



European Roma Information Office

ERIO Newsletter

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NEWS

Roma accuse the Trust of 'walking away' from them



By Belfast Media Group

A South Belfast MLA has accused the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) of creating a cold house for the local Roma community after it emerged that the Trust has withdrawn its services from the Romanian Roma Community Centre (RRCANI) in South Belfast just weeks after the Trust's own report admitted major

shortcomings in services to the Roma people.

Sinn Féin's Máirtín Ó Muilleoir said: "The Roma community understandably view this action as institutionalised racism. Across Europe, it's accepted that the Roma are among the most underserved communities when it comes to education, health and social services. In Belfast, however, RRCANI has been praised for its efforts to ensure the inclusion and promotion of the Roma who have made their home in Belfast, helping these immigrants to access healthcare, jobs and housing."

Read more [here](#)

Second National Platform on Roma Integration in Skopje



By Regional Cooperation Council

The second national platform on Roma Integration in Skopje, gathered representatives of the government, civil society organizations, the Delegation of the European Union and relevant international organisations, to assess the Roma integration policy achievements made in 2017 and agreed on priorities for 2018.

The meeting, which was held on 3 October 2018, was organized by the Regional Cooperation Council's (RCC) Roma Integration 2020 (RI2020) in cooperation with the Cabinet of the Minister Aksel Ahmedovski, National Coordinator for the National Strategy of the Roma 2014-2020 and National Roma Contact Point.

Read more [here](#)

Third National Platform on Roma Integration in Sarajevo



By Regional Cooperation Council

The third National Platform on Roma Integration in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organized by the Regional Cooperation Council's (RCC) Roma Integration 2020 in cooperation with the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was held in Sarajevo on the 28 September 2018. It gathered relevant officials

from all levels of governance in charge of Roma integration and representatives of civil society organizations, with aim to identify good practice examples, policy implementation gaps and priorities for this process in the upcoming period.

The platform meeting was opened by Sefket Hafizovic, Adviser to the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees and President of the Board for Roma, Mujo Fafulic, President of Board for Roma at the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Orhan Usein, RCC's RI2020 Action Team Leader, Saliha Djuderija, Assistant Minister for Human Rights and Refugees and RI2020 National Roma Contact Point and Zelimir Lalic, Head of the Department for the Protection of Rights and Cooperation with National and other Minorities, Religious Communities and CSOs.

Read more [here](#)

Czech president defends assertion that most Roma don't work



By Euronews

The Czech president refused to back down from comments slamming what he called a 90 percent unemployment rate among the country's Roma, earning a rebuke from campaigners and rights activists.

President Milos Zeman's latest spat with one of the few minorities in the European Union member country began when he said that although he despised the former communist regime, at least it made the Roma people work. His remarks sparked criticism, including from Roma people posting hundreds of pictures of themselves working on social media and asking the president to apologise. He declined, saying that those images were of the one tenth of Roma who actually work.

Read more [here](#).

Czech elections: 13 Romani local assembly members, no Romani senators



By Romea.cz

On the 5 October 2018 voters had the opportunity to choose their local assembly members and, in one-third of the country, 27 Senators. News server Romea.cz has followed the results in selected municipalities with larger numbers of Romani candidates who stood a

reasonable chance of election.

A minimum of 170 men and women who identify as Romani ran for office this time. According to broader, unverified estimates, however, there could have been as many as 300 Romani candidates. One self-identified Romani man ran for the Senate in Chomutov, Petr Jano. The Romani Democratic Party in Brno also ran a candidate for the Senate named Petr Erin Kováč, president of the Culinary Club and a professional chef.

Read more [here](#)

Literature review on the Roma life expectancy gap



By EPHA

The European Public Health Alliance is currently undertaking an evidence-based literature review on the Roma life expectancy gap, based on the following indicators: life expectancy gap between Roma and non-Roma, Roma children and infant mortality, determinants of life expectancy.

The poor state of health in Roma communities is prevalent—and largely ignored—across Europe. Some Roma are completely excluded from health care, while most face hostility and discrimination within healthcare settings. Available literature on Roma and health agrees that: Roma people suffer from poorer health and unhealthier living conditions compared to majority populations; better data is needed to explain the Roma health gap and design better interventions to reduce this gap; the poor health of Roma is closely linked to the social determinants of health.

Read more [here](#).

A Time For Anger: Walls Created by The Media



By Roma Bible Union

In fact, the reporting is almost always sensational and almost always negative. We read everyday news about ourselves. “One Hundred Robberies in France carried out by Croatian Gypsy youth.” “We must stop Gypsy Crime.” “Gypsy children being thrown under cars and then the Gypsy families black mail the drivers.” “Will we ever

have peace from the Gypsies?” “How Can We Get Rid Of The Gypsies?”

These are just some of the headlines we see every day on various websites and news articles. It is important to understand that in Central Europe one is first a Roma and then a citizen. It starts very young as all Roma grow up knowing violence and rejection from their peers. In the end for most Roma, life within the society becomes simply intolerable.

