



European Roma Information Office

# ERIO Newsletter

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## NEWS

### **ERIO's workshop "Ending discrimination of Roma in housing and health: the Role of Equality Bodies"**



*By ERIO*

On the 14 November 2018, ERIO organised a workshop in cooperation with EQUINET on "Ending discrimination of Roma in housing and health: the Role of Equality Bodies". Participants included representatives of different European Equality Bodies, the European Commission, anti-discrimination experts, lawyers and representatives from the Roma civil society.

Ivan Ivanov opened the event welcoming the participants and explaining the importance of identifying challenges faced by Equality Bodies in implementing legislation and the importance of a strong cooperation with the civil society at a national level in order to tackle the problem with housing and healthcare efficiently.

Szabolcs Schmidt, from the Non-Discrimination policies and Roma coordination Unit of the European Commission explained the current situation of the Roma community in Europe and how an effort still needs to be made at a European level in order to tackle social problems faced by the community. On the other hand, he also emphasised the work done by Equality Bodies and civil society along with European institutions working with the Racial Equality Directive to ensure a better coordination and effectively improve discrimination faced when wanting to access housing or healthcare services.

The importance of gathering quality data and a network of allies when trying to implement policies in housing and healthcare, intersectional discrimination faced by Roma in other sectors, the role of national governments in implementing good policies and practices and the importance of a strong cooperation between the civil society and Equality Bodies at a European level were some of the topics discussed during the workshop.

Read more [here](#)

### **'A time bomb': how social tensions are rising in a corner of northern England**



*By The Guardian*

It was an unusually heavy response to a fight in a school canteen: a police helicopter, police dog and 15 police vehicles all rushed to Fir Vale Academy in Page Hall, Sheffield, one Tuesday in late September.

The drama, inevitably, was caught on camera. The screaming in the dinner hall, children climbing on tables to escape. Outside, a teenage girl in handcuffs, face-down on a police car; the man in a tracksuit being mauled by a police dog. A pupil had texted false talk of a knife fight, and parents had been trying to scale the fence to reach the school.

Read more [here](#)

### **More damaging bigotry and intolerance from Bulgaria's deputy prime minister Simeonov**



*By Daniela Mihailova*

Large rallies took place across six cities in Bulgaria on 22 October, demanding the resignation of Deputy Prime Minister Valeri Simeonov following comments he made disparaging protesting mothers of children with disabilities. Simeonov, co-leader of the fascistic

United Patriots, who is already notorious for his anti-Roma racism and being convicted for hate speech, described the mothers as "shrill women with supposedly ill children". Below is a translated and abridged version of an article published in Bulgarian by Daniela Mihailova, Legal Director of the Equal Opportunities Association, Sofia.

Read more [here](#)

### **The work of the Regional Working Group for Developing Regional Standards for Roma Responsible Budgeting continues at its third meeting**



*By Regional Cooperation Council*

Rome – The Working Group for Developing Regional Standards for Roma Responsible Budgeting, comprising of the National Roma

Contacts Points (NRCP) representatives of Ministries of Finances from the economies in the enlargement region, Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)'s Roma Integration (RI2020) Action Team and independent budget experts, continued discussion on regional budgeting standards on its third meeting held in Rome today.

Read more [here](#)

### **Slovakia has 41 Romani mayors - 39 male and two female - a record high**



*By Romea.cz*

On Saturday, 10 November local elections were held in Slovakia. Unlike in the Czech Republic, where mayors are elected by the directly-elected municipal councils, mayors in Slovakia are directly elected in their individual capacity.

Many Romani voters in Slovakia perceive these elections as an opportunity to take public affairs into their own hands, and they frequently succeed when they run - soon 41 newly-elected Romani mayors, 39 male and two female, will take office throughout the country. Now, if your only source of information were the leaders of the Romani-profiled political parties in Slovakia, you might believe the local election outcomes were catastrophic, judging by the live stream videos posted by them over the weekend to the biggest social networking site.

Read more [here](#)

### **Romani LGBT activist David Tišer on Czech state holiday: Hatemongers are representing us**



*By Romea.cz*

An event called "Concert for the Future" was held on Wenceslas Square in Prague to mark the state holiday of Struggle for Freedom and Democracy Day. During the evening many music groups performed and public figures appeared to comment on contemporary and historical events.

One such figure was David Tišer, director of the ARA ART organization. The event, which is part of the Festival of Freedom organized by civil society on this holiday over the last few years was followed on the upper part of the square by thousands of people.

Read more [here](#)

## FRA report on being black in the EU



By FRA

“In the 21st century, there is no excuse for racial discrimination. Yet black people in the EU today are still victims of widespread and unacceptable levels of discrimination and harassment simply because of their skin colour,” says FRA Director Michael O’Flaherty. “We need to stamp this out once and for all. For this, Member States need

effective and targeted policies and laws to ensure black people are fully included in our society.” The Being Black in the EU report reveals the many challenges black people face.

Read more [here](#)

## ERIO at the 2018 Colloquium on Fundamental Rights on 26 and 27 November 2018 in Brussels



By ERIO

This year's focus was on "Democracy in the European Union". The Colloquium is a high-level forum in which key national and EU policy makers in the European Union, media representatives, journalists, companies, representatives of civil society organisations, international organisations and academics reflect together, from a fundamental rights perspective,

to identify avenues to foster free, open and healthy democratic participation in an era of growing low turnout in elections, populism, digitalisation and threats to civil society.

