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UN & CoE

January

25 February – CoE European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) publishes fifth reports on Belgium and Germany

February

13–19 March – CERD publishes concluding observations on Belgium, Luxembourg and Poland

March

11 April – UN Human Rights Committee issues concluding observations on the third periodic report of Latvia

23 April – CoE Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) adopts Resolution 1927 (2013) on ending discrimination against Roma children

April

May

3 June – ECRI issues fourth report on Romania

3 June – ECRI publishes conclusions on implementation of a number of priority recommendations made in its country reports on Cyprus and Lithuania, which were released in 2011

June

July

August

September – European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) publishes paper on the implementation of ‘Council of Europe recommendations on Roma: How do we move forward?’

16 September – ECRI issues fifth reports on Bulgaria and Slovakia, and fourth report on Slovenia

22 September – CERD publishes concluding observations on Estonia

September

October

November

December

EU

January

February

March

2 April – European Commission issues report on implementation of EU Framework for national Roma integration strategy

4 April – European Commission holds third Roma Summit, ‘Going local on Roma inclusion both in the EU as well as enlargement countries’

April

May

June

July

August

September

2 October – European Commission holds high-level conference on Roma inclusion on the ground, ‘The Romact experience’

16 October – European Economic and Social Committee announces ranking of 2014 Civil Society Prize: winners are organisations that contribute to Roma inclusion in Europe

31 October – European Commission issues report on discrimination against Roma children in education

October

11 November – In *Dano v. Jobcenter Leipzig* (C-333/13), the CJEU rules that economically inactive EU citizens might be refused certain “special non-contributory cash benefits” if no efforts to obtain a job are made after three months after arrival in a host EU Member State

November

December

3

Roma integration



EU Member States continued their efforts to improve Roma integration by implementing their national Roma integration strategies following the Council Recommendation of December 2013 on effective Roma integration measures. FRA supports these efforts by regularly collecting data and working with the Member States to develop monitoring methods that allow for efficient reporting on the situation of Roma in the Member States over time. At the same time, fundamental rights issues affecting Roma continued to make headlines, such as an incident of hate crime against a Roma teenager in France and evictions in Bulgaria and Greece. The European Commission initiated infringement proceedings against the Czech Republic concerning segregation in schooling. This emphasises the importance of the EU's efforts to support national strategies and action that address marginalisation and social exclusion, as well as racism and ethnic discrimination, as these are interlinked phenomena that mutually reinforce each other.

3.1. Moving forward with Roma integration

EU Member States continued in 2014 to put structures and mechanisms in place to implement their national Roma¹ integration strategies or sets of measures. The European Commission assessed these in 2012, 2013 and 2014.² In its 2014 report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, the European Commission notes that, “three years after the adoption of the EU Framework, progress, although still slow, is beginning to take shape in most Member States”³ EU Member States, for instance, are establishing structural preconditions indispensable for implementing their strategies, which is a first step. The report, nevertheless, also stresses that progress in the form of tangible change will be achieved when Member States demonstrate the political will to honour their commitments; when legislation is effectively combined with policy and financial measures to form structures and mechanisms that facilitate implementation; and when results are measured realistically through adequate monitoring and evaluation tools.

The implementation of national strategies is expected to intensify when EU funding becomes available through the new European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). ESIF partnership agreements were concluded in 2014 and the European Commission is adopting operational programmes relevant to Roma integration actions.⁴ Member States continue to implement Roma integration programmes – **Slovakia**, for example, is continuing a ‘health mediators’ programme, a project on inclusive education and the provision of housing grants for marginalised Roma communities.⁵

“For the 2014–2020 period, €343 billion has been allocated to Member States from Structural and Cohesion Funds. At least €80 billion of this will be allocated to investment in human capital, employment and social inclusion through the European Social Fund (ESF). It was decided that in each country, at least 20 % (compared to the current share of around 17 %) of the ESF must be earmarked to fight social exclusion and poverty i.e. about €16 billion. A specific investment priority for the integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma has also been established.”

European Commission (2014), Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, p. 10

ESIF are a key tool for Roma integration in the core areas of employment, education, health and housing.

In this regard, the ex ante conditionalities that Member States must apply to improve the situation of marginalised communities, such as the Roma, are an important tool in fulfilling their fundamental right to non-discrimination and equal access to these core areas.⁶ At the same time, it is also important to effectively address issues of racism and intolerance that affect individuals, as well as community cohesion. Chapter 2 on racism, which presents information about racist incidents involving Roma, shows that these continued to affect Roma individuals and communities in 2014.

