



Conference 'Roma in an Enlarged European Union'

Organised by the European Commission
DG Enlargement – DG Employment and Social Affairs

Brussels, Belgium – 22-24 APRIL 2004

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Rationale

The Roma community will form the largest ethnic minority group within the EU following enlargement. Both within current member states and accession and candidate countries, however, the experiences of support and integration policies for Roma communities are mixed, and Roma often remain excluded from mainstream economic and social activity, whilst human rights abuses still occur.

The European Commission, through a variety of instruments, has been actively engaged in promoting social inclusion and combating discrimination against Roma in both member states and accession / candidate countries, and now wishes to review its policies in light of the forthcoming enlargement. It has recently launched a study on "Roma in an enlarged EU", which will aim to identify examples of good practice and assess how best the European Union can support Member States and civil society in their efforts to address the challenges faced by Roma. The preliminary findings of this research will form one of the key inputs to the conference.

The Phare Programme¹ is one of the main instruments of the European Commission to provide support for Roma community in the accession and candidate countries. The lessons and experience learned from the Phare projects deserve to be communicated and shared between current and new EU member states and will be essential to help develop an adequate and comprehensive policy agenda for Roma in an enlarged European Union. Lessons and experiences from other EU policy and funding instruments (including the European Social Fund, the Employment and Social Inclusion Processes and action to combat discrimination) are also highly important in this context.

This international conference is aimed at Roma representatives, governmental officials and civil society organisations involved with Roma rights and will bring together approximately 120 key actors involved in Roma issues. It is expected to provide an input to the European Commission's reflections on the possible future direction of Roma policy and strategy in the EU and provide an opportunity for Roma and civil society actors to better understand instruments available to help achieving Roma integration objectives.

Objectives

- To review experiences of Roma anti-discrimination and social inclusion programmes in Europe, particularly in the workplace and in social services (Phare and other EU programmes - projects successes and limitations, best practice examples)
- To recap on current policies and instruments (including Phare and other EU programmes) within the EU and other international organisations of relevance to Roma integration
- Priority actions: to consider what further work is required to promote social inclusion and prevent discrimination of Roma
- Future EU agenda: to recommend avenues that the European Commission might pursue in developing a comprehensive Roma policy appropriate to a 25-member state EU
- Facilitate networking and exchange, and involvement of Roma leaders

¹ The Phare programme is one of the three pre-accession instruments financed by the European Communities to assist the applicant countries of central Europe in their preparations for joining the European Union.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

Thursday, April 22, 2004	
12.00 – 14.00	Registration Welcome coffee and sandwiches
Plenary sessions	
14.00 – 14.15	Opening: welcome and address by Chairperson <i>Presentation of conference context & objectives</i> Barbara Nolan, Head of Unit, European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs
14.15 - 14.30	Addressing the challenges faced by Roma in an enlarged EU Odile Quintin, Director General, DG Employment and Social Affairs
14.30 - 14.45	Introducing the Decade of Roma Inclusion (coordinated by Hungarian government) Katalin Lévai, Minister for Equal Opportunities, Hungary
14.45 – 15.00	Making the most of the EU policy and financial framework – experience of a Member State Sarita Friman, Secretary General of the Finnish Advisory Board on Roma
15.00 – 15.15	Roma Communities in an Enlarged Europe: Challenges and perspectives Angela Kocze, Director European Roma Information Office (ERIO)
15.15 – 15.30	Closing by Chairperson : brief questions and answers and introduction to the workshops
15.30 – 16.15	Coffee break
Workshops	
16.15 – 17.45	Parallel Thematic Workshops: Benefiting from experience – successes and limitations. A relevant project (e.g. Phare, EQUAL) will be presented to introduce each thematic discussion. Each workshop will be guided by a Chair and a Rapporteur.
	A. Accessing employment <i>Chair</i> : Peter Saunders, Leeds Traveller Education Service <i>Rapporteur</i> : Ann Morton-Hyde, social inclusion technical specialist <i>Presentation</i> : “Traveller Economy sectoral partnership”(EQUAL) Pavee Point Ireland, Patrick Nevin