Approached from the perspective of democratic activity in general and the upcoming European elections, the wide range of topics for discussion included the promotion of broad participation and representation as a condition for inclusive democratic societies. The audience discussed the opportunities and challenges brought about by digitalisation for an informed, fair and pluralistic democratic debate and the negative impact of propaganda.

More information can be found [here](#)

## Guidance note on the EU Framework Decision on racism and other follow up actions from the High Level Group



*By EU High Level Group*

To mark the 10-year anniversary of the adoption of the EU Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia, the Guidance Note on the practical application of the EU Framework Decision is now available online!

Please find a press release at this [link](#). The document is accessible [here](#), as well as through the High Level Group webpage. You will also find on the [High Level Group webpage](#), the final versions of the policy papers on Afrophobia and on antigypsyism.

## Training workshop on education with young people in Lithuania about the Roma genocide in Vilnius, Lithuania



*By Council of Europe's Youth Department in cooperation with the Department of National Minorities under the Government of Republic of Lithuania*

The Council of Europe's Youth Department in cooperation with the Department of National Minorities under the Government of Republic of

Lithuania organised a national training workshop from 6-8 November in Vilnius, Lithuania. The workshop developed the competences and motivation of 25 youth leaders and human rights activists in organising non-formal educational activities with Lithuanian young people about the Roma genocide on the basis of the Right to Remember handbook.

Read more [here](#)

## Seminar on the role of Roma youth in policy and decision-making bodies and structures at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg



*By the Council of Europe*

The seminar explored the role of mainstream youth and Roma integration policies in supporting Roma young peoples' development

and their participation in social and political life, and create a dialogue among policy makers and young people about the possibilities of integration of Roma youth issues in relevant policies and programmes at European, national and local levels.

Among its objectives the seminar, that took place on 19 and 20 November 2018, attempted to generate ideas for further support of the role of around 4 million Roma youth in decision making bodies and structure at all levels.

### **Roma Western Balkans Summit in Prishtina, Kosovo**

*By Civil Rights Defenders*



The aim of the Western Balkan Roma Summit, established in 2015 is to draw attention to prevailing anti-gypsyism, systematic discrimination and violations of human rights of the Roma in the Western Balkan, Turkey and Europe; and raise awareness about the obligations of the states to improve the respect and protection of Roma.

The Western Balkan Roma Summit gathers human rights defenders and activists from the Western Balkans, Turkey and Europe to critically and constructively discuss current issues and analyse challenges relevant to human rights of the Roma. The Roma Summit organized by Civil Rights Defenders on the 21 and 22 November 2018 provided a platform to promote and strengthen the regional cooperation and networking in overcoming challenges and problems that Roma face, enabled participants to share and learn from each others' experiences and fostered new initiatives.

### **Legal seminar on gender equality and non-discrimination law**



*By European Commission/DG Justice in cooperation with the European Network of Legal Experts in Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination*

The purpose of this legal seminar, organised in Brussels on 30 November 2018, was to provide an update on issues concerning the implementation of the EU non-discrimination and gender equality Directives. It assessed current legal developments and looked to future prospects in the area of non-discrimination and gender equality.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

### **Exhibition: Challenging Stereotypes of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller People in Basement-Portsmouth Guildhall, UK**



*By University of Portsmouth*

The exhibition is part of a British Academy funded project looking at how to challenge common stereotypes of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller people led by Dr Annabel Tremlett with co-investigator John Oates (Open University) and research associate Dr Sanna Nissinen (University of Portsmouth).

For this exhibition, the researchers have gathered together examples of anti-racism campaigns and projects from Roma-led charities and artists in the UK and beyond, alongside examples from their own research documenting the everyday lives of Roma people. It's a unique experience to see all these campaigns and projects together, giving real insights into how Roma, Traveller and Gypsy people themselves confront racism and connect with audiences.

The exhibition runs from **22 November until 21 December 2018**

Read more [here](#)

### **2019 Forum on the Future of Learning in Hotel Crowne Plaza, Brussels, Belgium**



*By the initiative of Commissioner Navracsics by the Directorate- General for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport of the European Commission*

This event will provide a platform for exchanges between Europe's education, training and youth stakeholders and policymakers at different levels, to discuss the major societal challenges and how they will shape education and training across Europe in the years to come. The discussions will focus on key issues that education and training will be facing in Europe and beyond until 2030, including the challenges associated to demographics; inclusion and citizenship; technological change

and the future of work; digitalisation of society; environmental concerns; and investments, reforms and governance.

The Forum will build on the work of the European Education and Training Expert Panel, which consists of independent experts from across Europe. The Panel members will present their findings on these six challenges and there will be an opportunity to provide input to the preparation of the new EU education and training cooperation framework beyond 2020. The Forum will also highlight some of the European Union's main initiatives driving forward education and training in the decades to come, including via the future Erasmus programme. It will involve plenary sessions, a number of interactive workshops and plenty of networking opportunities.

Further details, including registration instructions, will follow in December.