

## ERGO Network reacts to the EU Job Quality Roadmap

### What's in it for Europe's Roma<sup>1</sup>?

On December 4, 2025, the European Commission published the [Quality Jobs Roadmap](#), an initiative aimed at boosting EU competitiveness, **promoting fair wages, and securing high-quality working conditions across Member States**. To achieve these goals, the Roadmap outlines various initiatives to maintain and create quality jobs across the EU.

ERGO Network has been engaging in advocacy to promote access to quality jobs and better labour conditions for Europe's Roma. In 2024, we released a comprehensive research report entitled [Roma Access to Decent and Sustainable Employment](#), which describes the experiences of **Roma, who remain overrepresented in unemployment, low-skilled and low-paid labour, while experiencing discrimination in both recruitment as well as in the workplace**. We stressed the importance of quality jobs for Roma again in our snapshots on [Secure and Adaptable Employment](#), [Wages and Work Environment](#) and [Social Dialogue and Involvement on Workers](#). Based on these positions, we analysed the proposed Roadmap, and the results of this exercise are reprinted below.

ERGO Network welcomes the Commission's commitment to creating and maintaining quality jobs across the EU. Nonetheless, we regret to see that **the Roma are not explicitly mentioned at any point in the document, nor are ethnic minorities** more generally. **Discrimination is only mentioned twice**, in inconsequential contexts, and there are no links made with the Anti-Racism Action Plan, the Roma Strategic Framework or the Union of Equality. Given that **discrimination against Roma and against many other categories of vulnerable workers remains widespread**, strong anti-discrimination measures, including those that target antigypsyism, are essential for success.

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<sup>1</sup> The umbrella term "Roma" encompasses diverse groups, including Roma, Sinti, Kale, Romanichels, Boyash/Rudari, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Rom and Abdal, as well as Traveller populations (gens du voyage, Gypsies, Camminanti, etc.), in accordance with terminology used by the [European Commission](#).



Furthermore, we are concerned with **the strong focus on economic competitiveness** in the Quality Jobs Roadmap, which sees decent employment primarily as a driver of EU growth and a tool to attract skilled third-country workers, **rather than an essential pre-requisite for wellbeing**. **Employers are defined exclusively as companies, ignoring all public sector and third sector employers**, as if job quality did not also apply to them. Skills and digitalisation are motivated by competitiveness, boosting labour productivity, and reducing labour shortages. Additionally, the Quality Jobs Roadmap expresses the **need to integrate millions of unemployed women into the labour market**, disregarding the domestic and/or reproductive labour they perform at home.

Regrettably, **no definition of quality jobs is offered**, nor is a process to define one discussed, leading to doubts about the efficacy of implementation. We very much appreciate the **extensive acknowledgement of in-work poverty**, however, the Roadmap fails to identify the wider role of quality jobs in combating poverty. Quality jobs frameworks **should centre on societal wellbeing and social justice** as they serve to deliver on the right to lead a fulfilling, poverty-free life.

Building on this, we are pleased to notice the section dedicated to adequate wages, which **reaffirms the Directive on adequate minimum wages**, supporting fair wage-setting and reducing the gap between the highest and lowest minimum wages in Member States. Notably, it recognises that **collective bargaining is an important tool** for ensuring adequate wages. However, ERGO Network encourages adequate wages to be benchmarked against the at-risk-of-poverty threshold, which the Roadmap does not do, and the **ethic pay gap is not addressed**.

The Roadmap rightfully identifies the **segmentation of labour markets and the proliferation of precarious contracts**, including for young people. Yet, it does not introduce concrete initiatives to eliminate these contracts, nor does it mention other groups, such as Roma, who typically experience highly insecure employment arrangements. **Secure contracts should provide predictability, protection from arbitrary dismissal, and social security rights**. While the Roadmap promotes timely restructuring decisions and mitigation measures, it does not provide these protections.



The document announces a **Fair Labour Mobility Package**, aiming to **facilitate cross-border social security coordination** to protect workers' rights, as well as to secure the social protection of transport workers. The Roadmap introduces **supplementary pensions for mobile workers**, which is positive. Even though packages protecting migrant and mobile workers are also important for Europe's Roma, **we would like to see broader social security protection for all workers**.

We welcome the **extensive framework for improving health and safety at work** in the document, as well as measures to **reduce sexual harassment in the workplace**. The Roadmap also encourages raising awareness and research on work-related risks. The Quality Job Roadmap equally introduces **various measures to improve work-life balance**, such as remote work and the right to disconnect. However, aside these, **concepts such as workers' wellbeing, adapted workplaces, flexible working arrangements, job satisfaction, and career progression are largely ignored** in the document.

Positively, the Roadmap **stresses the importance of collective bargaining in ensuring adequate wages**, and commits to implementing the Pact for European Social Dialogue and the 2023 Council Recommendation on Strengthening Social Dialogue. While we very much welcome this support to social partners, and particularly trade unions, **it is a glaring missed opportunity that the role of civil society organisations in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the Roadmap is not discussed**, despite their key expertise on supporting vulnerable workers.

The Quality Jobs Roadmap **promotes education and training for all workers** to enhance their skills, and lists several key initiatives in this regard, such as the Skills Guarantee, investments in higher education programmes, short-term training, and Digital Skills Academies. Nonetheless, it **does not explain how it will provide equal access to these opportunities to vulnerable groups**, such as the Roma. Upskilling and education are also only seen as a way of **protecting competitiveness**, rather than as a tool to promote better goods and services.



Overall, the proposed Quality Jobs Roadmap **incorporates a number of important principles related to quality jobs**, although many of these remain insufficiently developed in practice. However, from ERGO Network's perspective, the most significant gap is **the lack of any explicit reference to Roma workers** and to the structural barriers they face in accessing decent and sustainable employment. More concerningly, **the anti-discrimination dimension is entirely absent** from the framework.

Ensuring quality jobs for all requires directly **addressing intersectional discrimination** - including racism and antigypsyism - in recruitment and in the workplace, looking at the **specific challenges of key groups of vulnerable workers**, and actively **combatting labour market exclusion**. We therefore hope that the European Commission will **remedy the missed opportunities identified above in the upcoming Quality Jobs Act**, and will commit to making quality employment genuinely accessible to everyone, including Roma communities across Europe.

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\* While artificial intelligence-based tools may have been used to support the preparation of this publication, the content, analysis and final outputs were developed, reviewed, and approved exclusively by human authors.