

MEMO / 29 November 2016

## **Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II): Roma – selected findings**

### **1. Why was this Minorities and Discrimination Survey survey carried out?**

EU institutions have long underlined the need to ensure that Roma are treated equally with respect to their fundamental rights, as enshrined in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Although Roma are the largest ethnic minority in Europe, there is no systematic data collection on Roma in the EU Member States. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) fills this data gap with its surveys on ethnic minorities and Roma.

### **2. How was the survey conducted?**

The survey was based on face-to-face interviews in 2016 with over 25,000 people from different immigrant and ethnic minority groups in all 28 EU Member States. Of these, nearly 8,000 were people who self-identified as Roma:

- Roma aged 16 or older who live in private households in Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. The survey does not include 'Roma' who have moved from one EU Member State to another.
- The interviews were carried out face-to-face in the country's official language using a computerised questionnaire (CAPI) and paper showcards to aid understanding.
- All respondents were selected randomly and the survey results are representative for Roma who self-identify as Roma or as members of the groups covered by this umbrella term.
- Information was collected on nearly 34,000 people in Roma households in the nine Member States.
- This survey builds on previous FRA surveys: in 2008, the first [EU-MIDIS survey provided the first comparative evidence on Roma in seven EU Member States](#) (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia); and in [2011](#), FRA, together with the European Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, conducted a Roma pilot survey in 11 Member States (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain).
- More detailed information can be found in the [technical Q&A](#).

### **3. What questions did the survey ask?**

Respondents were asked for information about their personal situation and living conditions, as well as basic socio-demographic characteristics of all household members. They were also asked about their experiences of discrimination, crime victimisation (including hate crime), profiling and policing as well as their rights awareness.

### **4. What does this report cover?**

This report presents selected results for Roma from the EU-MIDIS II survey. They cover employment, poverty, education, housing, healthcare, discrimination and rights awareness.

The full results on Roma and a comprehensive technical report will be published in 2017.

## **5. To what extent do Roma suffer from poverty?**

- 80% of Roma interviewed continue to live below the at-risk of poverty threshold of their country. This rises to 98% in Spain, 96% in Greece and 93% in Croatia where almost the entire Roma population covered by the survey has an income below the national income poverty threshold. The EU average for the general population was 17% in 2014.
- 92% of Roma surveyed indicate that they face difficulties in making ends meet, with 45% facing 'great difficulties'.
- On average, 26% of Roma live in households, where someone went to bed hungry at least once in the previous month. The rate is highest for Greece, where almost every second Roma (47%) lives in a household in which a person had to go to bed hungry at least once in the preceding month.
- Income poverty is related to the concentration of Roma in the area. In most countries, the proportion of Roma at risk of poverty is highest in neighbourhoods where the residents are 'all' or 'mostly' Roma.

## **6. What are the living conditions like?**

- 30% of Roma live in households with no tap water inside their house.
- 46% of Roma have no toilet, shower or bathroom inside their homes.
- One in 10 Roma live in housing without electricity.
- In all survey countries, Roma score worse than the general population when it comes to living in dark or damp conditions.

## **7. What is it like for Roma children?**

- 30% of Roma children in the countries surveyed live in households where someone went to bed hungry at least once in the preceding month.
- 53% of young Roma children attend early childhood education, often less than half the proportion of children their age from the general population in the same country.

## **8. What are the educational prospects for Roma?**

- Roma children in the countries surveyed lag behind their non-Roma peers on all education indicators.
- A very small proportion continued school after compulsory education. The data suggest that half of the Roma aged 15-18 years old do not attend school (48%). 69% of Roma children in Greece and 77% in Romania of compulsory-school age attend school; in all other survey countries it is 90% and over. Only 5% of Roma aged 18-24 across the nine Member States continued school.
- There is a high proportion of Roma without any formal education across all age groups surveyed, particularly those who are over 25 and those who are in Greece, Portugal, Spain and Croatia.
- School segregation remains a problem in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary and Slovakia despite being legally prohibited and the European Court of Human Rights' recent case law. In Slovakia (62%), Hungary (61%) and Bulgaria (60%), most Roma children (aged 6-15) attend schools in which all or most of their schoolmates are Roma. However, the ethnic composition of schools may reflect the ethnic composition of the people living around the school.

## **9. What are the employment situation of Roma?**

- 30% of Roma aged 20-64 were in paid work; the EU average employment rate in 2015 was 70%.
- Roma women reported lower paid work rates (20%) than Roma men 41%.
- 63% of young Roma aged 16-24 years are not in employment, education or training, compared with 12% of their peers in the general population in the EU.

- 44% live in households with a current low-work-intensity, where the households' work potential is below 20%; the EU average for 2014 for low work intensity was 11%.
- Precarious work conditions and low labour market integration is also reflected in access to healthcare. 26% of Roma respondents indicate they are not covered by public or private health insurance schemes.

#### **10. To what extent do Roma suffer discrimination?**

- Roma continue to face high levels of discrimination in daily life – whether looking for work, at work, in education, healthcare, or when in contact with administration or entering a shop. For example, 41% of Roma surveyed felt discriminated against because of their ethnic origin at least once in one of these daily areas in the past five years.

#### **11. How well do Roma know their rights?**

- 27% of Roma surveyed did not know of any law prohibiting discrimination based on ethnic origin.
- 82% did not know any organisations offering support to victims of discrimination.

#### **12. How do these findings compare with the earlier surveys?**

- The findings show that many Roma continue to live in conditions of severe poverty and exclusion, and face discrimination that often hinders efforts to improve their situation.
- Examples of progress include improvements in access to electricity and the availability of personal living space which has improved in all survey countries compared to 2011.
- Another FRA project has been looking at [activities to support inclusion that involve Roma and their non-Roma neighbours](#). It has identified practices in various Member States considered useful for their communities such as:
  - Working with Roma youth through after-school tutoring programmes (Jyväskylä, Finland).
  - Training local Roma mediators to support Roma children in education, and working with parents and children to encourage participation in schooling (Bologna, Italy).
  - Joint activities between Roma and non-Roma children in elementary school to survey people on what is needed in the village (Hrabusice, Slovakia).

#### **13. What can be done to improve the situation?**

- In December 2013, the EU Council issued a Recommendation with guidance to Member States on enhancing the effectiveness of their Roma integration measures. Member States should make sure the resources devoted to Roma integration achieve results.
- Member States should revisit their strategies and prioritise alleviating extreme forms of poverty, especially hunger, and severe housing conditions among Roma.
- Member States should act now to prevent losing another generation of Roma. They should ensure the equal participation of all Roma children in integrated schools and classes. They should also offer incentives, social and learning support at schools to counter the barriers Roma children face due to their living conditions, to ensure that they enrol in classes according to their age and to reduce dropout rates.
- Member States should create greater work opportunities for Roma, particularly youths and women. This includes encouraging stronger engagement of businesses, particularly at the local level.

- The EU and Member States should work with civil society to help raise rights awareness among Roma.
- The European Commission and Member States should collect statistical data on ethnicity in their surveys to better gauge the impact of their Roma integration policy measures.

**FRA's work on Roma and related publications can be found at:**

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/theme/roma> and the [press pack](#).

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