between the “internal” Roma world and majority society. This gap is filled with reciprocal distrust, fear and/or disapproval. Throughout the centuries this has led to a strong and inward-bound cultural identity: to be different from non-Roma. At the same time, majority society cultivates its own distance against Roma as a result of and through racist attitudes, laws, etc. This reality shows that a first task is to restore broken links.

2. Developing methodologies in restoring relations

Some important points to keep in mind:
- Egalitarian internal structures: Roma communities are not organised in a hierarchic way.
- Prevalence of the group over the individual: social control can level down the individual involvement of group members.
- Oral tradition: Roma did not write down their history or their language. Schooling was no traditional element in an oral culture.
- Minority position: providing social security allowances to a family is a starting point for social promotion in the eyes of majority society, but could be considered as a basic right by this family.
- Here-and-now attitude: when life can not be planned, people have to live in a permanent “now”.
- Flexibility: in a (historic) context of survival in a dangerous environment, it is vital to be able to manage circumstances as they arise.

Social cohesion

Maslow’s pyramid of needs can visualise why “integration” can pose so many problems.

Where different populations share the same territory their relations will be governed by two main forces: bonding and
Phases in bridging

Segregation
coexistence integration empowerment emancipation

physiological safety belonging esteem self-actualisation

Maslow’s needs

Bonding consists of the elements that keep groups together. Bridging consists of the moments or situations where individuals and/or subgroups of the population meet each other. In the first two stages (segregation and coexistence), there is an internal drive to establish economic relations: physiological: mere survival - safety: client–supplier relations. In the third stage (integration), people find fulfilment of their need of “belonging” within their own group: “bonding” takes over. In order to establish any degree of integration at least one of the groups has to launch a (long-term) outreach programme.

Outreach

Outreach is organised intentionally by the population outside the minority group. Those who reach out are intercultural mediators, backed by a strong but democratic organisation. The mediators’ commitment is a long-term one and they engage in relations which are face to face, ‘useful’ for the people involved and confidential. The mediation takes an integrated approach: it touches every domain of life. If successful, the mediators become the organising force of fragmented groups.

Some examples from the Belgian experience

1. Leuven

The city of Leuven has a trailer park with 26 Vlach Rom families who arrived in Belgium around 1880 and have been staying in Leuven since about 1980. The problem was that parents did not send even the youngest children to school, despite efforts by a nearby school. The Public Centre for Social Service (OCMW) started a project in 2001, linking allowances to integration contracts and engaging mediators to school and work. This way, the first trap in social cohesion was avoided: only compelling measures do not work, motivating input is needed simultaneously. As a result of the project, the first Rom started his first job in September 2005.

A few lessons learnt to date:
- In order to design a project according to the needs of marginalised people you have to present it to them and redesign it according to the feedback received.
- To learn to communicate with the Roma as real partners and to appeal to their own competences requires intensive coaching of the mediators.
- Only after three years did the Roma start to discuss their own plans, instead of waiting for initiatives from the project.

2. Sint Niklaas

Since the Yugoslavian separation wars, about 5,000 Kosovo Roma arrived in and around the town of Sint Niklaas. Very soon the Roma set up their own NGO, Romano Dzuvdipe. Sint Niklaas has another NGO called VLO5 (Refugee Support Sint Niklaas). Some 100 volunteers reach out to the newly arrived Roma, visiting them before any problems arise. The town council supports VLOS financially. It is an example of taking steps to guide the non-Roma and the Roma from phase 2 to phase 3 in social cohesion, from co-existence to integration. The two essential points in bridging towards social cohesion is that
local authorities provide meeting places and coaching for all volunteers from all groups in the community.

Conclusion
With regard to Roma populations, it is important to take the long history of prosecution into account. What has been destroyed in five centuries, we will not be able to reconstruct in five years. Let’s hope we can in five generations...

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A longer version of this article can be obtained from toon.machiels@skynet.be

Footnotes
3. This analysis of Roma culture is constructed on the basis of findings by Alain REYNIERS (Université René Descartes, Paris), Dirck van BEKKUM (Dutch anthropologist) and grassroots workers in Flanders.

Always somewhere else: Anti-Gypsyism in France

On 31 July 2002, during discussions in the French Senate of the text of the Law of 18 March 2003 for Interior Security (Security Law), including criminalisation and penalties for Travellers who park their caravans outside of designated areas, Mr Dominique Leclerc, Senator from the Department of Indre-et-Loire, declared:

“We also spoke of the Travellers. They are the plague of tomorrow ... but for God’s sake, we need to become conscious of the fact that the halting areas are only a first step and that they cater to persons who, tomorrow, will cause us enormous problems. They are anti-social people who have no respect for private property, no references, and for whom the words we use have no meaning. For instance, we ask a rural municipality to receive their children in its schools. This isn’t possible. Instead we need to offer them assistance where they are, in the halting areas, in order for them to practice the ABCs in scholastic terms, but also in social and medical terms, because we are faced with extraordinary pathologies. We, the mayors, who carry out patrols, we see that every evening three, four or five trucks of Travellers come “fuck” – I have no other words – young girls of twelve or thirteen years almost right in front of their parents’ eyes, and this doesn’t interest anyone!”

This comment was met by applause from parties of the centre and right.¹

This example of racist speech by a high-profile political personality is by no means exceptional. On the contrary, it is illustrative of the current climate of anti-Gypsyism in France, in which open expressions of racial hatred by prominent political personalities, the media, as well as by ordinary citizens, are commonplace throughout the country.

