



Statement

“Roma should actively participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Belgian National Strategy for Roma Integration”

Brussels, 3 December 2012

The European Roma Information Office (ERIO) welcomes the Belgian government's decision to join the pilot group composed of 14 Member States who will voluntarily work with the European Commission to better implement the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (EFNRIS). The Belgian government, together with the other 13 Member States from the pilot group, will contribute to the development of concrete recommendations to reinforce the message of the EFNRIS. The pilot group will also assist the European Commission on compiling the *2013 Report on the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS)* which will focus on the extent that Member States involve Roma civil society in discussions and consultations, how Roma are involved in the implementation of the NRIS and how Member States have managed or not to allocate funding for the NRIS.

In this regard, we would like to encourage the Belgian government to work more closely with Roma, Sinti and Travellers organisations, be regularly in dialogue with them and involve them in the implementation as well as in the monitoring of the implementation of the Belgian Action Plan. So far, some authorities prefer to work closely only with non-Roma organisations which in fact replace the Roma representation and which is something that goes against the principles promoted by the EFNRIS.

ERIO, as the only federal level Roma organisation in Belgium and key partner of the European Commission, as well as the organisation that contributed to the development of the EFNRIS, is happy to continue working with Belgian authorities for the improvement and effective implementation of the Belgian Action Plan.

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European Roma Information Office (ERIO) is an international advocacy organisation which promotes political and public discussion on Roma issues. It aims to combat racist discrimination against Roma and to contribute to an improved public awareness of the problems faced by Roma communities.