***What is the problem and what is the impact of the problem?***

The Roma are the largest minority in Europe. It is estimated that there are 10 to 12 million Roma in Europe, six million of them living in the EU, most of them being EU citizens.

**Antigypsyism (AG) is a specific form of racism that refers to acts of violence, racist speech and discrimination, fuelled by historical persecution and negative stereotypes, which lead to exclusion and dehumanization of Roma people. The stereotypes are thus used to justify violations of human rights, such as access to housing, education, health and employment. Those deprivations are no longuer see through the lenses of human rights.**

**In that sense, AG is a structural discrimination and institutional racism, the results of intentional rules, norms and structures. A focus on social exclusion to counter exclusion of Roma, without taking into account AG would not result in substantive improvement for Roma in EU.**

Since the mid-2000s in particular, the European institutions began increasing their efforts towards a better inclusion of Roma, through the provision of reports, resolutions, communications and the setting up of a Roma task force in 2010 to coordinate work and to examine the use of EU funds for Roma inclusion. Indeed, the EU also intervenes toward Roma inclusion through its Funds, even though the management of these funds is under the responsibility of national authorities.

One of the major and most concrete steps in this increasing attention given to the Roma was the adoption by the Member States of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies in June 2011[[1]](#footnote-1), which was initially a document proposed by the European Commission. This European framework aims at defining the obligations and responsibilities of the Member States towards the Roma living in their country. In this document, Member States were asked to draft national Roma integration strategies by the end of 2011, with a priority given to 4 areas:

* **Access to housing and essential services**: Close the gap between the share of Roma with access to housing and to public utilities (such as water, electricity and gas) and that of the rest of the population
* **Access to education**: Ensure that all Roma children complete at least primary school
* **Access to healthcare**: Reduce the gap in health status between the Roma and the rest of the population
* **Access to employment**: Cut the employment gap between Roma and the rest of the population

Within the national Roma integration strategies, Member States are supposed to take specific actions at regional and local levels to improve the situation of Roma. In particular, Member States must ensure that Roma are not discriminated against and have equal access to all fundamental rights. They must: “Set achievable national goals for Roma integration to bridge the gap with the general population; identify most disadvantaged micro-regions or segregated neighbourhoods; allocate a sufficient funding from national budgets which will be complemented by international and EU funding; set up monitoring methods to evaluate the impact of Roma integration actions and a review mechanism for the adaptation of the strategy” (EU Framework).

National contact points have been established in each country to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy.

The European Commission and the European Parliament regularly examine the progress made in the implementation of these national strategies, as for instance the resolution of the European Parliament in December 2013[[2]](#footnote-2) or the latest communication of the European Commission in April 2014[[3]](#footnote-3). The Council of the EU also intervenes in ensuring and controlling the effectiveness of national measures that are taken based on the EU Framework. In December 2013, it adopted a “*recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in Member States*” that defines the conditions and actions that Member States must undertake “*for an effective inclusion of Roma people*”. In its recommendation, the Council asked Member States to increase their efforts towards the economic and social integration of Roma populations in the 4 key-areas that were defined in the EU Framework. However, the recommendation encompasses other fields of actions: Among others, the recommendation also focuses on discrimination and fundamental rights, poverty and social inclusion, empowerment and civil society, local and regional authorities’ involvement. It also acknowledges the specific difficulties encountered by Roma women and children. However, this recommendation isn’t legally binding but requires Member States to report on the progress made every 2 years.

***What is ENAR aiming to achieve in response to the problem? What is the change we want to see? Outcomes (1. Change in law, policy and standards 2. Change in practices and accountability 3. Change in mobilisation  all of which to impact change in people’s lives)***

*To ensure that Member States recognise the need to fight against Anti-Gypsyism and mainstreamed it in the National Roma Integration Strategies*

* Recognition of AG as a specific form of racism and the need for policies to address Roma exclusion
* Mainstream the fight against AG in the National Roma Integration Strategies
* to recognise the history of Roma people, in particular the genocide of Roma during World War II, and to mark the 2nd of August as Roma Holocaust Memorial Day;
* bring an end to forced evictions, respecting the international and EU guidelines while using EU and MS funding to provide adequate alternative housing
* increased pressure by Roma civil society, ERPC and MEPs on the EC and Member States Roma National Contact Points to address AG

***What are the main barriers from achieving the desired outcomes?*** **Power analysis. What is your analysis of the key forces driving/blocking such a change? What economic or political interests are threatened/promoted by the change? Which groups are drivers/blockers/undecided? Is it visible (rules and force) or invisible (in people heads – norms and values) or hidden (behind the scenes influence). Who do the key players listen to (because that may help us decide on our alliance strategy).**

Interesting analysis from ERGO paper: NRIS didn’t bring change needed. The operate in vacuum – no other equality polices/strategies

EU Roma unit in DG JUST has very limited power. Funding DGs are more powerful

***What are the change hypothesis/assumptions***? **Opportunities? How is the change we are discussing likely to take place? What alliances (e.g. between sympathetic officials or politicians, private sector, media, faith leaders or civil society) could drive/block the change? What would strengthen the good guys and weaken the bad – e.g. research and evidence, pressure from people they listen to (who are they?) or mobilisation in the street? Can you foresee any likely ‘critical junctures’: new governments; changes of leadership; election timetables when change is more likely to occur?**

Opportunities: SK presidency, OSCE engagement

***How will we respond to achieve the desired outcomes?* Activities. Actions**

1. Shadow-reporting NRIS on Anti-Gypsyism: ENAR expert in call for tender on shadow-reporting of the NRIS, on the section “Anti-Gypsyism” (rhetoric of leading politicians, media, changes in attitudes of majority population, Roma participation in public life - arts, culture, popular culture, sports, youth, civil society and community affairs – etc.) (see research portfolio) attendance to meetings, review of the sections of annual report (5-year project)TBC if we get tender

2. Disseminate and launch Anti-Gypsyism book and support to the coordination (Zentralrat? UKREN?) (see research portfolio)

3. Attend regular meetings with the Roma Unit and the CSO coalition (former ERPC)

4. Support advocacy activities of the CSO coalition (Roma Day, LIBE hearing) – OSEPI work on antigypsyism (German State)

5. follow up to epsco conclusions (Slovak presidency) on anti-Gypsyism

5. Review and re-use the Debunking myths on Roma?

6. Ensure media coverage of the need to fight anti-Gypsyism in EU and key national and community media (press statements, op-eds, etc.) (see comms portfolio)

1. <http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. EP (2013) *Resolution of 12 December 2013 on the progress made in the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. EC (2014) *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)