

Roma inclusion in the EEA and Norway Grants

Mainstreaming for results



Background

- Roma is Europe's largest minority, with an estimated population of 10-12 million. Socially and economically, Roma are also one of Europe's most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and frequently face intolerance, discrimination and exclusion. Many lack access to housing, healthcare, social services, employment and education.
- European countries have both a national and a joint responsibility to address the discrimination and exclusion of Roma; significant funding has been devoted towards improving the situation of Roma.¹ However, impact remains limited.
- The *EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020* (2011) asked its member states to adopt national strategies aimed at improving the economic and social situation of Roma. This sets clear targets and engages EU member states, civil society and other stakeholders to address the exclusion experienced by Roma. The European Commission will review annually the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies (also based on surveys conducted by the Fundamental Rights Agency), reporting to the European Parliament and the Council.
- While welcoming the increased efforts of the European Commission, important stakeholders, such as the Open Society Foundations/Roma Initiatives Office have pointed out the weaknesses of the approach when analysing the EU Framework for Roma Integration. The Commission itself is also critical towards the actual implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies. OSF highlights that after 'lost decades', the issue of Roma inclusion attracted little attention in the European policy agenda, these strategies fall very short on what is required to make a tangible difference needed by 2020. Specifically, further coordination and targeting of funding is needed at European and national levels along with instruments to enforce the national and European policies in the field.

Improving the situation of Roma - a priority for the EEA and Norway Grants

- Promoting common democratic values, strengthening fundamental rights and consolidating the rule of law are horizontal concerns for Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. These concerns cut across priority sectors and programme areas in all beneficiary countries. Specific attention is given to the inclusion of minorities and vulnerable groups, in particular the Roma, to combat discrimination and racism and to promote tolerance and multi-cultural awareness.
- Progress in these core areas is crucial to ensure the sustainability and the contribution to the Grants' overall objectives of reducing economic and social

• ¹The terms 'Roma inclusion' and 'Roma integration' both refer to measures for improving the situation of Roma

disparities and strengthening bilateral relations; this is in line with and complementary to National Roma Integration Strategies.

- Under the EEA & Norway Grants 2004-09 some projects targeted vulnerable groups, including Roma.
- The funding period 2009-14 operates via programmes, which allows a more strategic approach to implementation and emphasises results. The Donor States have made the social and economic inclusion of Roma a priority, ensuring that special measures are taken to include Roma as a target group in relevant programmes.

The added value of support to Roma from the EEA and Norway Grants

- When compared to other major donors in the field, the Grants put stronger emphasis on the role of civil society in this area.
- The Grants feature a twofold approach in support to Roma combining perspectives of fundamental rights and a socio-economic inclusion.
- A wide spectrum of Roma-relevant aspects are considered eligible for support from the Grants, including those less emphasised by other donors, such as concerning identity or culture.
- The Grants are the first broad-based funding mechanism to try to set a numerical target of Roma inclusion in a systematic way; when following up on the achievement of this target:
 - synergies are stimulated across programmes
 - stakeholder consultations are encouraged to create functional models of cooperation at the national and local levels.
- The Grants are the largest donor for Roma inclusion after the EU, therefore in a strategic position to define a niche.

Advocacy, empowerment, inclusive societies - how the EEA and Norway Grants contribute to Roma inclusion

- In line with the EU's ten common basic principles on Roma inclusion, and specifically the principle on explicit, but not exclusive targeting, the Grants work with society at large to promote tolerance and fundamental rights, combat discrimination, foster the inclusiveness of institutions and raise awareness of the majority population. They also target Roma explicitly focusing on empowerment and public policy advocacy.
- The specific objectives set for the Grants in this field are proportionate with the funding available; at present, around €35 million is allocated for more than 40 programmes in ten beneficiary countries.

