# 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.



## **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

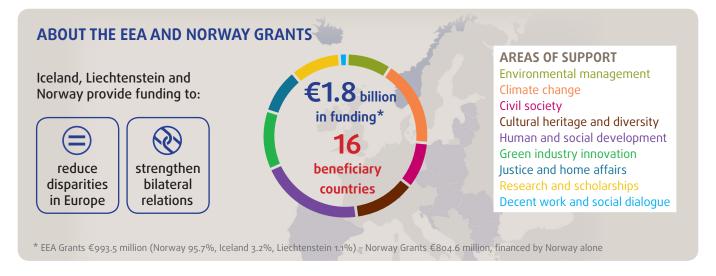
# COUNTRY OVERVIEW: PROGRAMMES WHICH INCLUDE FOCUS ON ROMA INCLUSION

Country	Programme	Minimum allocation (€ million)
Bulgaria*	<ul> <li>NGO programme</li> <li>Cultural heritage and contemporary arts</li> <li>Scholarships</li> <li>Schengen cooperation</li> <li>Correctional services</li> <li>Children and youth at risk</li> <li>Public health initiatives</li> <li>Domestic and gender-based violence</li> <li>Judicial capacity building</li> </ul>	TBS
Croatia	NGO programme	0.1
Czech Republic	<ul> <li>NGO programme</li> <li>Gender equality and domestic and gender-based violence</li> <li>Public health initiatives</li> <li>Judicial capacity building and correctional services</li> <li>Children and youth at risk</li> <li>Local and regional initiatives</li> <li>Cultural heritage and diversity</li> <li>Schengen cooperation and cross-border crime</li> </ul>	0.6 TBS TBS TBS TBS TBS 1.2 TBS 0.5
Greece	NGO programme	TBS
Hungary	<ul> <li>NGO programme</li> <li>Cultural heritage**</li> <li>Children and youth at risk**</li> <li>Public health initiatives**</li> </ul>	1.0 TBS TBS TBS

Country	Programme	Minimum allocation (€ million)
Latvia	<ul> <li>NGO programme</li> </ul>	TBS
Lithuania	NGO programme	TBS
Poland	NGO programme	TBS
Portugal	NGO programme	TBS
Romania	<ul> <li>NGO programme</li> <li>Children and youth at risk</li> <li>Gender equality and work-life balance</li> <li>Cultural heritage</li> <li>Diversity in culture and arts</li> <li>Research cooperation</li> <li>Scholarships</li> <li>Public health initiatives</li> <li>Domestic and gender-based violence</li> <li>Schengen and cross-border crime</li> <li>Judicial capacity building</li> <li>Correctional services</li> <li>Poverty alleviation</li> <li>Green industry innovation</li> </ul>	3.6 6.4 0.5 1.6 0.8 2.3 0.4 2.6 0.5 0.5 0.9 0.9 20.0 TBS
Slovakia	<ul><li>NGO programme</li><li>Domestic and gender-based violence</li><li>Local and regional initiatives</li></ul>	TBS TBS 1.0
Slovenia	NGO programme	0.3
Spain	<ul><li>NGO programme</li><li>Gender equality and work-life balance</li></ul>	TBS 1.1

TBS = To be specified

<sup>\*\*</sup>Payments currently suspended in indicated programmes in Hungary: bit.ly/1K41Ybl





<sup>\*</sup> 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.