“Now it is essential to focus on the full implementation of these [Roma integration] policies, combining legal and financial measures, in order to make a real difference on the ground. Implementation is key for the success of our policies.”

European Commission (2014), Speech by President Barroso at the European Roma Summit, Press release, 4 April 2014

On 4 April 2014, the Commission organised the European Roma Summit to take stock of progress made on Roma integration both in the EU as well as in enlargement countries, with a central focus on local activities and outcomes.⁷ The presence of the Commission President and Vice-President, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and the Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, as well as the Romanian President and several ministers from EU Member States and enlargement countries, stresses the political support for Roma integration efforts. At the same time, the major themes of the summit emphasise that the main challenges will be how to make policies inclusive for all Roma at the local level and how to ensure that EU funding reaches local and regional authorities, and that they use it effectively to ensure tangible progress in Roma integration and respect for their fundamental rights.

A number of Member States made explicit efforts to reach the local level. For example, in **Spain**, a ‘Technical cooperation working group on Roma population’ is expected to improve coordination with regional and local authorities.⁸ **Bulgaria** developed municipal-level plans⁹ and approved sector-specific action plans for important policy areas, such as on reducing early drop-outs from school. While FRA’s research at the local level is ongoing, early findings show the need to focus more on the implementation of policies addressing discrimination, poverty and social exclusion. The findings reveal a number of persisting challenges, which include weaknesses in operational coordination and a lack of expertise and experience in engaging effectively with residents, in particular Roma. When designing and implementing social inclusion actions, the lack of experience in engaging effectively with Roma becomes visible. FRA findings also point to the need for improved monitoring and

evaluation at local level. The Commission held national Roma contact point (NRCP) meetings in 2014; discussions there focused also on improving the contact points’ capacity to coordinate the relevant actors, including ministries and ESIF managerial authorities, as well as local authorities.

FRA’s research at the local level also points to the need to build up trust between Roma and public authorities. Trust may have been undermined by actions that reinforced exclusion, for example evictions from informal housing arrangements or school segregation. Efforts to build up trust, combating stereotypes and racism, can improve community cohesion and contribute to respecting and fulfilling the fundamental rights of Roma. Trust-building local initiatives can therefore usefully complement actions targeting poverty and social exclusion.

The Council of Europe was also active in encouraging member states to take bolder actions on Roma integration. ECRI made a number of recommendations in this regard. It suggests, for instance, that the **Slovenian**¹⁰ authorities enter into discussions with representatives of the different Roma communities to find the best possible composition and functions of an effective Roma community council. ECRI also encourages the **German**¹¹ authorities to continue developing strategies and to include measures in favour of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities historically present in Germany, especially Roma and Sinti, in the National Action Plan on Integration. ECRI strongly recommends that the **Romanian**¹² authorities ensure that sufficient funds be allocated and a strong impetus be given to the Strategy for Improving the Situation of the Roma. It also suggests that the **Bulgarian**¹³ authorities allocate adequate funding to the National Roma Integration Strategy for it to be effective and that the **Slovak**¹⁴ authorities evaluate, without further delay, the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy to measure its impact and redefine its parameters and goals where necessary.

3.1.1. Anti-Roma prejudice: a persisting challenge

Very few comprehensive and comparable EU-wide data exist on anti-Roma sentiments and prejudice. The most recent Eurobarometer survey on anti-Roma prejudice and attitudes was carried out in 2012.¹⁵ There are, however, some data and information on specific countries suggesting that anti-Roma sentiments persist. For example, a survey in the **Czech Republic** mapping the attitudes of the majority population towards 17 ethnic groups living in the country finds that Roma rank very low in the ‘antipathies rank table’, with an average ‘antipathy score’ of 4.21 out of 5.¹⁶ Respondents expressed their sympathies or antipathies using a five-point scale, on which 1 meant ‘very sympathetic’, 2 ‘rather likeable’, 3 ‘neither likeable

nor unsympathetic', 4 'rather unsympathetic' and 5 'very unsympathetic'.

A survey on attitudes towards Sinti and Roma in **Germany** reveals that 20 % of the respondents would feel uncomfortable with Sinti and Roma living in their immediate neighbourhood and one out of four of the respondents were of the opinion that there are very large or large differences between Roma lifestyle and that of the majority society.¹⁷ The survey findings also show that half of all respondents felt that Sinti and Roma provoke resentment against them through their own behaviour, and 15 % associate criminal behaviour, including theft, with the discriminatory term 'Zigeuner'.

Another **German** survey shows that racist attitudes and anti-Gypsyism are prevalent. Statements of anti-Gypsyism such as "Sinti and Roma should be banished from city centres" and "Sinti and Roma are prone to criminal behaviour" were supported by respectively 47 % and about 56 % of the respondents.¹⁸ Similarly, an attitude survey conducted by the BVA Institute in **France** reveals a "significant increase in explicit racism", especially against Roma, Muslims and Jews.¹⁹ A public opinion poll conducted by the Pew Research Centre in March–April 2014 in seven EU Member States shows that Roma are viewed unfavourably by a median average of about half of those surveyed (**Spain** 41 %, **Germany** 42 %, **Poland** 50 %, **United Kingdom** 50 %, **Greece** 53 %, **France** 66 %, **Italy** 85 %).²⁰

Certain political parties continue to exploit anti-Roma prejudice by openly adopting anti-Gypsy rhetoric. As ► **Chapters 1 and 2** show, a number of EU Member States recorded anti-Roma marches, hate crime and hostile rhetoric. Fragmented and biased stereotypical images of Roma associated with extreme poverty and reliance on social benefits can potentially fuel prejudice. In Member States with advanced and efficient social protection schemes, such as **Germany** and the **United Kingdom**, anti-Roma prejudice can be reinforced by media reports of allegations of misuse of the social welfare systems by foreign nationals, including those with Roma origin, dubbed 'benefit tourism'. The judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in the *Dano v. Jobcenter Leipzig* (C-333/13) case is relevant to this sensitive issue since it refers to the right of EU Member States to refuse social benefits to economically inactive EU citizens from abroad who exercise their right to freedom of movement solely to obtain another Member State's social assistance (see **Chapter 2** on racism, xenophobia and related intolerance).

3.1.2. Legal action to tackle discrimination against Roma

In 2014, a number of examples of such legal action were recorded at both national and European level. For example, in September 2014, the European

Commission initiated infringement proceedings against the **Czech Republic** under Article 258 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The proceedings question in particular the **Czech Republic's** compliance with its obligations under Article 2 and Article 3 (1) (g) of the Racial Equality Directive,²¹ which prohibit discrimination in education on the grounds of race or ethnic origin. The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) issued a landmark judgment in *D.H. and Others v. the Czech Republic* in 2007.²² It held that the practice of placing Roma children in special schools for children with learning difficulties violated Article 14 (prohibition of discrimination) and Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 (right to education) of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).²³ The Czech Republic failed to provide appropriate evidence that Roma children are not discriminated against either in legislation or in practice.²⁴

"The persistence of segregation of Roma children in special schools or classes remains a key challenge, with no simple and clear-cut solutions."

European Commission (2014), Report on the implementation of the EU framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, p. 9

Unequal access to education takes various forms, for example the practice of placing Roma children in segregated or 'special' schools (schools with simplified curriculum). FRA's Roma survey shows that as many as 23 % of Roma children up to the age of 15 surveyed in the **Czech Republic** attend special school and classes that are mainly for Roma.²⁵ The corresponding proportions are 20 % in **Slovakia** and 18 % of the *gens du voyage* in **France**.

The Regional Court of Nyíregyháza in **Hungary** took a decision regarding school segregation, which the Regional Court of Appeal of Debrecen upheld on 6 November 2014.²⁶ The court ordered the city council and the school run by the Greek Catholic Church to stop segregating Roma children and refrain from future violations. Later in 2014, the Hungarian parliament amended the Public Education Law, in accordance with which government decrees may set special conditions to foster equal opportunities in education in case of ethnic minority schools.²⁷ The government justified this provision with the objective of providing equal access to quality education by defining the extra educational services that must be provided and the regulatory guarantees that are necessary in certain areas. According to critics, however, this means that the government can decide where to allow segregation to continue. The amendment includes a clause in accordance with which the government, when making such a decree, must especially keep in sight the prohibition on illegal segregation.²⁸

For housing, the Ombudsperson for Minorities in **Finland** asked the National Discrimination Tribunal

to examine a case of refusal to rent an apartment to a Roma person.²⁹ The tribunal prohibited the lessor from continuing and repeating such ethnic discrimination.