- The EEA and Norway Grants use five main approaches to contribute to Roma inclusion

A. Ensuring strategic cooperation with external actors

- Policy coordination is a way of enhancing impact. This is why the EEA and Norway Grants have established a partnership with the Council of Europe, a Donor Programme Partner in a number of programmes relevant for Roma inclusion, as well as close cooperation with the European Commission, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and other EU bodies. Furthermore, the Grants also work closely with the Open Society Foundations
- The Grants are associated to several formal and informal platforms of cooperation on Roma inclusion, including the Council of Europe Ad Hoc Committee of Experts on Roma Issues (CAHROM), the EU Platform on Roma Inclusion, the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 and the Coalition of International Organisations on Roma Inclusion (joining the World Bank, the Council of Europe Development Bank, UNDP, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and Open Society Foundations)

B. Setting Roma inclusion targets in the Beneficiary States

- The main beneficiary countries concerned are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and the Slovak Republic, although Roma inclusion is also considered in programmes in Greece, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain
- A specific Roma concern is identified in the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) concluded with two beneficiary countries: Romania and Bulgaria. For Bulgaria, the target is for 10% of the allocation to go towards improving the situation for the Roma population. For Romania, the MoU provides that the parties to this Memorandum agree that an indicative target of at least 10% of the total funding for 13 relevant programme areas shall target the improvement of the situation for the Roma population
- For other beneficiary countries, the Roma concern is highlighted in specific programmes

C. Focusing support on specific sectors

- Civil society support:
 - The Grants are one of the prime funding schemes for civil society in Central and Southern Europe, focusing on human rights, anti-discrimination, multicultural dialogue, good governance, gender equality and the fight against poverty and social exclusion. Funding to these core areas, to which NGOs provide a unique contribution, makes up at least one third of the programmes in 15 beneficiary countries.

- While there have been many positive developments in the beneficiary states, trends such as rising extremism, intolerance, discrimination and hate speech still require serious attention. In response, the programmes tackle *horizontal concerns* such as hate speech, extremism, racism and xenophobia, homophobia, anti-Semitism, sexual harassment, violence against women and trafficking. They also promote tolerance, multicultural understanding and Roma inclusion. The Grants, and particularly the NGO Programmes, are a strategic partner to the Council of Europe's campaign against hate speech, launched in 2013.
- There are several other programme areas, which are relevant from a Roma inclusion perspective, such as:
 - Children and youth at risk
 - Public health
 - Cultural heritage and cultural diversity
 - Domestic and gender-based violence
 - Correctional services
 - Schengen cooperation
 - Judicial capacity building
 - Local and regional initiatives to reduce national inequalities and to promote social inclusion
 - Research.
- Programmes also include specific conditions highlighting the need to focus on Roma both exclusively and explicitly.
- Stakeholder participation in general and civil society consultation in particular is an integral part of including the Roma aspect in the programmes.

D. Using specific programme implementation tools

- There are ways to *target* calls for proposals while maintaining the overall objective of the programme. One is to award extra points to Roma inclusion within the selection criteria outlined in calls for proposals. Geographical targeting can also be effective in addressing Roma inclusion, as a high number of Roma reside in economically vulnerable regions. Capacity building and empowerment measures are also relevant in this respect.

E. Consolidating data on Roma inclusion within the programmes funded by the EEA & Norway Grants

- Data are being gathered through a *Roma inclusion study*, which aims to provide a complete overview of all supported projects, sub-projects and programmes in the field of Roma inclusion under the EEA & Norway Grants

2004-09. The study extracts results, lessons learned, best practices and recommendations for future funding. Strategies and possibilities for Roma inclusion support under the EEA & Norway Grants 2009-14 are also recommended.

- *Reporting* systems are being developed and refined in order to measure progress towards the objectives. Roma inclusion is currently included as a policy marker in the Grants reporting system. Additionally, best practice based coordination with the World Bank, UNDP and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) is taken into account when developing guidance for countries, programmes and projects to report on the Roma concern.

- Externally, the Grants plan to *reinforce similar efforts at European level*, including the one by European Commission on indicators in cooperation with the World Bank and UNDP. In particular, data collected and published by the *Fundamental Rights Agency* form an important backdrop and baseline for programmes under the Grants relevant from a Roma inclusion perspective.

Main partners of the EEA and Norway Grants

- To identify better the needs and assess the situation of Roma inclusion in the beneficiary countries, expertise has been sought from the Council of Europe and the Open Society Foundations – Roma initiatives office .