ERRC research indicates widespread and dramatic human rights violations

In December 2005, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) released its report “Always Somewhere Else: Anti-Gypsyism in France”, a comprehensive report on the human rights situation of Gypsies, Travellers and Romani migrants in France.²
Based on intensive monitoring and field research into the situation of Gypsies, Travellers and Romani migrants in France since 2003, the ERRC’s report describes a situation of dramatic and widespread human rights violations.

Gypsies and Travellers also find themselves cut off from other avenues of participation in public affairs. Even when they are directly and specifically concerned by matters under discussion, officials prefer to turn to intermediaries whom they consider to have expertise about Gypsies and Travellers, rather than to solicit the individual opinions of Gypsies and Travellers themselves.

Discrimination frequently begins with first contact with the education system. A very high percentage of Traveller and Gypsy children receive no education, drop out before reaching the secondary level, and/or attend segregated schooling arrangements that provide only minimal education. Gypsies and Travellers all too often receive a substandard education, often not even equipping them with basic literacy skills.

When Gypsies and Travellers buy land, they often find themselves harassed, threatened with eviction and denied basic amenities such as water and electricity. When they lead a travelling lifestyle and wish to halt in a municipality, they quickly find themselves evicted. Most of French territory seems, in fact, to be off-limits for Gypsies and Travellers, except unhealthy, polluted and segregated areas well-hidden from the view of other residents. The present situation has become so acute that a great number of Gypsies and Travellers believe the full apparatus of the state is being brought against them, possibly to end key elements of their culture, or more likely for no reason other than to try to force them away from French society altogether.

This research indicates that hundreds of thousands of Gypsies and Travellers are denied the right to equal treatment and experience regular denial and interference with almost all fundamental civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. They experience discrimination in fields as diverse as voting, political participation, personal identity documents, access to justice, housing, employment, education, public places, services and social insurance. They are also singled out for negative treatment by a range of racist laws and policies. The combined effect of the various laws, policies, rules and regulations that negatively affect Travellers and Gypsies leads to an alarming degree of marginalisation and exclusion.

For example, many Gypsies and Travellers are unable to vote in elections under the same conditions as other French citizens, due to discriminatory conditions stemming from a racist law. Many Gypsies and Travellers also need to carry specific circulation documents, and present them to the police station or gendarmerie for validation every three months. These persons risk penal sanctions – fines and imprisonment – if they travel in the country without these documents or neglect to have them regularly renewed or updated.
Gypsies and Travellers are also targeted for abusive forced evictions where police arrive heavily armed, in large numbers, and frequently subject residents to degrading treatment, including insults, damage to property and sometimes also physical violence. The ERRC’s research also indicates a systematic pattern of abusive raids involving searches, checks or arrests, in which all of the Gypsies and Travellers who happen to be residing at a particular location are treated as collectively suspect. In addition, the prevailing racist stereotypes that Gypsies and Travellers are thieves and delinquents also translate into discriminatory treatment by judicial authorities.

Racism and discrimination also pervade the daily interactions of Gypsies and Travellers with French society. For instance, they are regularly denied entry into public places such as bars, restaurants, nightclubs and stores. They are also frequently refused insurance of any sort. On the labour market, the key to success for Travellers and Gypsies depends on hiding their identity from clients and potential employers.

Likewise, several thousands of Romani migrants on French territory are subjected to policies the basic aim of which is to make them leave France. They live in indecent slum conditions and find themselves repeatedly evicted from their precarious camps and squats, chased to the next municipality – from which they are in turn evicted. In addition, they are subjected to various forms of violence, abuse, harassment and neglect that result in extreme violations of their rights in almost all fields of life.

Official Response to the ERRC report

The dramatic human rights situation of Gypsies, Travellers and Romani migrants, in flagrant violation of France’s constitutional guarantee of equality, requires urgent attention by the French authorities. In its report the ERRC has provided the authorities with recommendations for action.

Unfortunately, to date, the report has been roundly ignored by French officials. This despite a specific official request made by all of the Gypsy and Traveller associations present at the first meeting of the newly constituted National Consultative Commission for Travellers on 14 March 2006.

On that occasion, they presented the Commission with a letter informing the French Government and Consultative Commission representatives of their support for the ERRC report’s analysis of the situation in France and asked that the Government finally take effective action to remedy the many violations of their rights. They requested that the French government commit itself to putting in place a national comprehensive action plan aimed at improving the situation. They requested that this action plan be developed and implemented at the grassroots level with the full participation of Gypsies and Travellers, including their diverse voices.

The French officials have shown no signs of hearing these requests.

by Lanna Hollo


Footnotes
2. For the purposes of this article, the terms “Gypsies” and “Travellers” refer to individuals and groups who are French citizens, who are descended from groups that have long been citizens of France, and who have for many generations played a key role in
French society and history. The category “Gypsies and Travellers” includes persons of diverse culture, frequently self-identifying as “Sinti”, “Manouche”, “Kale”, “Gitan”, “Roma”, “Yenish”, “Traveller” or other. The term “Romani migrants” refers to non-citizens who have recently arrived in France from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and who are generally regarded as “Gypsies”. Such persons share the stigma of the long-standing racist stereotypes associated with “Gypsies” and “Gens du Voyage” (Travellers) in France, and therefore are frequently subjected to hostility and to racially discriminatory harms. Many of these persons (Sinti, Manouche, Kale, Gitan, Roma) share an Indic origin, being descended from persons who left India around 1000 years ago. However, some do not. The common elements binding all persons subjected to the treatment described in this article are anti-Gypsy/anti-Traveller racist discourse and related widespread discrimination.

