

ROMANI AND TRAVELLERS WOMEN POSITION PAPER RESULTING FROM
THE FRA ROUNDTABLE WITH ROMANI AND TRAVELLERS WOMEN
ACTIVISTS
“On a road to Equality”

06-07 April 2010

We, Romani and Travellers women present at the FRA Roundtable with Romani and Travellers Women Activists “On a road to Equality”, wish to address the European Union, Member States on the occasion of the Second EU Roma Summit on the situation of Romani and Travellers women and their families.

We endorse and reinforce statements, which were made at the FRA Roundtable with Romani women in Bucharest in 2006, Declaration of Romani women networks at the Romani women’s right conference *Amare Glasura Ashunde* in Stockholm in December 2007 and Declaration of Romani women networks “I am a European Roma Woman” conference in Athens in January 2010.

Romani women in the EU face multiple discrimination based on their ethnicity, social status and their gender. This negatively impacts on all areas of their daily life, including housing, health care, employment, education, political and civic participation and family relationship.

We are particularly concerned about the situation of Romani women in EU accession countries, about their situation in access to public health care, ethnic profiling, allegations of rape by officials and lack of identity documents. We believe it is essential that the situation of Romani women is monitored in the process of accession to the EU. There is a need to address human rights violations within Romani communities by respective authorities and cover up reference to Roma culture should not serve as a pretext for lack of intervention in cases where rights of the child, women are violated.

We note that since the First European Roma Summit, Roma have been killed and there has been an increase of activity of extremist neo-Nazi groups. We reject all forms of racist violence, as we witnessed in recent months in the Czech Republic in Vitkov and Opava, Hungary and Italy in Ponticelli, and call upon Member States to stop killings of the Roma and address all forms of gender based violence against Roma and Travellers women.

More specifically, the Romani and Travellers women underline the following:

1. There is a need for both mainstreaming and targeted approaches in addressing the situation of Romani and Travellers women in all EU and Member States policies. Gender needs to be included in all Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion.
2. There is a need to draw attention to the increasing poverty of Romani communities and to the increasing polarisation in the society, which results

from anti-Gypsyism. Especially in the time of crises, Romani women and children are even more affected.

3. The European Commission should develop EU Roma Strategy. In order to ensure Romani and Travellers women access to human rights, we should be consulted on a regular basis in all stages of strategy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process.
4. European Commission in the next programming period 2014-2020 should make the Structural Funds more accessible, flexible and develop micro credit programmes, which would support the grassroots Romani women and interlink small programmes, which already exist. EU should ensure that structural funds are not provided to institutions, which participate on human rights violation of Roma, such as segregated schools, hospitals, which perform forced sterilisation of Romani women etc.
5. There is a need to raise awareness of fundamental rights with the Romani communities as well as with the service providers, who need to be more aware of and responsive to community needs and of their obligations in this regard.
6. There is a need to be a critical reflection on what the First Roma Summit has brought to Romani communities. Concrete commitment of Member States needs to be in place for the outcomes of the II EU Roma Summit.