- The *Council of Europe* is engaged as a Donor Programme Partner in eight programmes targeting vulnerable groups, including Roma. The Council of Europe provides input and know-how in the areas of justice, human rights, education and social inclusion.

- The *OSF – Roma initiatives Office* is advising the EEA and Norway Grants on selected programmes targeting Roma inclusion throughout the appraisal process. Cooperation will continue in the implementation and monitoring of these programmes.

- Some Programme Operators are very experienced in Roma inclusion-relevant regranting or they have partnered with knowledgeable organisations and foundations in this area.

- *Donor Programme Partners* for the programmes could further assist implementation of the programmes in areas where the Roma concern is identified.

- *Donor embassies* play a role at the project selection stage, since they attend many selection committee meetings, by reasserting the importance of Roma inclusion. Furthermore, they are well placed to monitor the political developments on this topic in the beneficiary countries.

- *Continuous dialogue with all stakeholders* (National Focal Points, Programme Operators, NGOs and main partners) is key to ensuring ownership.

Assessing progress/taking stock of cooperation

- The National Focal Points from the five beneficiary countries with the largest Roma population (Romania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Slovak Republic) were invited to submit concept papers on the methods planned to achieve the Roma inclusion target or address the concern as specified in the respective Memoranda of Understanding, including monitoring and reporting requirements.
- The FMO and Donors' assessment of these papers comprise the basis of country-specific elements when mainstreaming support to Roma.
- Strategic discussions with main partners and external actors will also be regularly held when aiming at synergies in supporting the field of Roma inclusion.
- Roma inclusion is a specific topic for discussion in the annual meeting with the beneficiary countries that have programmes where this is a concern.
- There will be annual stock tacking events on Roma issues.
- A close monitoring exercise involving all Programme Operators of relevant programmes will ensure follow-up in implementation.
- A pilot exercise on lessons learnt for future programming will be undertaken in in 2014.
- Follow-up on results indicators will be ensured.

**Read more about how the Grants support Roma inclusion:
www.eeagrants.org/Roma**

ANNEXES

COUNTRY OVERVIEWS

Gábor has worked to help this community over a number of years and one of the projects has been funded by the EEA and Norway Grants. One of the initiatives was to pick up children in the morning and bring them to school (Photo by: Christophe Vander Eecken).

ROMANIA

Requirements at programme level

Romania and the Donor States have agreed through the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) that an indicative target of at least 10% of the total funding for the relevant programme areas under the EEA and Norway Grants shall be set aside for the improvement of the situation of the Roma population. Taking into consideration all the relevant programme areas mentioned in the MoU as having a potential to contribute to the achievement of this target, the amount to be spent on this objective is at least €17 million. The Roma inclusion target is calculated as based on the total eligible cost of the programmes.

National Focal Point plan on how to address specific concern in the MoU

The Programme Operators have presented their plans on how to achieve this ambitious target through their programme proposals. The plans vary a lot in details; therefore concise information is also needed on how the overall target will be reached. This matter will also have to be followed up in the programme implementation phase. The achieved results should be measurable and need to be reported on regularly. Therefore the National Focal Point was invited to prepare a concept paper on its strategy to ensure the achievement of this specific concern, including an overview of what is being proposed in the programmes, how the target assumed is met, the challenges and risks that lie ahead and the envisaged reporting and evaluation tools to be used.

Assessment of the plan/Follow-up

An assessment of this plan will structure the dialogue on follow-up actions with the overall objective of maximising the impact of support from the Grants towards the improvement of the situation of Roma in Romania.

Relevant programmes in Romania

Country	Programme	Overall allocation (in € million)	Roma inclusion target (in € million)
Romania			
1.	NGO fund	30.0	Min 3.0
2.	Children and Youth at Risk and Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion	22.0	Min. 5.2
3.	Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance	4.5	Min. 0.5
4.	Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and National Heritage	14.0	Min 1.6
5.	Promotion of diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage	6.8	Min. 0,8
6.	Research within Priority Sectors	20.0	Min. 2.3
7.	Scholarships	4.0	Min. 0.4
8.	Public Health Initiatives	8.10	Min. 0.9
9.	Domestic and Gender-Based Violence	4.0	Min. 0.4
10.	Schengen Cooperation and Combatting Cross-border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	5.0	Min. 0.5
11.	Judicial Capacity Building and Cooperation	8.0	Min. 0.9
12.	Correctional Services, Including Non-custodial Sanctions	8.0	Min. 0.9

