EU Enlargement & EU Roma Framework

Detlev Boeing
European Commission – Enlargement DG
Enlargement Strategy
Roma in enlargement countries face similar or more serious problems than in many EU Member States.

Data indicates that there has been a serious deterioration of the situation of Roma in the region over the past two decades.

The wars in the Balkan region have led many Roma families to move as displaced persons to other countries in the region or to Western Europe.

Promoting Roma integration in enlargement countries requires:

- an enhanced political commitment to Roma inclusion
- the allocation of appropriate resources under the national budgets
- better coordination with all relevant donors
- a systematic evaluation
- reinforced monitoring.

The EU Roma integration goals are equally relevant to enlargement countries as to Member States. The national Roma integration strategies and Action Plans of EU enlargement countries will be reviewed in line with the EU Roma integration goals.
There is an **explicit commitment** to help enlargement countries of South Eastern Europe at the regional and national levels to **enhance their efforts on Roma inclusion in three ways:**

- Improving the delivery of support under the **Instrument on Pre-Accession Assistance** towards a strategic and results oriented national and multi-beneficiary programming with a focus on a sector-wide approach for social development.

- Strengthening the **involvement of civil society** by encouraging Roma representatives to become involved and take responsibility for policy formulation, implementation and monitoring on regional, national and local level.

- **Close monitoring of the progress made by each country** regarding the economic and social situation of Roma and annual presentation of its conclusions in the **Enlargement Progress Reports**.
The objectives of these seminars are:

- Identification of policy gaps
- Strengthening of mechanisms for monitoring and reporting
- A review of relevant policies in order to effectively foster the integration of the citizens belonging to Roma communities.

The topics on the agenda of the Roma seminars were:

- Civil registration
- Education
- Employment
- Social and healthcare
- Housing
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In Albania, the seminar yielded positive outcomes:

- **Social and Health Care:** Amend health care regulations to allow for free care of people without papers; establish action plans to tackle the issue of child begging and street children; ensure vaccination of all Roma and Egyptians.

- **Cross-cutting issues:** additional efforts to implement existing policies including Decade Action Plan and National Inclusion Strategy; reinforce protection of human rights of Roma as key priority for membership application; make full use of IPA; strengthen Roma Technical Secretariat (coordination and monitoring) through additional human and financial resources.

- **Civil registration:** No child should remain unregistered; Ministries and authorities should liaise with civil society organisations to jointly organise information sessions; civil registration should not be conditional to payment of local taxes.

- **Education:** establish additional public integrated pre-schools, employ additional teachers; school directors should ensure continued enrolment of children of vulnerable families; address shortcomings of education programmes for Roma (e.g. improve free disbursement of textbooks); employ Roma graduates as teachers.
Vocational Training and Employment: Aim at equal footing access to labour market; State should give positive example by employing more Roma and Egyptians; government should mainstream employment active policies for Roma and Egyptians with focus on salaried employment.

Housing and Infrastructure: In case of evictions local authorities should provide substitute accommodation; find legal solutions and progressive practice for Roma living in informal settlements; implement gradually specialised housing programmes for vulnerable groups; ensure access to clean water and sanitation.
Until 2006 **PHARE (CEE) / CARDS (Western Balkan)**

=> Since 1998 more than €150 million for supporting Roma inclusion in EU-12

=> Evaluation of PHARE support (€64 million) for Roma projects in 2001-2003 (education, unemployment, infrastructure development):
- instrumental for promoting social inclusion policy, new laws and initiatives;
- weak on tackling long-term unemployment

As from 2007 replaced by **IPA – Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance** for candidates and potential candidates (~€1 billion/year)

Other financing instrument: **EIDHR (DG RELEX)** – in total €30 million for projects in Western Balkan in 2011-2013
Examples for structural actions on Roma social inclusion:

Croatia:

• Roma support project: improve infrastructure in several Roma settlements in Menimurje County (PHARE 2006 – IPA 2008 – € 5 million)
• Civil society organisations – capacity building on human rights (IPA 2012 - € 4,95 millions)

Albania

• Roma social inclusion project (IPA 2011 - € 1.5 million) – UNDP

Montenegro

• Child care system (IPA 2010 – € 1,25 million) - UNICEF
Protection of minorities and Pre-accession strategy (II)

- EU Regional Initiative for Roma integration in the WB:
  - € 3 million project adopted under IPA 2010 (runs until 2013) targeting WB countries.
  - Contributes to the integration of minority groups in the WB in accordance with commitments made in the perspective of EU accession.
  - Main aim is to improve the quality of life and access to rights of RAE communities.
  - Fosters the participation of Roma communities in the definition, implementation and monitoring of relevant activities in the region.
  - Regional cooperation provides for an ideal platform for peer review, benchmarking and coordinating efforts between existing initiatives.
Future challenges

- Maintain annual **progress reports** scheme with section on Roma
- Ensure that, with the **2014-2020 funding period**, the situation of Roma will be more appropriately addressed, both quantitatively and qualitatively.
- Make **Roma civil society or Roma representatives** part of the planning, implementation, and monitoring process.
- Carefully **scrutinize the accession experiences** of new Member States.
- Ensure that Roma forcibly returned from Western Europe are assisted with **comprehensive integration programmes**.