

Roma inclusion

In Esztergom, Hungary, the Grants have funded school bus schemes enabling young Roma in deprived communities to attend school.

The Roma is Europe's largest minority, with an estimated population of 10-12 million. Socially and economically, the Roma are also one of Europe's most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and frequently face intolerance, discrimination and exclusion. Improving the situation of the Roma is a priority for the EEA and Norway Grants.

WHY FOCUS ON ROMA INCLUSION?

A 2012 report by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), which covered 11 EU countries, revealed that Roma continue to experience high levels of deprivation and exclusion. Of those surveyed:

- > One in three is unemployed
- > 90% are living below the poverty line
- > Only 15% complete upper-secondary education and 20% are covered by health insurance
- > One in two have experienced discrimination because of their ethnic background

All European countries have a responsibility to address the exclusion and discrimination of the Roma. Improving the situation of the Roma is also a joint European commitment.

In 2011, the European Commission introduced an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020. This sets clear targets and engages EU member states, civil society and other stakeholders to address the existing gaps between the Roma and the rest of society. The Council of Europe also adopted a strategy to improve the situation of the Roma.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE?

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway have made improving the situation of the Roma a priority. There is a particular focus in countries with sizeable Roma minorities such as Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, where Roma are included as a target group in relevant programmes.

HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE IT?

Support focuses both on strengthening fundamental rights as well as on social and economic inclusion, including better access to education and health care. Involving Roma communities directly is an important aspect of the efforts – helping to empower the group to improve their own situation as well as contributing to more inclusive policies and practices in institutions and building bridges between Roma and non-Roma.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society plays a critical role in tackling inequalities and giving a voice to concerns of the Roma population. The NGO programmes address concerns such as hate speech, extremism, racism and xenophobia and promote tolerance and multicultural understanding.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Improved information on and access to healthcare and education is key to breaking the cycle of marginalisation and poverty. We address these challenges through, for example, support to centres for youth and children at risk, prevention of early school dropout, pre-school day care and Roma health and education mediators.



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JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Roma also appear to face harsher treatment in the justice systems. Programmes addressing judicial reforms, organised crime and gender-based violence take into account the needs of the Roma. Funded activities include provision of free legal advice for Roma, training for police services to help improve the relationship between the police and Roma, and support for efforts to prevent human trafficking and domestic violence.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

To ensure better dialogue and understanding, the Grants also support the promotion of cultural diversity and cultural

expression by minority groups. This includes initiatives to foster intercultural dialogue and to document cultural history.

WORKING IN COOPERATION

The Council of Europe is engaged as a partner in 18 programmes which support on Roma. The Grants also cooperate closely with the EU, including the European Commission and its Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) as well as with the Open Society Foundations.

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

COUNTRY OVERVIEW: PROGRAMMES WHICH INCLUDE FOCUS ON ROMA INCLUSION

Country	Programme	Minimum allocation (€ million)	Country	Programme	Minimum allocation (€ million)
Bulgaria*	• NGO programme	TBS	Latvia	• NGO programme	TBS
	• Cultural heritage and contemporary arts	TBS	Lithuania	• NGO programme	TBS
	• Scholarships	TBS	Poland	• NGO programme	TBS
	• Schengen cooperation	TBS	Portugal	• NGO programme	TBS
	• Correctional services	TBS	Romania	• NGO programme	3.6
	• Children and youth at risk	TBS		• Children and youth at risk	6.4
	• Public health initiatives	TBS		• Gender equality and work-life balance	0.5
	• Domestic and gender-based violence	TBS		• Cultural heritage	1.6
• Judicial capacity building	TBS	• Diversity in culture and arts		0.8	
Croatia	• NGO programme	0.1		• Research cooperation	2.3
	Czech Republic	• NGO programme		0.6	• Scholarships
• Gender equality and domestic and gender-based violence		TBS	• Public health initiatives	2.6	
• Public health initiatives		TBS	• Domestic and gender-based violence	0.5	
• Judicial capacity building and correctional services		TBS	• Schengen and cross-border crime	0.5	
• Children and youth at risk		TBS	• Judicial capacity building	0.9	
• Local and regional initiatives		1.2	• Correctional services	0.9	
• Cultural heritage and diversity		TBS	• Poverty alleviation	20.0	
• Schengen cooperation and cross-border crime		0.5	• Green industry innovation	TBS	
Greece	• NGO programme	TBS	Slovakia	• NGO programme	TBS
Hungary	• NGO programme	1.0		• Domestic and gender-based violence	TBS
	• Cultural heritage**	TBS	• Local and regional initiatives	1.0	
	• Children and youth at risk**	TBS	Slovenia	• NGO programme	0.3
	• Public health initiatives**	TBS	Spain	• NGO programme	TBS
		• Gender equality and work-life balance		1.1	

TBS = To be specified

* In Bulgaria, the target is that 10% of the country allocation (or €12.6 million) will go towards improvement of the situation of the Roma.

**Payments currently suspended in indicated programmes in Hungary: bit.ly/1K41Ybl

ABOUT THE EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway provide funding to:



AREAS OF SUPPORT

Environmental management
Climate change
Civil society
Cultural heritage and diversity
Human and social development
Green industry innovation
Justice and home affairs
Research and scholarships
Decent work and social dialogue

* EEA Grants €993.5 million (Norway 95.7%, Iceland 3.2%, Liechtenstein 1.1%) – Norway Grants €804.6 million, financed by Norway alone