BULGARIA

Requirements at programme level

Bulgaria and the Donor States have agreed through the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) that specific concern will be ensured in respect of issues related to the Roma population across the programme areas. The target is for 10% of the country allocation to go towards the improvement of the situation for the Roma population. Taking into consideration the overall allocation for Bulgaria, the amount to be spent on this objective is at least €12.6 million.

National Focal Point plan on how to address specific concern in the MoU

The National Focal Point was invited to prepare a concept paper on its strategy to ensure the achievement of this country-level target, including an overview of what is being proposed in the programmes considered as relevant, how the target assumed is met, the challenges and risks that lie ahead and the envisaged reporting and evaluation tools to be used for measuring progress.

Assessment of the plan/Follow-up

An assessment of this plan will structure the dialogue on follow-up actions with the overall objective of maximising the impact of support from the Grants towards the improvement of the situation of Roma in Bulgaria.

Relevant programmes in Bulgaria

Country	Programme	Overall allocation (in € million)	Roma inclusion target (in € million)
Bulgaria			
1.	NGO fund	11.79	To be specified
2.	Children and Youth at Risk	7.86	To be specified
3.	Public Health Initiatives	13.415	To be specified
4.	Cultural Heritage and Cultural Diversity	14.0	To be specified
5.	Scholarships	1.5	To be specified
6.	Domestic and Gender-Based Violence	4.0	To be specified
7.	Schengen Cooperation and Combatting Cross-border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	6.0	To be specified
8.	Judicial Capacity Building and Cooperation	3.0	To be specified
9.	Correctional Services, Including Non-custodial Sanctions	7.0	To be specified

HUNGARY

Requirements at programme level

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the EEA Grants in its Annex B mentions a number of programmes, where the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including Roma, shall be addressed.

This concerns the following Programmes:

- Under the EEA Grants: the NGO Fund (HU 05) and the Programme Children and Youth at Risk (HU 06)
- Under the Norway Grants: Public Health Initiatives (HU 12)

Under these programmes 4.6 M EUR is specifically earmarked to also benefit Roma.

National Focal Point plan on how to address specific concern in the MoU

The National Focal Point from Hungary was requested to submit a plan on how it will address the specific concern in these programmes, including the allocation of funds and measures foreseen. The request also highlighted the importance of describing ways how progress towards achieving the target will be monitored and reported on, asking for a description of the specific risks and challenges that may affect the attainment of the target and the mitigating measures to address these risks. The NFP was also invited to provide an overview of overarching policy issues relevant from a Roma inclusion perspective and to designate a person that could serve as contact point on Roma issues.

Assessment of the plan/Follow-up

An assessment of this plan will structure the dialogue on follow-up actions with the overall objective of maximising the impact of support from the Grants towards the improvement of the situation of Roma in Hungary.

Relevant programmes in Hungary

Country	Programme	Overall allocation (in € million)	Roma inclusion target (in € million)
Hungary			
1.	NGO fund	12.61	Min. 1.0
2.	Children and Youth at Risk	11.21	Min. 2.0
3.	Public Health Initiatives	16.64	Min. 1.6
4.	Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and National Heritage	11.21	Min. 0.6

SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Requirements at programme level

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the EEA Grants in its Annex B mentions a number of programmes, where the specific needs of minority groups, including Roma, shall be addressed. This concerns the following Programmes:

- Under the EEA Grants: the two NGO Funds (SK 03 and SK 10) and the Programme Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social inclusion (SK 04)
- Under the Norway Grants: a grant condition has addressed the specific needs of the Roma population in the Domestic and Gender-based Violence programme (SK 09)

Under these programmes 2.75 M EUR is specifically earmarked to also benefit Roma.

