

Roma health newsletter

Published by the WHO Regional Office for Europe in cooperation with the European Commission – Directorate-General for Health and Consumers and the Interuniversity Institute of Social Development and Peace at the University of Alicante, Spain (WHO Collaborating Centre on Social Inclusion and Health)



Issue 7 – May 2014

Welcome to the seventh issue of the Roma health newsletter. The newsletter is divided into the following sections:

- Events
- Resources and reports
- Professional opportunities
- Issues in focus/feature
- Research

EVENTS

[International meeting “The Decade – to be or not to be”](#)

20 February 2014, Bucharest, Romania

The National Agency for Roma in Romania organized an international meeting in Bucharest with the assistance of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat to discuss the possible scenarios of a future Decade after 2015. One of the conclusions of the meeting was that progress has been made in designing a comprehensive plan on how the Decade will function internally and how it will position itself towards the European Union (EU) Framework on National Roma Integration Strategies. The next consultation on the topic will be at the 26th International Steering Committee (ISC) Meeting on 19–20 June in Podgorica, Montenegro.

[Conference ‘Health in Europe, making it fairer’](#)

18 March 2014, Brussels, Belgium

More than 400 representatives of EU Member States, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other relevant stakeholders met to discuss ways to improve fairness and equity in health in Europe, improve access to health and combat discrimination in health. Key speeches on the need to improve the health of Roma and other ethnic minorities and combat discrimination were given by Mr Tonio Borg, European Commissioner for Health; Ms Viviane Reding, EU Vice-President, Justice; and Ms Livia Jaroka, Member of European Parliament. Ms Jaroka presented the report, [On gender aspects of the European Framework of National Roma Integration Strategies](#), which was adopted by the European Parliament in October 2013. The health of Roma was further discussed in the third parallel session on vulnerable groups. Web streaming from the conference is available on the event website.

[Third European Roma Summit](#)

4 April 2014, Brussels, Belgium

“It is unacceptable that Roma people still face discrimination in hospitals, companies and schools; that they remain without adequate housing, without a future,” said Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. The EU Summit assessed progress made on Roma inclusion in the EU since the last Roma Summit of 2010 and following the adoption of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies in 2011. The Framework presented a set of recommendations for reducing social inequalities between Roma and non-Roma within the areas of education, employment, health care and housing. According to the [Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies](#), tangible change in the situation of Roma will only be achieved if EU Member States, among other measures, “demonstrate political will and determination to remain on the path leading to the expected results for Roma at the local level by 2020 and persistently honour the commitments they have undertaken at the highest political levels”.

[EUPHA’s 5th European Conference on Migrant and Ethnic Minority Health](#)

10–12 April 2014, Granada, Spain

One of the important outcomes of the European Public Health Association’s (EUPHA) conference was the [Granada Declaration](#), calling on all European governments to take concrete steps to protect the health of migrants and ethnic minorities in Europe.

The Conference included a workshop, organized by the Open Society Foundation's Public Health Program, which featured views by public health academics and approaches by Roma NGOs to increase the protection of health rights of Roma, and strengthen efforts that pursue Roma inclusion in health in the context of the economic crisis.

The discussion emphasized the important role of the European public health community in raising awareness on the risks of austerity measures for marginalized minorities, and on the need to ensure that austerity in health care does not impose a disproportionately higher burden on the most vulnerable people.

[COPE project group from Sweden visits WHO](#)

9 May 2014, Copenhagen, Denmark

Members of the COPE (Community Parent Education) programme from Staffanstorp, Sweden, visited the WHO Regional Office in Copenhagen on 9 May to learn more about the regional activities in the field of Roma health and to present the COPE programme for discussion.

[Better Roma inclusion through civil society initiatives](#)

12 May 2014, Brussels, Belgium

A public hearing, with a special focus on health policies and antidiscrimination, was held in the context of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) project on "Better Inclusion of the Roma community through civil society organisations". The [programme](#) and the [presentations](#) are available on the EESC website.

"Health Mediation and the Roma" workshop and study visit

8–11 June 2014, Sofia, Bulgaria

The first workshop and study visit in the context of the Regional Pilot Intervention on "Health Mediation and the Roma" will take place in Bulgaria. The event is part of the [EQUI HEALTH action](#), co-funded by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Commission (EC) in partnership with the [National Network of Health Mediators \(Bulgaria\)](#), the [Federal Public Service \(FPS\) Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment \(Belgium\)](#) and the National Program for Health Mediation, Association pour l'Accueil des Voyageurs (AŠAV) (France). The pilot intervention has a longer term objective of starting a European network of community health mediators, building upon the model implemented by the National Network of Health Mediators (Bulgaria).