3. Law n° 69-3 of 3 January 1969, relating to the exercise of ambulant activities and the regime applicable to persons circulating in France without fixed domicile or residence (Law of 3 January 1969).

4. According to the Law of 3 January 1969, those persons without a fixed domicile or residence who live in vehicles, trailers or other mobile shelters (in large part Gypsies and Travellers) are obliged to have in their possession special circulation documents (in March 2002, a total of 156,282 persons held such documents). There are various categories of circulation documents, each implying different levels of police control. Those persons unable to provide proof of their professional activities and regular revenue are required to present their circulation documents at the police station or gendarmerie for validation every three months (in March 2002, 70,484 persons).

5. This Commission is composed of 40 persons, 10 of whom are Travellers.

6. The signatories of the letter were: Office National des Affaires Tsiganes: Renardo Lorier; Association Regards: Vincent Ritz; Association Social National et Internationale Tsiganes: Désiré Vermeersch; Vie et Lumière: Joseph Carpentier; La vie du Voyage: James Dubois; Association National des Gens du Voyage Catholiques: Alice Januel et Christophe Sauve; Association National des Gens du Voyages nomades et sédentaires: Martial Zigler; Centre culturel Gitan: Pipo Sarguera; Association pour une Recherche Pédagogique Ouverte en Milieu Tsigane: Dominique Steinberger.

Coerced sterilisation, informed consent and the Roma in the Czech Republic

During 2005, at long last, the Czech courts made a small step forward after decades of human rights defenders’ efforts to address the issue of coerced sterilisations of Romani women. Last November a first-instance court found that a hospital had violated the human rights of Helena Ferencíková when it failed to obtain her informed consent prior to sterilising her during a Caesarean delivery in 2001. She was 19 years old.

The November court decision was followed by the January release of the Czech Ombudsman’s Final Statement on 87 complaints of coerced sterilisation submitted to him during 2005 (http://www.ochrance.cz/en/dokumenty/dokument.php?doc=400). The Ombudsman concludes that the problem of sterilisations performed either with “improper motivation” or in violation of the law does in fact exist, and that Czech society must now address it. The Final Statement delineates the relationship between the eugenics movement in 1920’s Czechoslovakia, its unexamined influence on the development of Romani policy under communism, and the effects of this history on the practise of sterilisation in the 21st century Czech Republic.

This problem has affected the Romani community since the 1970s, although the methods of coercion have changed with the times. Under communism, social workers offered cash incentives to Romani women to encourage them to restrict their family size to the societal “norm” by undergoing sterilisation; the women were often misled as to whether the procedure was reversible. Those who did not easily
agree were coerced through gradually escalating measures, such as threatening to institutionalise their children, or bringing them to a psychiatrist under police escort for "examination". Charter 77 and international human rights monitors commented on the situation and after the democratic transition in 1989 the government decrees upon which these practises were based were rescinded.

Unfortunately, the successive democratic governments never gave clear directions as to how sterilisation should henceforth be practised. Doctors continued to rely on the 1972 Sterilisation Directive, which lists among the "indicators" according to which sterilisation can be recommended an indicator called "social" – shorthand, in the Czech context, for "Roma". Czech medical textbooks propagate the formula "two Caesareans = sterilisation required", and women's rights advocates have long commented on the difficulties facing those who wish to negotiate how they would like to give birth within the Czech Republic's paternalistic medical culture. If this is a problem for women from the majority society, it is even more of one for Romani women, who are subject to double discrimination by doctors who assume them incapable of participating in decisions over how to give birth or manage their own fertility.

Even though Czech legislation requires proof that a) the sterilisation request reflects the patient's genuine desire and b) a hospital's Sterilisation Commission has reviewed the request prior to the operation, of the 87 cases before the Ombudsman, eight of them from the post-1989 era, contained sufficient proof of malpractice such that the Ombudsman asked the State Attorney to investigate whether criminal charges should be filed against the hospitals. In most cases, pre-printed forms for consenting to sterilisation were presented to the women when they were in labour, anaesthetised, or in the worst cases, only after it was too late. Ms Ferenčíková's obstetrician told her that unless she underwent sterilisation, she would die. Consent given under such circumstances is neither informed nor free.

What is most disturbing about this sordid history is the extent to which social services under communism – and obstetricians in what is now an EU Member State – have justified these measures to themselves by claiming they were sterilising these women for their own "good". Such blatant disregard for the rights of the individual on the part of those most entrusted with caring for those in need is obviously a deeply rooted phenomenon that no legislation or court decision can remedy, but a question of respect for human dignity. Echoes of this misguided, patronising approach can also be seen in the measures taken by Czech institutions towards other areas of Romani life, such as the segregation of Roma into "special" schools, or the tendency to institutionalise Romani children rather than help Romani families on the edge of poverty stay together.

The human rights community must now ensure that these small steps forward eventually result in justice for the victims and changes in Czech medical practise. The European Association for Human Rights, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), the Group of Women Harmed by Sterilisation, the League of Human Rights and the Life Together organisation all support the Ombudsman's call for the establishment of a government commission to compensate victims. Unfortunately, the Ferenčíková decision did not go far enough; the court ordered the hospital to apologise, but ruled that the statute of limitations for claiming compensation had expired. The League of Human Rights will appeal this ruling.