B. Roma education

Chair : Hristo Kychukov, President, “ Diversity” Balkan Foundation

Rapporteur : Arthur Ivatts, Senior Researcher, European Roma Study

Presentation : 1/“Drom-edu” project (Comenius²), National Board of Education, Romany Education, Janette Grönfors, Coordinator, Finland,

2/ Social Integration of Disadvantaged Youth with Particular Emphasis on the Roma Minority (Phare), Victoria Mohácsi, Commissioner Ministry of Education, Hungary

C. Roma communities and access to health care

Chair : Dr Andor Urmos, Officer in the Hungarian Ministry of Public Health, Hungary

Rapporteur : Barbora Bukovska, Poradna, Czech Republic

Presentation : 1/ “ Breaking the Barriers-Romani Women and Access to Public Health Care”, European Union Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, John Kellock

2/ Health Care Mediator Training for Roma Women, Isabel Mihalache, Romania

D. Access to housing and other social services

Chair : Jan Jarab, Commissioner of the Government of the Czech Republic for Human Rights

Rapporteur : Claude Cahn, European Roma Rights Centre, Hungary

Presentation: “ Anti-discrimination and Social inclusion Programmes”,

Fundacion Secretariado General Gitano, Jose Manuel Fresno, Spain

E. Roma participation and political representation

Chair : Josephine Verspaget, Ex-Member of the European Parliament

Rapporteur: Peter Vermeersch, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

Presentation: 1/ “Political participation of Roma on National and International level”, European Roma Forum Initiative, Miranda Voulasantra, Finland

2/ Wolf Bruggen, Vlaams Minderheden Centrum, Belgium

F. Roma Women

Chair: Enisa Eminova, OSI Roma Women Initiative

Rapporteur: Debra Schultz, Open Society Institute/Women Network (OSI)

Presentation: “Combating Double Discrimination against Roma women in Europe”, International Roma Women Network (IRWN), Soraya Post, Sweden

19.30	Welcome Drink
20.00	Dinner

² European Cooperation on School Education. It is one of the actions of the European Union’s Education and Training Programmes.

Friday, April 23, 2004

Plenary sessions

09.15 – 9.30	Introduction and Order of the Day Barbara Nolan, Head of Unit, European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs
09.30 – 10.15	Plenary Roundtable - International Initiatives in favour of Roma Council of Europe (CoE) Maria Ochoa-Llido, Head of Migration and Roma/Gypsies Department Open Society Institute (OSI) Deborah Harding, Vice President Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) – Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Nicolae Gheorghe, Advisor on Roma and Sinti Issues, Contact point for Roma and Sinti Issues World Bank Dena Ringold, Senior Economist, ECSHD, Europe and Central Asia Region United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) Andrey Ivanov, Human Development Adviser,
10.15 – 10.30	Discussion (Questions & Answers) Conclusions and closing by the Chairperson Barbara Nolan, Head of Unit, European Commission, DG Employment and Social Affairs
10.30 – 11.00	Coffee break

Workshops

11.00 – 13.00	Parallel Thematic Workshops: Future perspectives: policies, programmes and instruments in the enlarged EU. EC officials will present relevant key EU policy areas and instruments (e.g. European Social Fund, EC anti-discrimination Directives, European Social inclusion agenda) to introduce the discussion of the workshop. Each workshop will be guided by a Chair and a Rapporteur. A. Accessing employment <i>Chair</i> : Dena Ringold, Senior Economist, World Bank <i>Rapporteur</i> : Ann Morton-Hyde, Social Inclusion Technical Specialist <i>Presentation</i> : 1/ Anthony Lockett, EU anti-discrimination legislation and programme, DG EMPL – European Commission 2/ Pavel Pinkava, European Social Fund ESF / EQUAL Community Initiative ³ , DG EMPL – European Commission
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³ EQUAL is part of the European Union's strategy for more and better jobs and for ensuring that no one is denied access to them. Funded by the European Social Fund, EQUAL will test new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality experienced by those in work and those looking for a job.