Read more [here](#)

A Raging Sleep: But Who Sees It?



By Roma Bible Union

Now I must share this because I really don't have anywhere else, in the hope that through the social network we raise awareness of sexual exploitation, paedophilia and begging.

Namely, the story is this. Last year, during the Leskovacke Rostiljijade (a huge annual meat grilling festival) a whole group of beggars were present. However, the problem is even bigger than it seems. It is not the local Roma who are begging for bread but the organized gangs that have made begging a business and a lifestyle. I am Roma and I know the people who generally beg on the street of out town. I saw a pimp in the middle of the street and he was taking money from those who beg and forcing them to return to begging! Now, in these days we have girls, who are extremely young who serve as dancers between the tables while older men of 60 years pass them money inappropriately! And that's the shame of the city! While in any normal state, it would be seen as sexual exploitation of a girl and even a possible paedophilia.

Read more [here](#)

The situation of Roma people in relation to health and their access to healthcare is still dire, EESC hearing reveals



By European Economic and Social Committee

Stakeholders from European level organisations and members of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) gathered in Brussels on 29 October 2018 to take stock of the state of play of the health situation of the Roma and their access to healthcare, assessing in particular the situation of women and children.

A number of issues were highlighted, such as discrimination in access to healthcare, differences in life expectancy between Roma and non-Roma people, poverty and its effects on their health and, regarding women and children, forced sterilisations, pregnancy, infant and maternal mortality, and the vaccination of children.

Read more [here](#)

Italian Deputy PM Salvini is behaving like a neo-Fascist, former Italian Labor Minister says



By Romea News

Former Italian Labor Minister Elsa Forner, speaking in a recent radio interview, said the current Italian Deputy PM and Interior Minister Matteo Salvini is behaving like a neo-Fascist. Salvini, who heads the anti-immigration party Lega ("The League"), and wasted no time in responding bluntly.

Salvini called Forner a "snob", adding that the populist coalition Government will reverse her previous pension reforms, which raised the retirement age. "I am observing unacceptable cynicism mainly from Salvini," Forner told the Capital radio station.

Salvini called Forner a "snob", adding that the populist coalition Government will reverse her previous pension reforms, which raised the retirement age. "I am observing unacceptable cynicism mainly from Salvini," Forner told the Capital radio station.

"His kind of aggression and neo-Fascism are not demonstrated by many other Lega members," she said. "Let's just say this clearly - I don't know what other designation to use..."

Read more [here](#)

Antigypsyism in Czech Republic , Statement



By Salvation Army

The Salvation Army calls for Roma inclusion policies, as it is stated in our advisory statement on Roma Inclusion, to be built on an open communication of expectations, which fosters mutual trust between Roma communities at grassroots level and the authorities.

Institutionalised Antigypsyism, such as that expressed recently in the Czech Republic, singling out one specific people group within the Czech population as incapable of adaptation and unwilling to work, is at the core of exclusion and separatist attitudes which maintain a whole people group in poverty. This must stop!

Read more [here](#)

Matteo Salvini sues black MEP for defamation in racism row



By the Guardian

Cécile Kyenge, an MEP who had bananas thrown at her and was likened to an orangutan during her time as Italy's integration minister, is being sued for defamation by the far-right interior minister, Matteo Salvini, for calling his party, the League, racist.

Kyenge will face trial in the northern city of Piacenza over comments made in an interview in 2014 during the Festa de l'Unità, a social democratic event celebrated across Italy each year. She was responding to a photograph posted on social media by Fabio Rainieri, who at the time was party secretary in the Emilia-Romagna region, depicting her as an orangutan.

In order to support, sign the following [petition](#). Please also feel free to spread the petition and share a photo of you signing the petition online.

Read more [here](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Seminar on the role of Roma youth in policy and decision-making bodies and structures



By Council of Europe

The Council of Europe within the framework of the Roma Youth Action Plan project is organizing a seminar on the role of Roma youth in policy and decision-making bodies and structures, scheduled to take place during **19-20 November 2018** at the European Youth

Centre Strasbourg.

The seminar will explore the role of mainstream youth and Roma integration policies in supporting Roma young peoples' development and their participation in social and political life, and to 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.

Register by 7 October 2018 at 14:00 [here](#)

2018 Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights



By European Commission

The theme of the 2018 colloquium will be "Democracy in the EU". The colloquium, that takes place from **26 to 27 November 2018**, will aim to reaffirm that Democracy is a central value common to the European Union and all its Member States,

and to look at how to renew democratic engagement within the European Union and the European societies. This debate is timely also in the context of the upcoming European elections and on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

High-level national and European policymakers, international organisations, civil society organisations, media and social media representatives, the world of business and education, legal professionals, and many others, will work together 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.

Register by 29 October 2018, 12:00 noon [here](#)