There are many thorny issues still to be resolved; hospital records for some victims are completely missing, for various reasons,
and some of the women who currently reside in the Czech Republic were sterilised in Slovakia when the countries were one. Justice for them lies in the hands of the Slovak government, which has exploited every opportunity it can to absolve itself of responsibility over the years when faced with challenges from the NGO community to address this issue.

A climate of racism in general and anti-Roma sentiment in particular has prevailed without respite since democracy and freedom of speech came to the Czech Republic 17 years ago. It is imperative that the majority society realise what kinds of human rights abuses such racist attitudes lead to, imperative that the infatuation with anti-Roma and quasi-Nazi rhetoric on the part of Czech right-wing extremists be sharply condemned, and imperative that the next generation of Czech citizens demand their government issue clear directives on the prevention of the discriminatory treatment of anyone on Czech territory, not only in health care facilities, but anywhere that Czech and international law apply.

Gwendolyn Albert, Director
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Roma and housing rights in Europe

Using human rights norms and law to address the extreme housing situation of Roma in Europe has not been a simple matter. The European Convention on Human Rights includes no right to housing. Its Article 14 non-discrimination provision, not yet fully superseded by the new Protocol 12 comprehensive non-discrimination Convention ban, extends the ban on discrimination only to rights included in the Convention. On this basis, the European Court of Human Rights earlier this year refused to hear claims related to a forced eviction case in Hungary. The Court has been particularly loath to move into issues it regards as part of administrative planning, and therefore of a high degree of complexity. Indeed, due to the fact that housing is very resource-intensive, addressing housing rights abuses is among the most difficult tasks in Roma rights, even in those cases where a high degree of goodwill exists. And on Roma housing issues, goodwill is a resource frequently missing.

It is therefore noteworthy that it was precisely on Roma issues that in 2004 the Court overturned its previous approach to housing, in the process drawing a direct link between oppressive housing and severe infringements of human dignity. The case at issue was Connors v. United Kingdom, and in its ruling on the matter, the Court found Britain in violation of Article 8 (right to private and family life), for failing to protect Mr. James Connors from summary forced eviction. The Court held that, “The Court has also stated that in spheres such as housing, which play a central role in the welfare and economic policies of modern societies, it will respect the legislature’s judgment as to what is in the general interest unless that judgment is manifestly without reasonable foundation. ... It may be noted however that this was in the context of Article 1 of Protocol No. 1 (Right to the peaceful enjoyment of one’s possessions), not Article 8 which concerns rights of central importance to the individual’s identity, self-determination, physical and moral integrity, maintenance of relationships with others and a settled and secure place in the community. ... Where general social and economic policy considerations have arisen in the context of Article 8 itself, the scope of the margin of appreciation depends on the context of the case, with particular significance attaching to the extent of the intrusion into the personal sphere of the applicant.”
The Court subsequently held, in July 2005, in Moldovan and Others v. Romania that housing conditions and racial discrimination to which Roma were subjected were so extreme that they amounted to degrading treatment in the sense of Article 3 of the Convention, a very high standard.

Roma throughout Europe – from Lisbon to Dublin to Athens to Vladivostok – frequently live in extremely substandard housing. Slum settlements throughout Europe are characterised by lack of infrastructure and exclusion from municipal services including electricity, heat, public lighting, paved roads, solid and liquid waste removal, provision of potable water, bus services, proximity to local schools and a range of other public goods. Housing is frequently substandard to the point of being dangerous or even deadly as a result of being structurally unsound, fostering diseases such as tuberculosis, being very flammable, and/or being located in or near hazardous sites. One settlement in Slovakia is located on a former mercury mine.

In addition, Roma are frequently exposed to forced eviction from housing, the extreme harm associated with the right to adequate housing of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, derived from Article 11 of the Covenant. Forced eviction is a threat to Roma everywhere, but has been a particular problem in countries undergoing post-communist transition, where social protections have been dramatically eroded in recent years. Hungary is a particularly extreme example in this regard; a 2000 amendment to domestic law now allows the notary – an employee of the municipality – to order expulsions from housing which must be implemented by police within eight days, appeal or no appeal.

The European Court of Human Rights has ruled on housing issues only in some cases, and has declined to rule in others. The Council of Europe treaty review body to confront the core issues of the housing situation of Roma most directly has been the European Committee of Social Rights, the body charged with adjudicating matters under the European Social Charter. In two recent decisions, it has held Greece and Italy in violation of Charter provisions for systematically frustrating the right to adequate housing where Roma are concerned as a result of:

- The insufficient number of dwellings of an acceptable quality to meet the needs of settled Roma;
- The insufficient number of stopping places for Roma who choose to follow an itinerant lifestyle or who are forced to do so;
- The systemic eviction of Roma from sites or dwellings unlawfully occupied by them.

The complaints against Greece and Italy, brought by the European Roma Rights Centre, brought evidence of systemic racial discrimination in the application of housing policy, insufficient protections against forced eviction, insufficient control over local authorities, and empirical evidence of huge disparities in the quality of housing enjoyed by Roma, as opposed to non-Roma. A similar complaint against Bulgaria is currently pending.

Other international bodies have also weighed in on Roma housing rights. For example, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination found Slovakia in violation of international law in 2004 for racial discrimination against Roma in the field of housing.

The EU has no specific competence in the field of housing, but has made creative use of its limited competences to attempt to address housing issues related to Roma. For example, funding under programmes such as Phare has repeatedly gone toward infrastructure in Romani communities, with the Commission taking the approach that, although it cannot fund housing, it can
In analyzing the housing conditions of Roma in Portugal, it is crucial to understand the difficulties that these and other ethnic minority communities face.

