

DRAFT RAPPORTEUR'S REPORT

ENGLISH only

OSCE 13th Economic Forum

Tuesday 24 May 2005, 16:45 – 18.00

Side event on implementing the Roma and Sinti Action Plan (economic and social aspects) – “Increasing access of Roma to employment and inclusion in sustainable economic development: Elements of an OSCE cross-dimensional approach”

Moderator: Mr. Mitja Zagar, Director, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia
Rapporteur: Nina Lindroos-Kopolo, Associate Programme Officer, OSCE/OCEEA

Conclusions and recommendations:

1. Need for improved dialogue and co-operation of all relevant actors to facilitate joint planning and programmes to better take advantage of synergies when developing common policies and strategy. These actors are:
 - Roma and Sinti communities;
 - states and their relevant national action plans;
 - international organisations: as an example of inter-organisational co-operation, the Council of Europe and the OSCE are organising a joint conference on 20-21 October 2005 in Warsaw on the implementation of policies /action plans on Roma, Sinti and Travelers at the local level with a focus on anti-discrimination;
 - public institutions, especially institutions related to education;
 - civic society - NGOs and the business community.

2. Need for improving the situation of Roma and Sinti. The National Action Plans should address the issues of:
 - a) Education and training: enhance all activities that can contribute to inclusion;
 - b) Employment and economic initiative (creation of Roma businesses), especially on the local and grass root level;
 - c) Health and housing, in particular legalisation of existing informal Roma settlements;
 - d) Information and communication, especially intra-governmental communication, is needed to achieve coherence on Roma policies when a country is a party to various Roma related international initiatives;
 - e) Adoption of anti-discrimination legislation, facilitation of access to courts (to fight discrimination in the labour market) and other public institutions and services;
 - f) The member states of the European Union should include an explicit focus on Roma when elaborating their national action plans for social inclusion (2007-2013) in the framework of the Lisbon process.

3. The central goal should be the inclusion and integration of the Roma and Sinti in all spheres of life – economic, political, cultural and social, including facilitating their participation in mainstream political parties. Host societies should also improve the inclusion of migrant Roma, while countries of origin should assure non-discriminatory access to legal migration.
4. Need to upgrade and finance existing programmes and policies, to assess their actual impact on the improvement of the situation of the Roma and Sinti. Furthermore, participating States should keep their commitments and increase their efforts to implement the OSCE Action Plan on Roma and Sinti issues. The ODHIR and OCEEA should enhance the activities aimed at strengthening the organisational capacity of Roma and Sinti associations to become effective partners for implementing Roma related policies.
5. Inclusion and participation of Roma in programmes through the development of partnerships reflecting the interest of the target population. In this context, it was recommended to OSCE institutions to consider the possibility of a Fund for sustainable development of local Roma communities.
6. Concerned states and international organisations should address the Roma and Sinti refugees and IDPs in crises and post-crisis situations. In this context, OSCE may use its institutions and field presences to contribute to finding fair and durable solutions to the current humanitarian crisis of Roma IDPs living in refugee camps of northern Mitrovica since summer 1999. A necessary step is to involve the families concerned in the negotiations about the return and reconstruction of their destroyed houses and neighbourhood in Southern Mitrovica.
7. The Roma are an ethnic groups that are currently constructing the elements of a national identity. This process should be observed and all sensitive issues discussed; Roma themselves may consider articulating this identity as a civic and European identity.