

Working languages: English / Italian



Structural Funds: Investing in Roma inclusion at the local and regional level

Transnational Seminar

**Social Inclusion Working Group -
EURoma Network**

***25/26 February 2010
Rome, Italy***

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EURoma NETWORK

EURoma is a European Network joining together 12 EU Member States (MS) with the aim of promoting the use of the Structural Funds (SF) in favour of the social inclusion of the Roma population. This initiative was launched by the Spanish Government in 2007 taking into consideration the potential added value of the SF to improve the situation of the Roma in the European Union.

EURoma Network is composed of representatives from public administrations: European Social Fund (ESF) Managing Authorities and the public bodies responsible for Roma issues. The Network works as platform for exchanging information and experiences, sharing strategies and approaches and generation of knowledge. Education/ Social Inclusion / Employment Working Groups allow to focus on specific topics and to open activities to other stakeholders beyond Network members.

BACKGROUND

Local and regional administrations are becoming key actors in the development of social inclusion policies and programmes. Nevertheless, it is not always the case that those municipalities with large Roma populations and high levels of social exclusion and poverty access SF as a tool for promoting social inclusion.

Therefore, the Social Inclusion WG decided to organise a transnational seminar aimed at sensitising and informing localities and regional authorities from different MS on the need, strategies and means to tackle social inclusion of Roma. Bringing administrations from different MS together, in some cases to present positive experiences and in other cases to facilitate learning from others, is expected to have a positive impact on the fostering of more and better interventions for the Roma at the local level. Moreover, the ESF Managing Authorities could use this opportunity to reflect on the potential improvement for their own functioning, in order to promote more and better implemented interventions towards the Roma.

PARTICIPANTS

- Representatives of local and regional administrations.
- EURoma members
- Social Inclusion Working Group members
- Italian authorities

Every session will be open for debates/discussions.

The specific objectives of the seminar:

- To raise the awareness of **local and regional administrations** regarding their key role in tackling the **social inclusion of the Roma**.

Municipalities and regions are becoming more and more relevant actors when dealing with social inclusion policies as a consequence of the principle of subsidiarity, the process of decentralisation in most countries and the increase of their competencies, but also because they are the best positioned for better knowledge and understanding of the needs encountered at the local level.

Local and regional administrations are the real decision-makers when managing social services, employment resources, educational centres, urban planning, etc. All these fields are directly linked to social inclusion policies.

Any European strategy or state-wide plan to improve the social inclusion of the Roma population won't succeed without the involvement of local and regional administrations.

- To encourage the use of **SF** for the **social inclusion of the Roma**.

The social inclusion is one of the main objectives of the cohesion policy and the SF are its principal economic tool; therefore, SF should be considered as a potential resource to invest on the social inclusion of the Roma population.

Moreover, the SF have proved to be more than an economic resource when dealing with the social inclusion of the Roma. They provide funds and services, but they also allow to articulate policies in the mid-term. The use of SF facilitates integrated actions, coordination between public services, adapted and long-term initiatives, synergy with other public and private resources, etc.

- To identify existing experiences at local and regional level as potential solutions to the challenges faced by local and regional administrations in the decision-making and implementation of effective policies for the social inclusion of the Roma.

Main concerns for local and regional administrations are how to approach the social inclusion of the Roma, what to do, how to do it and with whom. Existing local and regional experiences in EU countries will provide with the opportunity to give an answer to questions raised by local and regional administrations on successful measures, optimal approaches and main partners to tackle the social inclusion of the Roma.

Roma migration has become a new phenomenon in the last years and it requires adapted responses and specific approaches beyond mainstreamed migration measures. It is a phenomenon that affects most of EU countries in different degrees, either as origin or destination countries. There are not many strategic or intervention plans at national level dealing with Roma migrants; most answers usually take place at local level. Some of the existing local experiences will be analysed.

Agenda

25th February

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| 9.30 | Welcome and Introduction by Italian authorities, EURoma members and Technical Secretariat |
| 10.00 | Conference Panel:

<i>“The added value of the local and regional dimension in the social inclusion of the Roma”</i>

<i>“The local dimension in the use of SF: the case of the Roma”</i> |
| 11.00 | Coffee Break |
| 11.30 | I Round Table: <i>“Key investments in the social inclusion of Roma”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Experiences from local and regional programmes in the different MS |
| 13.30 | Lunch Break |
| 14.30 | II Round Table: <i>“Roma migration and local responses”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Experiences from local and regional programmes in the different MS |
| 17.00 | Closing session |

26th February

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| 9.00 | III Round Table: <i>“Effective partnerships in the social inclusion of the Roma”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Experiences from local and regional programmes in the different MS |
| 11.00 | Coffee Break |
| 11.30 | IV Round Table: <i>“Harmonisation of local and regional programmes with national and EU policies”</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Experiences from local and regional programmes in the different MS |
| 13.30 | Closing remarks by Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies |