



EUROPEAN ROMA GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS (ERGO) NETWORK

Annual Policy Conference



Implementing the EU Roma Strategic Framework

Roma access to quality and inclusive education

20 November 2025
10.00 – 16.30

NH Brussels Carrefour de l'Europe
and online



*This conference is kindly supported by the European Union
Programme for Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV)
and by the German Federal Foreign Office.*



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Concept

Background

At a time when Europe is confronted by war at its borders, the ongoing cost of living crisis, and political instability, its Roma find themselves facing worsening poverty and exclusion, dire living conditions, and widespread antigypsyism every day.

Ensuring access to quality and inclusive education is a key dimension of the EU Roma Strategic Framework, a focus of Principle 1 of the European Pillar of Social Rights, supported also by the Sustainable Development Goals. And yet, antigypsyism continues rampant in educational settings, leading to low rates of attainment, completion, and academic success for many Roma. While Europe's current mantra is *skills for competitiveness*, a much broader approach to education, training, and lifelong learning is needed, to ensure Roma equality and social inclusion.

With the adoption of the **EU Roma Strategic Framework** up to 2030, Governments developed National Roma Strategic Frameworks in EU Member States and Western Balkan countries in 4 thematic areas and 3 horizontal strategic objectives, including education, employment, health, housing, fighting antigypsyism, combating poverty, and promoting Roma participation. In order to ensure an effective implementation of the ensuing National Frameworks, a robust and continued monitoring of the entire policy process should be ensured.

Objectives

The **first part of the event** will launch ERGO Network's research report on "**Roma access to quality and inclusive education**", based on 6 national case studies carried out in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain, with additional benchmarking from Ireland and Sweden. A dialogue with key decision-makers and stakeholders will aim to identify positive solutions to support better access to education, training, and lifelong learning for Roma, and to inform the delivery of the EU Roma Strategic Framework, the Union of Skills, and the European Pillar of Social Rights and its Action Plan.

The **second part of the event** will examine the **implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework on Equality, Inclusion, and Participation**, in the context of the European Commission's upcoming 2026 progress report on the National Roma Strategic Frameworks. The session will also reflect on the **implementation of Council of Europe standards and policy instruments** for protection of Roma and Travellers, highlighting achievements, challenges, and complementarities with EU-level processes. Covering both EU Member States and enlargement countries, it will present findings from ERGO Network's 2025 data collection exercise, alongside perspectives from the EU institutions, the Council of Europe, and civil society.

Participants

The conference will bring together ERGO Network members from the grassroots level, EU policy-makers from across the institutional spectrum, as well as other relevant European and national stakeholders. The event will also be fully live streamed on our Facebook page.



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Agenda

10:00 – Welcome refreshments

10:30 – Opening Remarks

- Daniel Grebeldinger, ERGO Network Board / Nevo Parudimos, Romania
- Eva Schultz, Cabinet of European Commission Executive Vice-President Roxana Mînzatu
- Hon Hristo Petrov, Member of the European Parliament, Bulgaria, Renew Europe

11:00 – Panel 1: Roma access to quality and inclusive education, training, lifelong learning

Moderator: Andrei Frank, Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLP)

- Dr Zuzana Havírová, ERGO Network / Roma Advocacy and Research Center, Slovakia
- Aljoša Rudaš, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI)
- Rui Teixeira, Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU)
- Angeliki Giannakopoulou, European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)
- Gareth Hughes, European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE)
- Miriam Toplanská, European Commission, DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Q&A and interactive exchange with the audience

12:30 – Networking lunch

14:00 – Panel 2: The implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework

Moderator: Andor Ürmös, Sector Officer for Roma Inclusion, EEA and Norway Grants Office

- Szabolcs Schmidt, European Commission, DG Justice and Consumers
- Oana Tabă, Roma and Travellers Division, Council of Europe (*online*)
- Isabela Mihalache, Senior Advocacy Officer, ERGO Network
- Lavinia Banu, Coordinator *Roma Inclusion, Participation & Equality Index* (RIPE) project
- Elena Sirbu, ROMNI, National Focal Point, Republic of Moldova

Q&A and interactive exchange with the audience

16:00 – Closing Session

- Elena Ioannou, Permanent Representation of Cyprus to the European Union
- Hon. Nela Riehl, Member of the European Parliament, Germany, Greens / EFA (*video*)
- Gabriela Hrabánová, ERGO Network Director

16:30 – Parting refreshments



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