RESOURCES AND REPORTS

[FRA Roma Survey data available](#)

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) has made the data and results from its 2011 Roma Pilot Survey available online. The new data visualization tool, the Roma Pilot Survey data explorer, allows users to compare the findings by country or by survey topic. Results can also be exported in various formats, provided that the FRA survey is acknowledged as the source. The FRA survey collected data on the socioeconomic situation (including health) of Roma and non-Roma living in 11 EU Member States and was coordinated by the European Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank.

[The role of the United Nations in advancing Roma Inclusion](#)

This joint position paper identifies a number of crucial areas where United Nations agencies can add significant value to work to achieve Roma inclusion and development. It was produced by the Roma Regional Working Group of the United Nations Development Group working in Europe and central Asia.

[WHO/Europe launches Roma health site](#)

The WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) has launched a new website on Roma health to raise awareness of the unacceptable living conditions of Roma populations, and to disseminate knowledge and expertise for improving their health.

[Medical education to promote non-discrimination of vulnerable groups](#)

The interorganizational network Social Partners for Health without Discrimination released the results and recommendations of its three-month project to help formulate public health policies to reduce inequalities in the health care system. The network focused its efforts on promoting the subject of non-discrimination in the medical education system in Romania.

[Roma women: exposing inequality](#)

The report [Interplay between gender and ethnicity: exposing structural disparities of Romani women](#)

compares the status of Roma women with non-Roma women and Roma men in various thematic fields such as education, employment, health and housing. The report identifies the sources of these inequalities and reports progress in alleviating ethnic and gender inequalities by comparing the situation in 2011 to 2004. The publication is part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Roma Inclusion Working Papers series and uses the data from the UNDP/World Bank/European Commission regional Roma survey 2011 as well as from the UNDP regional Roma survey 2004.

Roma households in Slovakia

Two UNDP reports provide an in-depth look at the living conditions of marginalized Roma households in Slovakia, based on data from recent field research. They present an innovative and interdisciplinary approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, to show the socioeconomic barriers that Roma face when they attempt to access health care and to satisfy the most basic human needs. The reports are [A situational analysis of selected aspects of the living standard of households in marginalized Roma settlements](#) and [Incomes, expenditures and consumption of households in marginalized Roma settlements](#).

PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

[EU grants to increase employability of disadvantaged persons](#)

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security (Turkey) and EU Coordination Department are seeking proposals for promoting registered employment in Turkey under the Improving Social Integration and Employability of Disadvantaged Persons grant scheme. The grant helps facilitate the access of disadvantaged persons (including Roma and Travellers) to the labour market. The deadline for submission of proposals is 10 June 2014 and should reference EuropeAid/135743/ID/ACT/TR.

[OSF employment, grants, scholarships and fellowships](#)

The Open Society Foundations (OSF) supports a range of projects and programmes around the world, including initiatives to counter xenophobia and other projects to promote the social inclusion of Roma in central and eastern Europe. Grants, scholarships fellowships are awarded throughout the year.

[Romani studies grants available](#)

Early career scholars are invited to apply for grants to attend scientific events including conferences, seminars and workshops. Applicants must be members of the European Academic Network on Romani Studies. Applications should be submitted at least six weeks prior to the event.

[ERRC seeks Executive Director](#)

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) website is looking for an Executive Director to provide the strategic and management leadership necessary to enable the ERRC to fulfil its mission of promoting respect for and protection of the fundamental human rights of Roma. The deadline for applications is 8 June 2014.

[EESC Civil Society Prize accepting applications](#)

The theme of the 2014 EESC Civil Society Prize is "The integration of Roma". The prize rewards initiatives that aim to improve the economic and social inclusion of Roma. Civil society organizations and individuals may apply. The deadline for applications is 15 June 2014.

ISSUES IN FOCUS/FEATURE

[Making the most of EU funds for Roma](#)

For the first time, Roma inclusion is high on the European agenda, as reflected in the new 2014–2020 EU budget. The [regulations on EU funds](#), adopted in December 2013, provide favourable conditions to launch policy reforms that benefit equality and Roma inclusion with support from EU funds. A toolkit, [Programming the Structural Funds for Roma Inclusion in 2014–20](#), links the EU funding to needed reforms in education, employment, housing and health services.

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CONTACT US

Vulnerability and Health Programme
Division of Policy and Governance for Health and Well-being
WHO Regional Office for Europe
UN City, Marmorvej 51
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark
Tel.: +45 45 33 68 04
Fax: +45 45 33 70 01
E-mail: romahealth@euro.who.int

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