Access to housing or accommodation is regularly denied on the grounds of skin colour and ethnic minority background. There are also limitations in accessing public housing due to people’s legal status (for example undocumented families).

Portugal has also witnessed violent physical attacks aimed at dissuading minorities from living in certain neighbourhoods. Such practices become mechanisms that reinforce or create social exclusion.

Measures to tackle this problem, such as policies towards an effective promotion of social inclusion, lifetime education and labour integration have to be taken urgently.

Some excellent work has been undertaken by private individuals. In Lyon, France, for example, a local housing provider has, at considerable financial risk to himself, designed a number of innovative housing projects designed to house the extremely marginalised, including Roma.

For now, however, positive initiatives by courts and others have not outweighed the powerful forces in law and society ranging against Roma in the area of housing. There will be many more abuses reported, and many are continuous and ongoing. The public will suffer as well. In addition to general degradation of the commonweal, real threats, such as tuberculosis, will grow, unless major efforts are undertaken now.

Claude Cahn, Programmes Director ERRC, European Roma Rights Centre
http://www.errc.org/
In Portugal there are around 40,000 Roma citizens. Most of them are sedentary and 18% lives in precarious housing conditions. According to a study by the National Secretariat for Roma Issues (ONPC, a church-related institution), 58.9% of Roma families have difficulties related to housing. Most of these families inhabit unsafe houses in unfinished buildings, slums, tents, etc. This is the only kind of housing available to them, as wealthier families are not interested in living in them. A project called “Dignity” was started by the ONPC with the purpose of guaranteeing minimum standards to these families. The project aimed to ensure that all Roma families would receive water and light.

SOS Racismo organized a survey aimed to understand the dynamics of integration of Roma communities in Portugal. The organisation surveyed all municipalities in Portugal to evaluate the measures implemented by the authorities to facilitate the integration of Roma. While a number of positive initiatives were identified, most were oriented towards dealing with poverty and social exclusion in general, rather than the precise needs of the Roma people. These initiatives never included working with non-Roma people in an attempt to resolve tensions or promote good community relations. Most municipalities just focussed their work around improving the housing conditions of the Roma, rather than looking into community development work aimed at social integration.

Although EU intervention in ethnic relations via legislation is having positive outcomes, we believe that a lot of work still needs to be done.

Monica Frechaut and Monica Catarino
SOS Racismo – Portugal
http://www.sosracismo.pt/

Entrepreneurs in the making

A disproportionate segment of Europe’s Romani population engages in self-employment activities. Why doesn’t public policy do more to encourage small- and micro-enterprise to lift Europe’s Roma out of poverty?

Angel Asenov laid equipment on the cashier counter of the hardware store: a portable welding machine, wrenches and a hammer. Unsure of all the supplies he needed, he checked the list in his jeans pocket.

“Anything else?” the clerk asked. An expression mixed with excitement and worry crossed Angel’s face. At 29 years old, coming from one of the most impoverish-ed Roma ghettos in Bulgaria, he was taking his first step into the world of small business ownership.

Angel is the newest beneficiary of the Sliven Business Incubator, a massive former textile factory that was transformed into a business development centre in 2004 with the support of the Open Society Institute and the local and national Bulgarian governments. The Incubator, as its name claims, nurtures the ambitions of disadvantaged entrepreneurs in and around the city of Sliven, providing work space, equipment, business management counselling and access to credit. Open to anyone with an idea for a small enterprise, the Incubator gives preference to businesses that are either owned by or seek to employ minorities. In particular, the Incubator reaches out to residents of Nadezhda – the crowded sliver of land across the railroad tracks that is home to approximately 18,000 Roma.

Angel, who lives in Nadezhda with his mother and brother in a two-room house without running water, is one of the ghetto’s luckier inhabitants. Unlike 90% of
space was found for him at the Incubator complex and REDC extended him an $850 loan with flexible terms and a low rate of interest.

With this start-up capital he was able to purchase equipment and spare parts. He was also able to finance the refurbishment of his new work space and advertise. In one stop, he was provided with all of the inputs he needed to make his dream a reality.

The story of the Incubator’s complex is itself one of hope and renewal. Built in 1814 as the first textile factory in the Balkan Peninsula, the site was briefly used as a prison before being abandoned for 25 years – a gigantic and decrepit reminder of Silven’s economic deterioration.

That changed when the Open Society Institute partnered with the local governor and the Council of Ministers to establish the Incubator. The local government donated the use of the building for ten years and the Open Society Institute donated $75,000 for the building’s renovation, hiring local Roma workers to gut the structure and install electricity and running water. In little over a year since its opening, the Incubator now houses 15 businesses. Two businesses that started at the Incubator have already grown and left to find more space. A sock producer, an electrician and an accountant currently at the Incubator will soon follow suit.

Although it provides business counselling and advice on legal registration and tax preparation, the Incubator requires that its clients sign service contracts and pay rent. Those, like Angel, who are just starting their businesses, are put on re-payment schedules. Paying rent is a crucial part of the Incubator’s mission – to nurture truly sustainable enterprises, not create dependencies.

The Incubator’s emphasis on Roma entrepreneurship is a strategy that has been remarkably neglected by national pro-employment policies. Faced with rampant discrimination in the labour market, low rates of secondary school completion and physical segregation, a disproportionately large segment of Roma forego traditional employment in favour of

During his apprenticeship Angel learned nearly everything about the trade, even building bicycles from scratch. But when the shop’s owner suddenly died last year, the store quickly closed and Angel was left jobless.

