



FIVE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM EPHA

*The future EU Framework for
National Roma Integration
Strategies post 2020*

*The post 2020 EU Framework for National
Roma Integration Strategies
EPHA Position | October 2017*

RECOMMENDATION TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

1. Make a proposal for a suggested post-2020 EU Roma framework mainstreaming Roma health and early childhood development in 2018, subject to a democratic policy debate, including meaningful involvement of civil society, and political decision. Following the Commission Communication on the Mid-Term Review, the recently conducted Public Consultation in 2017 and the expected external evaluation in early 2018, it is the Commission's duty and responsibility, having the monopoly to initiate EU wide proposals, to draw conclusions and make clear its vision and proposals for a post 2020 EU Roma Framework which includes Roma Health and Early Childhood Development (ECD).

RECOMMENDATION TO NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

2. Evaluate at national level the impact of health and Early Childhood Development policies in the National Roma integration Strategies in 2018. The approach to health and ECD found in most EU and national Roma inclusion documents is a narrow one - the EU Framework and its accompanying assessments focus almost exclusively upon access to care. Targeted healthcare policies can only be effective when the particular health challenges facing a given community (disease types, vaccination history, local environmental health threats, occupational risks, demographic factors etc.) are known.

3. Ensure the efficient implementation of the strategy for the benefit of the Roma population The National Governments should design the appropriate institutional framework within the national, regional and local Health and ECD institutions in order to ensure effective implementation and monitoring of the National Roma Integration Strategies.

JOINT RECOMMENDATION TO NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS & THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

4. Establish at national level, with European coordination and support, individual, comparable, and better data collection mechanisms, and a more appropriate assignment of health and ECD indicators and measures for the post-2020 EU Roma Framework. The European Commission reports on Roma health and Early Childhood Development and Care (ECEC) offer a series of recommendations as to where further action could be focused¹.

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RECOMMENDATION TO ROMA, PRO ROMA AND PUBLIC HEALTH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

5. Make your voice heard and help European governments and the European Commission to deliver the post 2020 Roma Framework by co-signing the 'Joint Statement I Pledge for a future EU Roma Framework which delivers'². It is crucial that the European Commission keeps its focus on Roma inclusion, and that new emerging issues do not push the situation of Roma off the agendas of EU national governments. The voice of Roma civil society, and Roma individuals should be heard and reflected in the discussions, including young children and their families.

TAKE HOME MESSAGES FOR THE 11TH EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR ROMA INCLUSION FOR EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, EU INSTITUTIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Thanks to the evidence on Roma Health and Early Childhood Development compiled³⁴ by the European Commission, European governments, EU institutions and civil society are well aware of the growing Roma public health emergency and Early Childhood Development (ECD) challenges: almost 12 million Roma in Europe must navigate their way through life suffering illiteracy, unemployment, segregation in education, and forced eviction, preventing the next generation of Roma children and youth from living a healthy life.

A recent civil society shadow report⁵ also found that although the very existence of the EU Roma Framework is an achievement in itself and represents a turning point for Roma communities in Europe, by design, it has several major shortcomings. It concluded that post-2020, the EU Roma Framework should be maintained but should undergo a substantial reform that will reorient the current policy design.

Poor Roma health is an underlying consequence of Roma segregation. Roma suffer on average ten years lower life expectancy than the mainstream population due to hunger and malnutrition, squalid housing, and significantly higher rates of unemployment. **Antigypsyism in health- and childcare⁶,** the specific form of racism towards Roma, results in substandard medical care and ineffective access to early childhood education and care.

Jobs and growth cannot be achieved with a sick and segregated Roma population. Given the cross-border elements of Roma inclusion, it is important to recognize that no individual country can cope with the challenges of Roma exclusion alone. There is a need for an EU rule of law mechanism to enforce responsibility of national governments to fulfill their laws and commitments. Only a coordinated effort at EU level reaching all the way to local level can bring real and visible progress to tackle all cross-sectoral elements and determinants of good Roma health, and ensure access to the benefits of early childhood development programmes.

Good Roma health is a precondition for a good education and to secure employment. While European governments, EU institutions and civil society gather for their timely discussions on the



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occasion of the 11th European Roma Platform, it is vital to stress the need for a European Roma framework post 2020 which delivers for all Roma. The future framework must be based on the latest available, reliable, data and evidence. Detailed and realistic action plans should have appropriate, predefined budgets included in the national, county and local council budgets. While the European Commission has admitted that there have been some achievements in early childhood education, there needs to be improved access to inclusive schooling, higher education and employment, as well as health, as practice shows that efforts to promote Roma inclusion in Europe are still needed.

Lack of transparency and accountability mechanisms are the main shortcomings that make the monitoring and evaluation process of NRISs difficult and uncertain. Therefore, data collection on the situation of Roma and measures to improve the policies towards Roma, must be promoted by systematically involving local Roma community members, local Roma NGOs and local Roma professionals in completing and analysing data. It is essential to ensure independent and external periodic evaluations based on participatory methodologies, including members of the Roma community. These evaluations must be impact-oriented and must be comparable with national official data.

The mid-term review of the EU Roma Framework⁷ offers an opportunity for European institutions, national governments, and civil society to design a post 2020 EU Roma framework, which by mainstreaming Roma Health and early childhood development, ensures meaningful Roma integration.

Notes

1. EPHA Briefing – October 2017 – EPHA Analysis of EU and National Policy Commitments in the NRIS
2. <https://epha.org/joint-statement-pledge-for-a-future-eu-roma-framework-which-delivers/>
3. European Commission (2014) Report commissioned by DG Health and Consumers 'Report on the health status of the Roma population in the EU and monitoring data collection in the area of Roma health in the Member States' available online at https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/social_determinants/docs/2014_roma_health_report_en.pdf [accessed October 2017].
4. European Commission (2014) Report of the working group on ECEC 'Proposal for key principles of a Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care' available online at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/strategic-framework/archive/documents/ecec-quality-framework_en.pdf [accessed October 2017].
5. Revisiting the EU Roma Framework: Assessing the European Dimension for the Post-2020 Future. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/revisiting-eu-roma-framework-assessing-european-dimension-post-2020-future>
6. http://antigypsyism.eu/?page_id=17
7. http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?item_id=127519



About EPHA: The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) is a change agent – Europe's leading NGO advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. EPHA is a member of, among others, the Social Platform, SDG Watch Europe, and the Semester Alliance.

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