EUROPEAN ROMA GRASSROOTS ORGANISATIONS (ERGO) NETWORK

Annual Policy Conference



Implementing the EU Roma Strategic Framework

Roma child poverty and the prevention of family separation

19 November 2026
10:30 – 17:30

Venue: Comet Louise
Place Stéphanie 20, 1050 Brussels

Funded by the European Union

This conference is kindly supported by the European Union, by Tanya's Dream Fund, 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 that Roma children escape poverty is a key dimension of the EU Roma Strategic Framework, with three concrete, dedicated targets by 2030, while the European Child Guarantee explicitly names Roma children among its target groups. And yet, antigypsyism continues rampant across housing, social protection, education, and child protection systems, leaving Roma children among Europe's most marginalised groups, with an estimated 77% at risk of poverty. Too many Roma families are facing increased surveillance and separation, as poverty is misread as neglect.

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. This year's Mid-Term Review offers a unique opportunity to revive and strengthen the implementation of the National Frameworks, ensuring a robust and continued monitoring of the policy process.

Objectives

The ***first part of the event*** will launch ERGO Network's research report on "**Roma children: child poverty and prevention of family separation**", based on 6 national case studies carried out in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain. The subsequent dialogue with key decision-makers and stakeholders will aim to identify positive solutions to support Roma children and their families to stay together and escape poverty and antigypsyism, as well as to positively contribute to informing the delivery of the EU Roma Strategic Framework, the European Child Guarantee, and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The ***second part of the event*** will examine the **implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework on Equality, Inclusion, and Participation**. It will present a monitoring report on the topic, covering EU Member States and enlargement countries, with findings from civil society and local authorities. It will foster a discussion with participants and decision-makers on how to improve implementation, as well as ensure continuity of the priority given to Roma equality, participation, and inclusion in EU policy and funding.

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 and YouTube pages.

Agenda

10:30 – Welcome refreshments

11:00 – Opening Remarks

- Soraya Post, Chairwoman of ERGO Network, Sweden
- Nessa McKevitt, Fundamental Rights Attaché, Irish Presidency of the European Union
- Hon Hristo Petrov, Member of the European Parliament, Bulgaria, Renew Europe

11:30 – Panel 1: Roma child poverty and prevention of family separation

Moderator: Katja Reuter, Social Platform

- Kadrin Hasanov, ERGO Network / Integro Association, Bulgaria
- Rihanna McDonald, young Traveller person from Ireland *(video message)*
- Zuzana Konrádová, Eurochild / EU Alliance for Investing in Children
- Johanna Schima, Make Mothers Matter
- Delia Pop, Tanya's Dream Fund
- Dr Stefan Iszkowski, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission

Interactive exchange with the audience

13:00 – Networking lunch

14:30 – Panel 2: The implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework

Moderator: Danijel Ćubelić, Office for Equal Opportunities of the City of Heidelberg / European Coalition of Cities against Racism (ECCAR)

- Isabela Mihalache, ERGO Network
- Martin Collins, ERGO Network / Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre, Ireland
- Dragan Jović, ERGO Network / OTAHARIN, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Lavinia Banu, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
- Marcela Adamová, Roma Unit, DG Justice and Consumers, European Commission

Q&A and interactive exchange with the audience

16:30 – Closing Session

- Hon Victor Negrescu, European Parliament Vice-President, Romania, S&D *(video message)*
- Silvie Pýchová, Permanent Group on Roma, European Economic and Social Committee
- Emmanuel Achiri, European Network Against Racism

17:00 – Parting refreshments

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