



Roma Youth as a Specific Target Group in Roma Policies

Orhan Usein

Member

Forum on European Roma Young People

23rd International Steering Committee Meeting
Zagreb, Croatia



Content

- Short summary of the current situation on Roma youth policies
- Why targeting Roma youth individually?
- Recommendations



Brief analysis of the NAPs



In the NAPs, Roma youth are:

- **passive beneficiary of measures, not stakeholders;**
- addressed specifically only with second-chance education and in terms of support in formal education;
- encouraged to promote cultural and ethnic identity,



Brief analysis of the NAPs



- In HR, CZ, RS, ES, young Roma are discussed also in employment;
- The HU NAP promotes participation of Roma youth in competitive sports;
- In SK, the Roma Youth Forum participated in the design of the NAP; however it is not particularly different from other NAPs on youth's perspective;
- In ES, NAP mentions the need to provide rental housing for young Roma.



EU Framework for NRIS



- EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018
- EU Structured Dialogue – totally missing when creating the EU Framework for NRIS
- No consultations conducted with any Roma youth networks



1. Young Roma are the most vulnerable group



- Roma population is the youngest in Europe – average age is 25, compared to 40 across the EU
- The youth is the majority – the biggest beneficiaries of any policies and the ones that mostly face the challenges
- Current economic crisis exposes them to greater social exclusion and poverty



2. Young Roma are the basis towards integration



- Taking advantage of civic and political participation, volunteering, creativity, entrepreneurship, sport and global engagement will further integration;
- Youth policies can have cross-sectoral impact;
- Enabling access to political participation and drafting policies in cooperation with young Roma will enhance opportunities for empowerment



3. Young Roma can change their communities from within



- Young people are easier to integrate
- It is easier to address sensitive issues such as gender identity, sexual orientation and diversity within the Roma community.
- Neglecting these issues triggers consequences such as: early marriage, health issues, domestic violence, and gender inequality.
- Help combat multiple discrimination



Recommendations



- *Include Roma youth organizations in decision-making processes on local, national and international level*
- *Empower young Roma to embrace European Values in their communities*
- *Invest in young Roma by developing policies that are a reflection of their everyday lives and needs*
- *Encourage young Roma to take part in mainstream youth policies and programs in their respective countries*



**Thank you for
your attention**