

April 2022

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## Editorial

### Continuing the Fight for Roma Health Equity in Europe

Complex and persistent issues require holistic and stubborn approaches. In our efforts to combat health inequalities in Europe, we combine targeting the underlying drivers of health (in)equity, such as through the *social accountability* approach; focusing on specific social determinants of health, like (racial) discrimination; exposing the consequences of these inequalities, e.g., the unequal impact of the pandemic; and zooming in on specific vulnerable and marginalised groups, including young children from disadvantaged communities and Roma.

This issue of our newsletter is dedicated to the Roma, a group estimated to number around six million within the European Union, who experience disproportionately large health inequalities. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency estimates that the average Roma life expectancy is about ten years lower than that of non-Roma. At the time of writing, we are almost two and a half years into the European Commission's **strategic framework for Roma equality, inclusion and participation until 2030**. With the – much delayed – national strategies slowly trickling in over the past months, we provided the Commission with [our recommendations](#), which were drafted in close collaboration with the EPHA-managed [Roma Health Network \(RHN\)](#). Although it is encouraging to see some quite elaborate strategies, we do observe that the majority has few, poorly defined, or insufficiently ambitious impact indicators. Clearly, our work is not yet concluded.

Being in between **International Roma Day** (8 April) and the **2022 Romani Week** (16-20 May), the topic of Roma inclusion is very much alive. While waiting for European member states and accession countries to finalise their national strategies, we are working hard to raise awareness on the health inequalities between Roma and non-Roma, with a specific focus on mental health, housing, and the monitoring of inclusion policy. Moreover, this newsletter issue highlights a guest contribution from Alejandro Chuquitarco from the University of Alicante, who investigated [environmental component](#) of the national Roma strategies.

Two years into the pandemic and the recent events in Ukraine, attention for mental health is steadily growing. EPHA and the RHN have recognised this, and so as part of the 2022 Romani week we will host a [capacity building event with a focus on mental health](#). It will take place on 19 May from 16:30 until 18:00 and will bring together several members of the Roma Health Network, who have developed a mental health model which they successfully implemented in North Macedonia. There will also be a

contribution from our RHN member, [Klimaka](#), who provided mental health services to Roma and recently went to the Romanian-Ukrainian border to provide mental health support and humanitarian aid for the refugees. Among all the chaos, it is important that we do not lose sight of internally displaced Roma, or Roma trying to leave Ukraine.

Neither should we lose sight of the learnings from how the EU has dealt with the response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. EPHA stresses that the recently established [European Parliament's special committee on COVID-19 is an opportunity to drive health equity forward](#), a chance to strengthen accountability and increase public trust, but only if developed transparently and together with civil society and public health organizations.



**Raymond Gemen**

Senior Policy Manager for Health Inequalities



**Tomas De Jong**

Policy Intern for the Roma Health Project

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## This Month's Top Stories



Analysis | The environmental component in EU National Roma Integration Strategies

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Humanitarian Mission in Romania and Ukraine: providing mental health services and combating social exclusion

[READ MORE](#)



European Parliament's special committee on COVID-19: an opportunity to drive health equity forward

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Event organised within the 2022 Romani Week addressing capacity building in the Roma society, the importance of mental health in Roma inclusion, and exploring CESPYPD's mental health model.

**May 19 | 16:30-18:00 CEST | Online**

[REGISTER HERE](#)



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## EPHA Updates



EPHA's response to WHO public hearings on a new international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response

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EPHA's response to the European Commission's call for evidence on AMR

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Tyre wear: an underestimated source of air pollution that needs to be tackled

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## EPHA Events



The MEP Interest Group on antimicrobial resistance will convene to discuss how to curb antimicrobial pollution in the context of the Pharmaceutical Strategy and the Zero-Pollution Action Plan.

May 17 | 15:00 - 17:30 CEST | Online

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## Previous Discussions

This event address the health impacts of air pollution caused by residential heating and cooking. It also hosts a conversation informed by the findings of a new study undertaken by CE Delft for EPHA.

31 March 2022

[\(RE-\) WATCH THE DISCUSSION](#)



## News From Members

### Empowering men to undertake healthy social participation and active engagement in the labour market

The [Step-by-Step \(SBS\) Project](#) is a cross-border partnership involving 10 organisations from the UK, The Netherlands, France and Belgium.

The aim of SBS is to empower men and promote a culture in which all citizens in all regions will have the confidence to make sustainable positive changes in their lives benefiting themselves and society.

[READ THE REPORT](#)





## European AIDS Treatment Group

EATG launches reports aiming to strengthen community leadership for access to HIV and HCV testing in Europe and Central Asia

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## Eurochild

From words to action: will the Council of Europe's new Child Rights Strategy deliver for children?

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## ESOT

ESOT Think Tank: Tackling Inequalities in Organ Transplantation – A Pathway Forward

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## EONS

Cancer Nursing Education Framework – Survey

*Deadline: 30 April 2022*

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

## FEANTSA

International Roma Day Statement: Addressing homelessness and poor housing among Roma communities in the post-2020 national strategies for Roma equality, inclusion, and participation

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## AGE Platform Europe

Age equality: joint EU and UN discussions address need for a life course and intergenerational approach in EU policies

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## Alcohol Action Ireland

Why aren't we willing to protect children from profiling and targeting by corporate forces selling harmful products such as alcohol, betting and junk food?

[READ MORE](#)

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EPHA (AISBL) is the European Platform bringing together public health organisations representing health professionals, patients groups, health promotion and disease specific NGOs, academic groupings and other health associations. The European Public Health Alliance has received funding under an operating grant from the European Union's EU4Health Programme (2021-2027). The content of this email represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains. Transparency Register Number: [18941013532-08](#)

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