B. Roma education

Chair : Ronald Lucardie, Cordaid, the Netherlands

Rapporteur: Arthur Ivatts

Presentation: 1/ Aurora Iglesias Ortego, DG Education & Culture - European Commission
2/ Rumyan Russinov, Roma Participation Programme

C. Roma communities and access to health care

Chair: Hanna Dobronauteanu, Ministry of Health, Romania (to be confirmed)

Rapporteur: Barbora Bukovska, Poradna, Czech Republic

Presentation: 1/ Ana Xavier, Social Inclusion Unit, DG EMPL - European Commission
Sue Bird, DG Regional Policy – European Commission
2/ Ivan Ivanov, European Roma Rights Center

D. Access to housing and other social services

Chair: Eva Schwebel, Council of Europe Development Bank, France

Rapporteur : Claude Cahn, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)

Presentation: 1/ Luca Pirozzi, Social Inclusion Policy, DG EMPL – European Commission
2/ Claire Roumet, European Liaison Committee for Social Housing
(CECODHAS)

E. Roma participation and political representation

Chair: Andrej Mirga, Project on Ethnic Relations and Chair of the Roma Specialist Group of Council of Europe

Rapporteur: Peter Vermeersch, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

Presentation: 1/ Mr Laszlo Teleki, State Secretary for Roma Affairs - Hungary
2/ Livia Plaks, Project on Ethnic Relations

F. Roma Women

Chair: Agnes Daroczy, Romaversitas Alapítvány

Rapporteur: Debra Schultz, Open Society Institute (OSI) Roma Women Network

Presentation: 1/ Marie-Anne Paraskevas, Gender Equality Unit, DG EMPL – European
Commission
2/ European Women Lobby ???

13.00 – 15.00

Lunch and networking

During this time, the moderators and rapporteurs of workshop sessions prepare their reports for the plenary meeting.

Plenary sessions	
15.00 – 17.00	<p>Plenary session– drawing together the threads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Brief workshop Reports – key outcomes & recommendations (by Rapporteurs)</i> • <i>Open Discussion</i> <p>Chair: European Commission, DG Employment and Enlargement</p> <p>Plenary Panel of Experts (for the discussion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angela Kocze, European Roma Information Office (ERIO) - Jean-Pierre Liegeois (France) - Dimitrina Petrova, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)
17.00 – 17.30	<p>Summary of key recommendations in the context of the EC Study on Roma in an Enlarged EU</p> <p>Plenary Panel of Experts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Angela Kocze, European Roma Information Office (ERIO) - Jean-Pierre Liegeois (France) - Dimitrina Petrova, European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) <p>Closing of the conference</p> <p>Chair: European Commission, DG Employment and Enlargement</p> <p>Closing remarks</p>
17:30-17:40	<p>Hannes Swoboda, Member of the European Parliament: “Future of the social and inclusive Europe”</p>
19.45	<p>Social Event</p> <p>Dinner in La Tentation, rue de Laeken 28 and cultural event (Roma artists).</p>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
Venue	Conference Secretariat
<p>The event will take place in Brussels, Belgium at the</p> <p>Hotel President World Trade Center Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 44, 1000 Brussels Belgium Tel. 32 2 203 20 20 Fax: 32 2 203 24 40 e-mail: wtc.info@presidenthotels.be</p>	<p>For further information, please contact the</p> <p>Conference Secretariat Sema Belgium e-mail: conference@brussels.sema.slb.com Tel.: 32 2 333 54 82 Fax: 32 2 333 55 85</p>