In the spring of 2014, the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF) submitted a collective complaint against the **Czech Republic** to the European Committee of Social Rights.³⁰ The ERTF complained that the Czech government did not comply with the European Social Charter provisions in ensuring rights to housing and health for members of the Roma community. Roma are facing spatial segregation and forced evictions, and have difficulties in accessing adequate housing and health provision. The European Committee of Social Rights is expected to deliver its decision in 2015.

3.1.3. “Nothing about us without us”: Roma participation

The Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion,³¹ in particular concerning the participation of Roma, should inform the design and implementation of Roma integration strategies, policies and actions, as noted in the 2011 European Commission communication on the *EU Framework for National Roma Integration strategies up to 2020*.³² This is necessary to ensure that those who will benefit from these policies and actions are involved in their design and implementation, and also in assessing their impact. Member States are making efforts to achieve this, including through activities of NRCs. In **Austria** for example, the NRC regularly hosts meetings of the Roma Dialogue Platform, bringing together representatives of federal, regional and local administrative authorities, academia and Roma civil society organisations. **Croatia** maintains regular contacts with the focal point representatives of the Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat and with other Roma representatives and non-governmental organisations (NGOs); the Commission for National Roma Integration Strategies Monitoring, presided over by the Vice Prime Minister, consists of equal numbers of representatives of key line ministries and Roma communities (seven each). In **Portugal**, a Consultative Group for the Integration of Roma Communities was created and civil society is part of the group. In **Greece**, the NRC cooperates with Roma civil society actors and hosts meetings to encourage dialogue.

Civil society organisations are part of working groups in **Belgium, Italy** and **Slovakia**. In **Bulgaria**, the Commission for the Implementation of the National Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria formally cooperates with civil society. In **Spain**, civil society organisations are represented on the Roma State Council, and there are similar bodies at the regional and local level. In **Hungary**, Roma are also involved in two bodies, namely the Roma Coordination Council and the Evaluation Committee of the National Strategy ‘Making Things Better for Our Children’. In the **Czech Republic**, Roma civil society

representatives participate in the Government Council for Roma Minority Affairs and in the relevant committees of the council where Roma-related policies and documents are discussed. In **Ireland**, the NRC coordinates the National Traveller Monitoring and Advisory Committee in the Traveller Policy Unit of the Department of Justice and Equality, where civil society is also represented. In **Finland**, the National Advisory Board on Roma Affairs serves as a platform for consultation and dialogue with civil society.

Promising practice

Evaluating Roma integration efforts through ‘shadow’ monitoring reports

The Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat published in 2014 a series of civil society monitoring reports on progress in implementing the National Roma Integration Strategies in 2012 and 2013. The monitoring reports analyse and evaluate the Decade national action plans and the National Roma Integration Strategies.

The Secretariat coordinates civil society monitoring of Roma inclusion efforts together with civil society coalitions, both led by Roma and with Roma engagement. It also receives guidance from the Open Society Foundation’s ‘Roma Initiatives’ Office and the Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Programme.

For more information, see: Decade of Roma Inclusion Secretariat, Civil society monitoring reports

Civil society has voiced its concerns in various assessments and evaluation reports prepared by national and international organisations. The European Roma Information Office network has published a number of reports on the role of local authorities in integrating Roma better³³ and on the role of equality bodies in protecting Roma against discrimination.³⁴ The Open Society Institute released a toolkit on programming structural funds for Roma inclusion;³⁵ it provides guidance on how to design meaningful projects that reach out to those who are most in need.

Local-level engagement through viable community-level structures is an essential element in Roma integration actions. FRA is conducting qualitative action research in several localities across the EU to identify drivers and barriers in the process of Roma integration at local level.³⁶ As already presented in last year’s report,³⁷ this research examines how local-level stakeholders, including Roma and non-Roma residents and civil society organisations, are engaging with local authorities and other actors in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of local-level inclusion actions, policies and strategies. In 2014, two localities piloted the research: Hrabušice, Slovakia, and Mantua,

Italy. The pilot tested different ways of engaging with local actors in Roma integration activities and identified a number of issues, including the effectiveness of operational coordination between public authorities at different governance levels – national, regional and local –, the issue of trust between local authorities and Roma residents, and the need to combat racist stereotypes and prejudice effectively.

