

Resolution 2153 (2017)¹

Promoting the inclusion of Roma and Travellers

Parliamentary Assembly

1. There are estimated to be around 11 million Roma and Travellers living in Europe today. On average, they are disproportionately poor. Substandard living conditions and inadequate access to health care, low incomes, high unemployment and discrimination in access to education are the daily reality for many Roma and Travellers. Prejudice, hate speech and lack of trust between these groups, the population at large and the public authorities aggravate this situation and make it harder to overcome.

2. Nobody's life chances should be determined by their ethnic origin. States are increasingly recognising that integrating Roma and Travellers is in everyone's interests, and are adopting strategies to this effect. Moreover, major initiatives to promote the inclusion of Roma and Travellers have been taken by the Council of Europe, the European Union and other regional bodies in recent years. In this context, the Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the creation of a European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture to promote understanding about the rich and varied culture and history of Roma and Travellers and to break the cycle of prejudice, ignorance, anti-Gypsyism and discrimination.

3. Access to employment is a crucial factor in social inclusion. Yet Roma and Travellers face much higher unemployment rates than the rest of the population. They tend to be in more precarious employment, to have lower wages and to be over-represented in the informal sector. Barriers to employment for Roma and Travellers include lower education outcomes and skills, direct and indirect discrimination in the labour market and persistent stereotypes of Roma and Travellers as passive recipients of assistance rather than as having an active role in their own destiny. The Assembly is convinced, however, that these barriers can be overcome and that social exclusion is not the inevitable fate of Roma and Travellers.

4. In the light of the above, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member States to:

4.1. with regard to improving the education outcomes and skills of Roma and Travellers, implement the recommendations contained in [Resolution 1927 \(2013\)](#) on ending discrimination against Roma children, and ensure in particular that:

4.1.1. all Roma and Traveller children have genuine access to quality pre-school education;

4.1.2. school segregation is eliminated and an inclusive environment is created for these children in the education system;

4.1.3. bullying and discrimination in the education system are not tolerated;

4.1.4. programmes designed to improve education outcomes of Roma and Traveller children include measures to work together with children to prevent absenteeism and school drop-out, in particular for girls;

4.1.5. such programmes engage the parents of the children concerned; this is especially important where parents have low levels of educational attainment themselves and/or little faith in an education system that previously failed them;

1. *Assembly debate* on 27 January 2017 (9th Sitting) (see [Doc. 14149](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Mr Tobias Zech). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 27 January 2017 (9th Sitting).



- 4.1.6. unskilled and semi-skilled Roma and Traveller workers have access to return-to-education, retraining and vocational education programmes, and that individuals who have not completed their compulsory schooling are not excluded from such programmes but instead given additional support in order to make these programmes accessible to them;
- 4.2. with regard to tackling discrimination against Roma and Travellers in the field of employment:
 - 4.2.1. ensure that effective anti-discrimination laws are in place, providing for accessible complaints procedures and simplified means of demonstrating discrimination (such as testing and a shared burden of proof), combined with dissuasive sanctions against employers who are found to have acted in a discriminatory manner;
 - 4.2.2. deliver anti-discrimination training to legal professionals in all fields and conduct awareness-raising campaigns to ensure that employers are aware of their duties as regards non-discrimination;
 - 4.2.3. implement capacity-building measures in order to ensure that Roma and Travellers have effective access to existing remedies;
- 4.3. with regard to actively promoting equal access of Roma and Travellers to employment:
 - 4.3.1. place both public and private employers under a legal duty to monitor and report on the diversity of their workforce, encourage applications from under-represented groups, and ensure that their training and promotion practices also promote inclusion;
 - 4.3.2. include equality requirements in public procurement processes;
 - 4.3.3. develop and implement programmes to increase the immediate and long-term employability of Roma and Travellers through personalised support and accompaniment, tailored to the individual and context; work together with employers in order to match labour supply with employers' needs;
 - 4.3.4. ensure that any active labour market policies implemented go beyond mere short-term reinsertion in working structures and provide an opportunity to receive additional training and/or qualifications that will promote integration in the primary labour market; jobs provided through such schemes must also be attributed fairly and remunerated sufficiently to help break the poverty cycle;
 - 4.3.5. when putting in place measures to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship, ensure that adequate training in financial and business skills is made available to Roma and Traveller participants and provide support throughout the process of setting up or formalising a business.
- 5. In addition, the Assembly calls on member States to:
 - 5.1. incorporate measures to fight anti-Gypsyism and combat prejudice and stereotypes as an integral part of all efforts to promote the inclusion of Roma and Travellers, and promote a positive sense of Roma and Traveller identity as well as Roma and Traveller role models with whom younger generations can identify;
 - 5.2. directly involve Roma and Traveller representatives at all stages of the design, implementation and evaluation of policies, strategies and programmes intended to promote their inclusion;
 - 5.3. ensure that funding periods for such programmes allow for medium- to long-term planning, and avoid making such programmes reliant on funding that needs to be constantly renewed on a short-term basis;
 - 5.4. encourage local authorities and give them financial and substantive support to play an active role in promoting the inclusion of Roma and Travellers, both by implementing programmes in this field and by engaging with members of local Roma and Traveller communities to build trust and foster good relations between them and the broader community; to this end, an appropriate housing policy also needs to be in place;
 - 5.5. engage, in conformity with data protection requirements, in collecting the necessary data to enable programmes to promote the inclusion of Roma and Travellers to be appropriately designed and their impact to be effectively monitored;
 - 5.6. promote an increase in the knowledge of Roma and Traveller culture and history, and work actively for recognition of their identity in order to improve intercultural coexistence;

5.7. contribute to the visibility and recognition of women and girls in Roma and Traveller communities as central to the development of their communities.

6. Finally, the Assembly invites national parliaments to mobilise against anti-Gypsyism and all forms of racism and intolerance, in particular through participating in networks such as the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance.