

EESC hosts Platform for Roma Inclusion addressing education and employment prospects for young Roma

On Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 November 2017 the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) hosted the 11th European Platform for Roma Inclusion, organised by the European Commission and focusing on the transition of young Roma from education to employment.

The Committee, which has worked on Roma inclusion in recent years, thanked the Commission for the opportunity to host the European Roma Platform on its premises for the first time since it was set up in 2009 to help boost cooperation between stakeholders on successful Roma inclusion.

The high-level event addressed the problem of **extreme marginalisation of Roma in Europe, who face segregation in schools and are largely excluded from labour markets**. The participants included ministers from Member States, the EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, vice-presidents and members of the European Parliament and the EESC, and other high-ranking officials from the EU institutions and various civil society organisations representing Roma.

The EESC's Vice-President for Communication, **Gonçalo Lobo Xavier**, said: "Hosting the platform here in the house of civil society signals the importance of civil society organisations as an agent for positive change for Roma inclusion. We know the importance of bringing all stakeholders together, such as national governments, the EU institutions, international organisations and Roma civil society groups to stimulate cooperation and exchange of experience and good practice."

The EESC has set up a permanent study group with a mandate to monitor and report on how civil society sees the implementation of Roma integration strategies and facilitate further dialogue on Roma issues between civil society groups and the EU institutions.

The group also organises country visits and holds hearings with various stakeholders to raise awareness about Roma discrimination and exclusion in many Member States.

This year's Platform is seeking solutions to the fact that **Roma are the most under-represented group on the labour market**. Many Roma do not finish primary or secondary level education, and often face discrimination when looking for work. According to the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), as many as 63% of young Roma aged between 15 and 24 do not work, attend school or training courses.

The EU Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality, **Věra Jourová**, said: "Europe cannot afford to let young Roma fail to fulfil their potential.

The growing proportion of young Roma not in education, employment or training is worrying. Policy-makers need to look carefully at the causes and address them”.

The platform held at the EESC consisted of two workshops which looked closely at the education and employment prospects for young Roma. The recommendations put forward in the workshops were then presented at the high-level political debate on the second day of the event.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (MAIN EESC OPINIONS ON ROMA):

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/esc-opinion-roma-citizens>

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/esc-opinion-socio-economic-integration-roma>

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/esc-opinion-intercultural-dialogue-and-roma>

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/esc-opinion-integration-minorities-roma>

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/esc-opinion-roma-societal-empowerment-and-integration>

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/publications-other-work/publications/civil-society-prize-2014-integration-roma>