“I wanted to start my own bike shop,” he says. “I went to the banks in town for a loan but all of them turned me down.”

Angel’s experience is not uncommon. With poverty rates in Bulgaria that are four times higher among Roma than among non-Roma, entrepreneurs like Angel lack the financial resources, credit histories, management skills and social networks needed to obtain credit. Surveyed Roma in Bulgaria corroborate that banks refuse to consider homes in Roma neighbourhoods as security for commercial loans. Except for money lenders that charge 400% interest, Roma entrepreneurs have no way to grow their enterprises beyond unstable petty commerce.

After Angel had exhausted the possibility of a commercial loan, a Roma businessman suggested that he speak to the Regional Economic Development Centre (REDC), the non-profit organisation that administers the Business Incubator. Speaking to the REDC staff, he finally found people who saw in him the human assets of a successful business. Angel was given financial counselling, taught to write a business plan, to size his market, make a budget, and develop a marketing plan. A

his neighbours, Angel had a salaried job in a bicycle repair shop for fifteen years.

“I used to hang around the bike shop when I was a kid,” he said, remembering the establishment that was famous among children throughout town. “I wanted to fix my bike myself so the owner let me use his tools. When he saw how good I was, he hired me on weekends and when I was 15 I left school and worked there full time.”

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informal self-employment. A World Bank study cites that informal sector activity is an important source of income for Roma – seasonal agricultural labour, cross-border trade, farming, stock-breeding and producing handicrafts.³

Although under-capitalized and largely operating outside the realm of written contracts, licenses and taxes, many of these micro-enterprises have the potential to grow and create ripple effects of employment, tax revenue and economic development in destitute areas like Nadezhda.

Yet most pro-employment initiatives that target Roma, such as those sponsored by the European Union’s Phare and Equal programmes, disregard micro- and small-enterprise development in favour of active labour market programs – creating mainly temporary jobs requiring unskilled labour – or job training programmes that underestimate the realities of Roma education and anti-Roma bias among employers.

Self-employment programmes, like the Business Incubator, harness the assets that unemployed Roma bring with them: ambition, experience, skills, and in Angel’s case, a list of waiting customers. The Incubator allows entrepreneurs themselves to make their own opportunities where none existed otherwise. It is a strategy that needs serious consideration now, during the 2005-2015 Decade of Roma Inclusion, or else, like the thousands of Roma with untapped skills and ideas, Europe will have wasted a great opportunity.

Mark Narron is a Program Officer at the Open Society Institute’s Economic and Business Development Program http://www.soros.org/

Nikolay Sidjimov is the Executive Director of the Regional Economic Development Centre in Sliven, Bulgaria http://www.redc.sliven.net

Footnotes
2. Ibid.

The social situation and living standards of the Roma community in Spain have improved over the last decades, in part because it has been able to benefit from advances in the welfare state in general. However, it continues to be one of the most disadvantaged social groups and one of the most affected by social exclusion processes and discrimination.

The Roma’s exclusion from the labour market is a key aspect contributing to a scenario of social discrimination, and the Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG) dedicates a large proportion of its efforts to addressing this problem.

The FSG initiatives taken with and for the Roma population over the last five years have aimed at improving their living standards through measures favouring their access to salaried employment in the labour market. These activities took place within the framework of the European Social Fund’s (ESF) Multi-Regional Operational Programme “Fight Against Discrimination 2000-2006”, the so-called Acceder Programme.
Although the FSG had grassroots knowledge of the situation and needs of the Spanish Roma population, it was also well aware of the lack of precise and representative data concerning their employment status. The organisation thus decided to conduct and publish a study on the employment situation of Roma. The main results and conclusions of this study are summarised in this article.

The FSG study aimed to collect data on the employment situation of the Roma population and to compare the results with the situation of the overall population based on the Encuesta de Población Activa (EPA, Active Population Survey). It also aimed to provide objective data on the current labour situation of Spanish Roma with a view to informing future socio-labour policies towards the community in the fields of training and employment.

Main results of the survey

1. Data on Roma characteristics

• The Spanish Roma population age 16 and older accounts for 69.9% of the total Roma population, with 50.8% women and 49.2% men and an average age of 35.
• 7 out of every 10 Roma over the age of 15 are either completely or functionally illiterate. The number of completely illiterate Roma is 4.6 times higher than that among the general population.

2. Data on the Roma employment situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Spanish Population</th>
<th>Roma Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population age 16 and over</td>
<td>34,474,300</td>
<td>475,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity rate %</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate %</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate %</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in Industry %</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in Services %</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>75.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary employment rate %</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time employment rate %</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results regarding the employed segment of the population:

• The Roma population enters the labour market at an earlier age than the rest of the population and therefore has a longer working life.
• The age difference for entering the labour market generally accounts for the differences in educational levels between the two groups. While 5 out of every 10 active Spaniards complete at least secondary education, not even 1 out of every 10 active Roma reaches this same educational level.
• 51.5% of working Roma has salaried employment compared with 81.6% for the Spanish population on the whole.
• 48.5% of Roma workers are self-employed while only 18.3% of the general Spanish population is self-employed.
• Close to 25% of the working Roma describe their activity as “collaboration in the economic activity of the family” which is indicative of a precarious or not at all “standard” situation. In clear contrast, only 1.4% of the general Spanish population describe their work as such.

This “collaboration in the economic activity of the family” is indicative of the large number of family businesses with low profit margins and scant economic formalisation, where the owner is head of household and the other active members do not benefit from any social or labour rights, since they are not able to contribute social security payments. This reality may well constitute the most significant weakness in the labour structure of the Roma population and all strategies should explicitly address this situation.

• The Roma population faces a high degree of precariousness in employment:
  - 42% of salaried Roma work part-time; for the overall population this is 8.5%.
  - 71% of Roma workers have temporary work contracts compared to 31% for the Spanish labour market as a whole.

Results regarding the unemployed segment of the population:

• Unemployment affects the Roma population more than it does the general Spanish population: 13.8% compared to 10.4%.
• Unemployment among the Roma population hits youth the hardest.
• Of the unemployed Roma, 72% are either completely or functionally illiterate while that same figure for the entire Spanish population is barely 5%.

➢ Results regarding the inactive Roma population:

• The inactivity rate of the Roma population is 30.7%, compared to 43.9% for the general Spanish population.
53.5% of inactive Roma take care of the housework, compared to 32% of the overall Spanish population.
• Only 11% of inactive Roma are retired, while this category accounts for 30% of the general inactive population.

3. Gender-segregated data

This table shows the main variables relating to the disadvantaged situation of Roma women compared to Roma men in the field of employment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Roma Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population 16 and over</td>
<td>233,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity rate %</td>
<td>80.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate %</td>
<td>11.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate %</td>
<td>71.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in Industry %</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working in Services %</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary employment rate %</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time employment rate %</td>
<td>32.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, results show that the Roma population exhibits a pattern similar to that of the overall Spanish population when it comes to gender issues: women have a lower activity rate, lower employment, higher unemployment, and more fixed-term contracts and part-time employment.

• 53.5% of inactive Roma women claim to be inactive because they are taking care of home responsibilities compared to 32.5% of the general Spanish population.
• 93.8% of Roma women working part-time claim “family obligations” as the main impediment standing in the way to full-time employment.

• 24.6% of inactive Roma men are retired compared with only 5% of Roma women.
• Women take part in vocational training courses more readily (17.6%) than men (13.1%).

4. Data concerning the Roma community’s perception of discrimination

Discriminatory attitudes towards the Roma population still seem to be prevalent in many sectors of society, given that 45.4% of those surveyed stated that at certain times they feel discriminated against, mainly when seeking employment or when working, less so when studying.

Conclusions, recommendations and proposals

The research results clearly show that despite recent developments in the Spanish labour market, in particular growing activity rates and reduction in unemployment, unemployment continues to be higher among certain excluded groups, such as the Roma population.

In addition to the under-representation in the labour market, the results also point to serious situations of disadvantage which give rise to:
➢ initial disqualification preventing permanence in job posts, even where merited and desired;
➢ a high degree of precariousness;
➢ persistence of non-regulated and non-protected employment, implying a lack of labour rights.

It is important to stress that the data collected clearly confirm that the Roma population wants to work, thus dispelling a still prevalent prejudice that Roma are lazy, that they do not want to work and therefore are responsible for their situation. Data supporting this conclusion: the high activity rates among the Roma population; the long period of time they spend in the labour market (start at a much earlier age, retire later); the expectations and desires expressed by Roma in terms of access to employment; the readily apparent and high degree of motivation on the part of women to receive training and find work.
However, this fact should not conceal but rather help to highlight the problems and difficulties facing Roma men and women in today’s labour market and the situation of social disadvantage they are in compared to the rest of the Spanish population. It becomes clear, then, that there is still much to be done...

In the view of the FSG, the fundamental barriers standing in the way to training and employment include the following:

- The scant participation of Roma in “mainstream” vocational training and employment resources and their poor permanence in the employment circuit.
- Early school dropouts and the failure to continue in the formalised training process, with the clear repercussions this has on future integration into the labour market and professional career development.
- Deficient access to new technologies implies a new risk factor for decline and social exclusion.
- Serious and persistent “unofficial” employment problems under the guise of family employment, which in many cases arises out of a need to keep the family economy afloat.

To address these barriers, the FSG would therefore like to make the following recommendations:

- To develop actions aimed at attracting more Roma to form part of and remain in the labour market, and to modernise the social protection systems facilitating this incorporation.
- To offer education and training programmes which are attractive, accessible and of high quality at all levels and to allow for flexible training itineraries.
- To urgently provide digital literacy instruction.
- To develop specific measures to tackle the persistent problem of “unofficial” employment.

All of the above should go hand in hand with an intensification of the fight against discrimination and the promotion of acceptance of diversity at the workplace: seeking greater impact for “positive messages” in contrast to discrimination.

All of these recommendations and proposals are based on the belief that the fight against discrimination should not be limited to defence against a phenomenon violating the fundamental rights of individuals, but should also envisage a proactive approach clearly including the Roma population’s active exercise of their right to training and employment as a gateway paving the way to other rights and full citizenship.

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Link to the entire Research Study: http://www.gitanos.org/publicaciones/estudioempleo/index.htm
Could football stop anti-Gypsyism?

Despite recent initiatives to tackle the problem, racism in football remains a serious problem throughout Europe. Valeriu Nicolae of the European Roma Grassroots Organisations looks at the situation of racism against Roma in football in Romania, where a recent grassroots campaign booked a first success in countering the trend...