National Focal Point plan on how to address specific concern in the MoU

The National Focal Point from the Slovak Republic was requested to submit a plan on how it will address the specific concern in these programmes, including the allocation of funds and measures foreseen. The request also highlighted the importance of describing ways how progress towards achieving the target will be monitored and reported on, asking for a description of the specific risks and challenges that may affect the attainment of the target and the mitigating measures to address these risks. The National Focal Point was also invited to provide an overview of overarching policy issues relevant from a Roma inclusion perspective and to designate a person that could serve as contact point on Roma issues.

Assessment of the plan/Follow-up

An assessment of this plan will structure the dialogue on follow-up actions with the overall objective of maximising the impact of support from the Grants towards the improvement of the situation of Roma in the Slovak Republic.

Relevant programmes in the Slovak Republic

Country	Programme	Overall allocation (in € million)	Roma inclusion target (in € million)
Slovak Republic			
1.	NGO fund	3.45	Min. 0.96
2.	Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion	1.0	Min. 1.0
3.	Public Health Initiatives	13.41	Min. 0.79
4.	Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and National Heritage and Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts	11.92	Not specified

CZECH REPUBLIC

Requirements at programme level

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the EEA Grants in its Annex B mentions a number of programmes, where the specific needs of minority groups, including Roma, shall be addressed.

This concerns the following Programmes:

- Under the EEA Grants: Civil Society (CZ 03), Children and Youth at Risk (CZ 04), Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion (CZ 05) and Cultural heritage and Contemporary Arts (CZ 06)
- Under the Norway Grants: Schengen Cooperation and Combating Cross-Border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups (CZ 14)

Under these programmes 2.37 M EUR is specifically earmarked to also benefit Roma.

National Focal Point plan on how to address specific concern in the MoU

The National Focal Point from the Czech Republic was requested to submit a plan on how it will address the specific concern in these programmes, including the allocation of funds and measures foreseen. The request also highlighted the importance of describing ways how progress towards achieving the target will be monitored and reported on, asking for a description of the specific risks and challenges that may affect the attainment of the target and the mitigating measures to address these risks. The National Focal Point was also invited to provide an overview of overarching policy issues relevant from a Roma inclusion perspective and to designate a person that could serve as contact point on Roma issues.

Assessment of the plan/Follow-up

An assessment of this plan will structure the dialogue on follow-up actions with the overall objective of maximising the impact of support from the Grants towards the improvement of the situation of Roma in the Czech Republic.

Relevant programmes in the Czech Republic

Country	Programme	Overall allocation (in € million)	Roma inclusion target (in € million)
Czech Republic			
1.	NGO fund	9.81	Min. 1.08
2.	Children and Youth at Risk	4.3	Not specified
3.	Local and Regional Initiatives to Reduce National Inequalities and to Promote Social Inclusion	1.24	Min. 1.24
4.	Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and National Heritage and Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts	21.49	Not specified
5.	Schengen Cooperation and Combating Cross-Border and Organised Crime, including Trafficking and Itinerant Criminal Groups	7.4	Min. 0.5
6.	Gender Equality and Domestic and Gender-Based Violence	0.84	Not specified

RELEVANT PROGRAMMES IN OTHER BENEFICIARY COUNTRIES

Country	Programme	Overall allocation (in € million)	Roma inclusion target (in € million)
Greece			
1.	NGO fund	6.34	Not specified
Poland			
1.	NGO fund	37.0	Not specified
2.	Conservation and Revitalisation of Cultural and Natural Heritage	60.0	Not specified
3.	Promotion of Diversity in Culture and Arts within European Cultural Heritage	10.0	Not specified
4.	Domestic and Gender-Based Violence	3.0	Not specified
Portugal			
1.	NGO fund	5.8	Not specified
2.	Public Health Initiatives	10.0	Not specified
Slovenia			
1.	NGO Fund	1.9	Not specified
2.	Public Health Initiatives	10.2	Not specified
Spain			
1.	NGO Fund	4.58	Not specified
2.	Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Promoting Work-Life Balance	10.19	Not specified

Photo by Christophe Vander Eecken: At the Burratino School on the Csepel island, Budapest, children from underprivileged families come to learn and live in a safe and inspiring environment. Many of the children at the school are Roma. The school was upgraded with support from the Norway Grants and can now provide better facilities and education.