



PRESS RELEASE

ERIO stands out to denounce discrimination against Roma Brussels, 21 March 2018

Today is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On this occasion, ERIO stands out to denounce all discrimination grounded on racial and ethnic origin, and racial crimes. It is ERIO's duty to remind that Roma people are particularly affected by racial discrimination all over the world and more particularly in the European Union where they are the largest minority ethnic group. Despite a strong commitment of the European institutions and the Member states to tackle this issue notably through the European Framework for National Roma Integration strategies up to 2020 and the Racial Equality Directive, progress on the ground is still very slow. Anti-Gypsyism, far-right demonstrations, hate speech and hate crime have been reported to be on the rise in most EU countries.¹

Even more concerning is the lack of willingness of officials in some Member states to condemn and tackle hate crimes against Roma, as well as the alarming rise in nationalistic and populist political movements and discourses across Europe, thus widening the gap between Roma people and mainstream society. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has for instance reported that, in 2015, only 12% of people who felt discriminated against because of their Roma background dared to report it to an authority or filed a complaint.²

It is then of the utmost importance for the European Commission to take a tougher stance against these racist political movements and to ensure that EU funds are adequately used for Roma inclusion. Such heinous crimes and discriminations against the Roma minority, simply cannot be tolerated anymore in a European Union which has placed human dignity and equality as part of its core values.

¹ *Report on the implementation of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies 2015 COM(2015) 299 final*

² FRA-Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey Roma – Selected findings
<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2016/eumidis-ii-roma-selected-findings>

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Note to the editor:

The European Roma Information Office (ERIO) is an international advocacy organisation which promotes political and public discussion on Roma issues by providing information to the EU institutions, civil society and governments. Through its wide network, it aims to combat racist discrimination against Roma through awareness raising, lobbying and policy development.