On 6 April 2006 Steaua Bucharest and Rapid Bucharest played their last game in the UEFA Cup in the most important game of the last 16 years in Romania. Considering the long history of violence and extreme racial abuse chanted or displayed during football games between the two teams, many expected the match to be marred by a display of anti-Gypsyism.

But when a small group of people tried to yell racist slogans during the game, they immediately were told to shut up by the people around them.

Just weeks earlier, on 19 March, the two teams played against each other in the Romanian national football league. Razvan Lucescu, the coach of Rapid Bucharest, was forced to leave the stadium after 80 minutes of racist abuse. The entire game Steaua’s gallery yelled racist chants against him: “go out you stinky crow”, “die gypsy” and “we hate the gypsies”. He needed protection to leave the stadium. During the same match, the captain of Steaua Bucharest racially abused the Nigerian player of Rapid, Agunbiande Abioudund, repeatedly calling him “crow” and “gipsy”. The same week, two black players were beaten up in Sibiu for “daring” to date white women.

So what brought about the change?

Following the March incidents, and many like them in the past years, a strong campaign was initiated by Roma civil society organisations in Romania, led by the Romanian Roma Civic Alliance and with the support of the European Roma Grassroots Organisations and the Romanian mass media. The campaign started a public debate around violence and racism in the media, joined by numerous high level politicians and public personalities who called for an end to racism and violence in Romanian stadiums.

On 5 April the end of the campaign was marked by a football game against anti-Gypsyism, violence and racism in general in Bucharest. Opened by the Head of the European Commission Delegation to Romania, Jonathan Scheele, and attended by the President of the Romanian Football Federation, Mircea Sandu, UEFA Representative Patrick Gasser as well as numerous government representatives, the game sent a strong signal about the need to seriously tackle the often rampant anti-Gypsyism in Romania. The match was also attended by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the National Council Against Discrimination, the office of the Romanian prime minister and over 20 civil organisations, and received a lot of attention from numerous mass media outlets.

Photo taken at the 5 April match against racism.

This campaign was based on the enthusiasm and commitment of those involved, and required less than 300 Euros to generate more than 100 articles, reportages and news items in the Romanian media. It is important to compare this to the expensive but not always effective awareness-raising campaigns at the European level, which are meant to be built on a multi-stakeholder approach and real involvement of civil society. Grassroots organisations find that this ‘involvement’ is often but a slogan...
The results of the grassroots campaign against racism in football have clearly been demonstrated at the 6 April UEFA Cup match. It is a first step, but it is still far from enough. More campaigns are necessary and the European Commission is urgently called to pay serious attention to racism in football and sports in general. It should look at real partnerships with grassroots organisations, UEFA and FIFA in this matter.

Valeriu Nicolae, Secretary General of the European Roma Grassroots Organisations and OSI Fellow

Read more about racism in Romanian football: http://www.romanetwork.org/Football.html

Roma issues: a bibliography

The below is a selection of publications, reports and websites on Roma issues at the European level. It does not claim to be a comprehensive list of all publications on the topic.

BOOKS/REPORTS/PUBLICATIONS

Current Attitudes toward the Roma in Central Europe - A Report on Research with Non-Roma and Roma Respondents
OSI, Open Society Institute, 2005
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/attitudes_20050901

Employing the Roma: Insights from Business
UNDP RBC, Ernst & Young, 2005

Equality for Roma in Europe. A Roadmap for Action
OSI, ERIO, ERRC, IRCHR, MPG, 2006

Final report on the Human Rights situation of the Roma, Sinti and Travellers in Europe
Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights, 2006
http://www.coe.int/T/E/Commissioner_H.R/Commun ication_Unit/CommDH%282006%291_E.doc

Keeping the Distance or Taking the Chances. Roma and Travellers in Western Europe
ENAR, European Network Against Racism, 2002

OSI, Open Society Institute, 2005
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/overcoming_20050916

Overcoming Exclusion: The Roma Decade, Part II - Reflecting on Social Impact: Employment and Gender
OSI, Open Society Institute, 2005
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma/articles_publications/publications/overcomingtwo_20050916

Review of the European Union PHARE assistance to Roma minorities
European Commission (DG Enlargement), 2004

STIGMATA: Segregated schooling of Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, a survey of patterns of segregated education of Roma in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia
ERRC, European Roma Rights Centre, 2004
http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=1892

Separate and Unequal: combating discrimination against Roma in education – a source book
PILI, Public Interest Law Initiative, 2004
http://www.pili.org/2005r/content/view/53/53/

Thematic Comment No 3: ‘The Protection of Minorities in the EU’
(Chapter 7: The specific situation of the Roma/Gypsies)
EU Network of Independent Experts in Fundamental Rights, 2005

The situation of Roma in an enlarged Europe
European Commission, 2005
WEBSITES

European Grassroots Roma Organisations
http://www.romanetwork.org/

ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues
http://www.osce.org/odihr/18148.html

Open Society Institute - Roma Initiatives
http://www.soros.org/initiatives/roma

Roma Education Fund
http://www.romaeducationfund.org/

Roma Women’s Initiatives
http://www.romawomensinitiatives.org/

World Bank on Roma
http://www.worldbank.com/roma

 Council of Europe – Roma and Travellers

Decade of Roma Inclusion

ERIO, European Roma Information Office
http://www.erinnet.org/

ERRC, European Roma Rights Centre
http://www.errc.org/

ERTF, European Roma and Travellers Forum
http://www.ertf.org/ (under construction)
http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/romatravellers/ERTF/defaul t_en.asp

European Commission
http://europa.eu.int/comm/roma

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