

The 10 Common Basic Principles for Roma Inclusion

These principles aim at guiding the EU institutions and Member States when they design and implement new policies or projects for Roma inclusion.

They represent a legally non-binding political declaration. However, Member States have shown their commitment to basing future initiatives on these principles.

1. Constructive, pragmatic and non-discriminatory policies
2. Explicit but not exclusive targeting
3. Inter-cultural approach
4. Aiming for the mainstream
5. Awareness of the gender dimension
6. Transfer of evidence-based policies
7. Use of Community instruments
8. Involvement of regional and local authorities
9. Involvement of civil society
10. Active participation of the Roma

Some of the Principles are on issues that are well-established, while others are very innovative, such as:

- 'Explicit but not exclusive targeting' which, instead of singling out the Roma as distinct group, aims at improving the living standards and environment of all those living in similar conditions.
- The 'inter-cultural approach' which stresses that both the Roma and mainstream society have much to learn from each other and that inter-cultural learning and skills deserve to be promoted alongside combating prejudices and stereotypes.
- 'Aiming for the mainstream' which emphasises that policies should support the Roma to participate fully in mainstream society, rather than developing separate Roma settlements or labour markets.

Contacts

European Commission Roma Portal
<http://ec.europa.eu/roma>

European Commission, DG Employment,
Anti-discrimination Unit
<http://ec.europa.eu/anti-discrimination>

'For Diversity. Against Discrimination.'
information campaign
www.stop-discrimination.info

European Social Fund
<http://ec.europa.eu/esf>

European Regional Development Fund
http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funds/feder/index_en.htm

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EU Action for the Roma



An initiative of the European Union

Facts and Figures

The Roma are one of the biggest ethnic minorities in the EU. An estimated 10-12 million Roma live in different Member States, often in difficult situations.

According to a recent survey* which asked the Roma about their experiences:

- Half of all the Roma questioned had been discriminated against at least once in the previous year.
- Of those who have been discriminated against, each person experienced on average 11 incidents of discrimination over a 12 month period.
- 69% of the Roma questioned consider that discrimination on the basis of someone's ethnic or immigrant background is widespread in their country.

* Data in Focus Report 1 – The Roma, EU-MIDIS: European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (2009), produced by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). This series of reports is the first EU-wide survey to ask immigrant and ethnic minority groups about their experiences of discrimination and criminal victimisation in everyday life. <http://fra.europa.eu/eu-midis>



Legislation

The EU's power to combat discrimination is based on Article 19 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union.

Since 2000, Member States have agreed a number of pieces of legislation which provide important rights for the Roma:

- The Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC), which was adopted in 2000, prohibits discrimination on the grounds of racial or ethnic origin in the workplace as well as in other areas of life such as education, social protection, health-care and access to goods and services.
- The Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia (2008/913/JHA), which was agreed in 2008, provides an approximation of the laws and regulations which Member States should follow for offences involving racism and xenophobia.
- The Directive on the right to move and reside freely within the EU (2004/38/EC), which was adopted in 2004, guarantees that all citizens have the right of free movement throughout the EU provided that they are working or seeking employment, studying, or are self-sufficient or retired.

Funding

The European Commission's approach regarding Roma issues is explicit but not exclusive: Roma inclusion is not dealt with separately from mainstream EU activities, but instead special attention is paid to the particular situation of the Roma within all EU policies and instruments which aim at improving the economic situation, health, living conditions, employment opportunities, cultural understanding and education of all Europeans.

Specifically, the full participation of the Roma in society is supported through the Community's financial tools such as:

- The European Social Fund (ESF) which supports employment and the improvement of living standards, and helps people enhance their education and skills.
- The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which supports regional development, economic change, enhanced competitiveness and territorial co-operation throughout the EU.
- The PROGRESS programme, including the 'For Diversity. Against Discrimination.' information campaign, which funds awareness-raising activities which aim to combat discrimination against the Roma.
- Other Commission activities and related funding mechanisms, for example, the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Youth in Action Programme, the Culture Programme (2007-2013), and the Health Programme 2008-2013, etc.

EU Platform for Roma Inclusion

A key conclusion of the General Affairs Council of the EU in December 2008, which followed the first European Roma Summit of 16 September 2008, was to set up a platform for the exchange of good practice and experience of Roma inclusion. The first meeting of the new platform took place on 24 April 2009 in Prague. The platform will help make the existing policy processes at national, European and international level more coherent and effective.

Around 70 stakeholders, including national governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), EU officials and Roma representatives, came together in Prague to discuss the 10 Common Basic Principles for Roma Inclusion. These principles were annexed by EU Employment and Social Affairs Ministers on 8 June 2009 to their Conclusions on the Inclusion of Roma.