3.2. “What gets measured gets done”: towards rights-based indicators on Roma integration

Respect, protection, promotion and fulfilment of fundamental rights are strengthened by applying robust methodologies that can accurately and systematically assess progress. These methodologies need to rely on effective indicators that can measure outcomes and assess the effectiveness of legal and policy measures that aid in understanding the drivers and barriers in policy implementation. Such a complex endeavour requires addressing conceptual challenges and interpretative inconsistencies. Establishing a robust rights-based indicator framework has several positive effects, particularly in strengthening accountability and transparency of the actions of ‘duty bearers’.

In response to the request in the 2011 European Commission communication on the EU Framework for national Roma integration strategies and the 2013 Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the Member States,³⁸ FRA established a working party on Roma integration indicators, as a subgroup of the European Commission’s network of NRCPs.³⁹ Since 2012, FRA has coordinated the working party in close cooperation with the Commission. The number of Member States participating in the working party grew from 13 in 2013 – **Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Spain** and the **United Kingdom** – to 17 in 2014, with **Austria, Greece, Ireland** and **Portugal** joining. The objective of this group is to develop and pilot a rights-based framework of Roma integration indicators (presented in detail in FRA’s Annual report 2013) that can comprehensively document progress made in reference to fundamental rights standards. In 2014, the working party set out process indicators that can show progress in implementing the measures outlined in the Council recommendation,⁴⁰ and four Member States piloted the indicators.

To populate the indicators with data, the working party exchanged knowledge and experience of ethnically disaggregated data collection – an essential element

in tracking progress on Roma integration. The latest round of population censuses, from 2011 in most countries, hints at some progress in this regard. A number of countries with significant Roma populations (**Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania** and **Slovakia**) have included ethnic identifiers in their censuses and have data disaggregated by ethnic origin. Another promising approach is including ethnic identifiers in large-scale sample surveys, such as the EU’s Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) or the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Including such ethnic identifiers has been piloted in **Hungary** and is planned in **Bulgaria**.

Promising practices

Using ethnic markers in statistical data collection

To monitor progress in social inclusion, users need statistical information on ethnicity. The **Hungarian** Central Statistical Office therefore included a question on ethnic origin in large sample surveys. The method was tested during the 2011 population census, where Roma accounted for 3.2 % of the total population. The Labour Force Survey covers 68,000 people aged 15-74 years in 38,000 households and uses two questions on ethnicity to measure dual ethnic identity. The sample covered 3,700 Roma people between the first quarter of 2013 and the second quarter of 2014. Only 241 did not answer, and Roma were 3.8 % of the total population. The European Health Interview survey conducted in 2014 used the same method. In 2014, ethnicity was also included in EU-SILC, which covered 20,000 people aged 16 years and over in 10,000 households. The proportion of Roma people in the total survey population was 4.2 %. The information allows the core outcome indicators to be calculated for monitoring the implementation of the national social inclusion strategy as regards Roma.

For more information, see: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal (KSH), Munkaerő-felmérés (MEF) and ‘Európai lakossági egészségfelmérés’

Some of the Member States use additional instruments to collect data on Roma. In **Spain**, ad hoc surveys are carried out. The second national survey on Roma health (*Segunda Encuesta Nacional de Salud a Población Gitana 2013-2014*) took place in 2013 and 2014 and the results will be released in March 2015. In the **Czech Republic**, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs commissioned an update of the ‘socially excluded localities’ analysis.⁴¹ The original analysis was prepared in 2006⁴² and was used as a source of data for social inclusion work in the country. The current update will serve as a basis for defining the priorities in this area for the new ESIF programming period.

Croatia and **Slovakia** have adopted a different approach, developing versions of an ‘Atlas of Roma communities’. In both, data were collected at the level of localities populated by Roma, which were identified on the basis of census data and information from civil society. In **Croatia**,⁴³ only one county, Medjmurje, was covered. The intention is to extend the exercise to other counties in the future. In **Slovakia**,⁴⁴ the atlas covered the entire country and was funded from the national budget. The atlases in both countries have been used to design county-level (**Croatia**) and country-level (**Slovakia**) programming documents for implementing Roma integration actions.

Some Member States intend to use ESIF for monitoring and evaluation. According to its NRCP, **Slovakia**, for example, envisages a national project on monitoring and evaluation of Roma inclusion policies under the European Social Fund (ESF) for 2015–2020.⁴⁵ This project will cover four substantive areas: monitoring framework consultation, data collection, analytical work and providing an information portal on the national Roma integration strategy. Similar projects are also planned in **Bulgaria, Romania** and **Spain**.

Promising practices

Mapping Roma communities’ socio-economic and fundamental rights situation

In November 2014, the Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities (*Institutul Național pentru Studierea Problemelor Minorităților Naționale*) started a two-year project collecting information on the socio-economic and fundamental rights situation of the Romanian Roma communities. It will generate local-level data on their status in society, needs and priorities, as well as on the available material and human capital. The participation of local residents is an important element of this project, which will develop and train a network of community focal points that will gather real-time, relevant and reliable data on Roma communities.

The Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities is a government body tasked with conducting research on the national minorities in Romania. The project to establish a ‘Socio-graphic mapping of the Roma Communities in Romania for a community-level monitoring of changes with regard to Roma integration’ is funded by the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2009–2014 as part of the programme ‘Poverty alleviation in Romania’, which targets local Roma communities, local-level administration and civil society actors.

For more information, see: Romanian Institute for Research on National Minorities, Socio-graphic mapping of the Roma communities in Romania for a community-level monitoring of changes with regard to Roma integration (SocioRoMap)

In 2014, FRA completed the preparatory work for the next wave of its EU-MIDIS survey. It will cover Roma populations where they can be sampled randomly as they were in the previous Roma survey, conducted in 2011. The survey will collect household data on socio-economic characteristics in the areas of employment, education, health and housing. A particular focus will be on educational attainment and reasons for early drop-out. It will further ask respondents about their experiences of discrimination and rights awareness. The results are planned to be released in 2016 and will provide trends over time in comparison with the previous survey findings to identify changes over the past four years.

FRA conclusions

- Evidence shows that, in 2014, efforts by the EU and its Member States to fulfil the fundamental rights of Roma are ongoing, with modest progress in the implementation of NRISs. The Commission’s report on the application of the equality directives confirms that there is insufficient use of positive action. Such measures can usefully fight discrimination against Roma.

EU Member States should intensify efforts using the ESIF to speed up the implementation of their national Roma integration strategies. Moreover, they have to make sure to observe obligations flowing from EU legislation, including the Racial Equality Directive.

- FRA research shows that, although structures of cooperation among actors involved in Roma integration are gradually being put in place, their operational coordination remains a challenge. Barriers are also identified in the capacity and willingness of local actors, including Roma, to participate effectively and in a meaningful way.

Member States are encouraged to ensure that their NRCPs are empowered and resourced to coordinate actions, especially by local authorities, more effectively on the ground and to promote the active and meaningful participation of Roma residents in planning, implementing and evaluating relevant local actions.

- Past surveys of Roma households show important differences in the socio-economic and living conditions of Roma and their non-Roma neighbours, which can be influenced by intolerance and discrimination.

Member States are encouraged to include measures specifically addressing intolerance and racism in all actions implementing their National Roma Integration Strategies.

- FRA research, as well as other evidence, shows that building mutual trust and respect fosters community cohesion and is an essential element for successful social integration efforts. These elements can be incorporated in actions implementing national Roma integration strategies on the ground.

Member States should consider incorporating trust-building and community cohesion measures in all actions implementing their National Roma Integration Strategies.

- Given the continuing forms of discrimination, segregation and exclusion, there is a need for comprehensive monitoring of Roma integration efforts, to ensure that they are on track and produce positive results.

The rights-based indicator framework developed by several Member States, FRA and the Commission

can be a valuable tool for assessing concrete actions, measures and outcomes against rights standards and EU policy targets. Member States should consider testing and using the rights-based indicator framework developed by the working party on Roma integration indicators.

- There is evidence of continuing segregation of Roma children in education and of Roma women facing particular challenges.

Member States are encouraged to continue their efforts to stop any practice segregating Roma children in education and to secure their fundamental right to equal access to good-quality schooling. Promoting gender equality should be an important priority in the implementation of national Roma integration strategies. Outcomes in this respect should be effectively monitored.

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Endnotes

All hyperlinks accessed on 30 April 2015.

- 1 According to the Council of Europe (*Descriptive glossary of terms relating to Roma issues: Version dated 18 May 2012*), the term 'Roma' refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.
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