



*Structural Funds: Investing in Roma*

## **EURoma meeting**

**27 – 28 November 2014, Vienna**

### **Agenda**

#### **Meeting venue:**

Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection  
Stubenring 1, 1010 Vienna, Austria

## **Background information**

The meeting will mainly focus on two relevant topics:

- 1. How the inclusion of Roma has been incorporated in the Partnership Agreements (PAs) and how it will be in the Operational Programmes (OPs) in the 2014-2020 programming period.**

In this year of transition between the 2007-2013 and the 2014-2020 programming period, and mainly at this particular moment when the Member States and the European Commission are about to close the negotiations on the use of European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds for the next 10 years, it is particularly relevant to promote the exchange of information and ideas on the state-of-play and plans in each country and how the learnings from the 2007-2013 have been taken into account.

- 2. How Roma youth employment is addressed within the Youth Guarantee?**

European institutions, together with Member States, are working to reduce youth unemployment and to increase the **youth employment** rate in line with the wider EU target of achieving a 75% employment rate for the working-age population (20-64 years).

European Structural and Investment Funds are a key financial instrument to achieve this goal. The June 2013 European Council stipulated that youth employment should be given a particular focus in implementing Structural Funds. In particular the European Social Fund will have a crucial role to play in the 2014-2020 programming period in supporting young people, implementing the **Youth Guarantee** (in particular through the Youth Employment Initiative<sup>1</sup>) and addressing the related country-specific recommendations as part of the European Semester.

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<sup>1</sup> To increase available EU financial support to the regions and individuals struggling most with youth employment and inactivity, the European Council agreed in February 2013 to create a dedicated **Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)**. The YEI will exclusively target NEETs aged up to 25 years, and where the Member State considers relevant, also those aged up to 30 years



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Youth employment is particularly relevant for the Roma, a population significantly younger than the overall population<sup>2</sup> and experiencing higher unemployment rates than the rest of the society.

Against this background, these mechanisms to address youth employment offer Member States an opportunity to promote **Roma youth employment** and address the main challenges that make it difficult for Roma youngsters to have access to the labour market.

**Thursday, 27 November**

9.00 – 9.15	<p><b>Welcoming words from host country representative</b></p> <p>Mr. Roland Hanak, Head of Staff Position Bilateral Cooperation in Labour Market Policy, Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection. Austria</p>
9.15 - 9.30	<p><b>Presentation of the agenda</b></p> <p>Ms. Carolina Fernández, EURoma Technical Secretariat</p>
9.30 – 11.00	<p><b>2014-2020 Structural and Investment Funds programming period: content of Partnership Agreements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Update on advances since last EURoma Network meeting:</b> <p>Ms. Annette Björnsson, Policy Officer, Unit E1, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission</p> </li> <li>• <b>Round of interventions from Member States (MS) representatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Changes related to Roma inclusion introduced/requested during negotiation process</li> <li>▪ How is Roma inclusion incorporated in PAs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
11.00 – 11.30	<i>Coffee break</i>

<sup>2</sup> An average of 25.1 years old in seven Member States, compared to 40.24 years in the EU-27; 62.4% of the Roma population is under 29 years old, compared to 35% in the EU-27

11.30 – 13.00	<p><b>2014-2020 Structural and Investment Funds programming period: state of play of negotiations and content of Operational Programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Update on advances since last EUroma Network meeting:</b></li> </ul> <p>Ms. Annette Björnsson, Policy Officer, Unit E1, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Round of interventions from Member States (MS) representatives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ State-of-play in negotiation and approval process</li> <li>▪ Changes related to Roma inclusion introduced/requested during negotiation process</li> <li>▪ How is Roma inclusion being incorporated in OPs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
13.00 – 15.30	<p><b>Lunch &amp; Study Visit</b> at Supra-company apprenticeship training/integrative professional training. One of the top rated restaurants in Vienna and successful pilot initiative on Dual VET system</p>
15.30 – 18.00	<p><b>Main EU mechanisms to tackle Roma youth unemployment and the contribution of ESI Funds</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Setting the context: EU measures to tackle youth unemployment</b></li> <li>• <b>National Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans and OPs:</b> How are Roma youth incorporated in the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plans and OPs? Are Roma youngsters explicitly included in Youth employment OPs? Are there specific priority axes or measures focusing on Roma or disadvantaged groups?</li> </ul> <p><i>Round of interventions from EC and each MS representatives</i></p>
18.00 – 20.00	<p>Dinner offered by host partners</p>



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**Friday, 28 November**

9.00 – 9.30	The <b>Austrian approach on youth employment initiatives</b> : Ms. Valerie Bösch, Department of International Affairs in Labour Market Policy, Expert on Youth Guarantee. Austria
9.30 –11.30	<p><b>Youth employment initiatives</b>: Presentation and analysis of key elements of initiatives on youth employment which could be applied specifically to Roma or to socially excluded groups.</p> <p>Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Spacelab</i> – Spacelab: Mr. Christoph Trauner. Vienna (Austria)</li> <li>• <i>Establishing a partnership to set up a Youth Guarantee scheme in Neamt County</i> (EC youth pilot project)– Neamt County Chamber of Commerce: Ms. Mihaela Constantinescu. Neamt (Romania).</li> <li>• <i>Gijón más</i> (Youth Employment and Activation Agency) (EC youth pilot project)- Local Agency of Economic Promotion and Employment. Gijón City Council: Mr. Joaquín Miranda Cortina. Gijón (Spain).</li> <li>• <i>Romane Buca</i> – Sensus: Mr. Rosario Ali Takon. Stockholm (Sweden)</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation of initiatives and exchange among MS representatives on key elements of the case studies</i></p>
11.30 – 12.00	<i>Coffee break</i>
12.00 – 12.50	<b>Keeping track of relevant EU developments on Roma and ESI Funds</b> Update on relevant events and initiatives at EU level, including the latest National Roma Contact Points meeting, European Commission Structured Dialogue with ESI Funds’ partners group of experts, EURoma+ activities, upcoming EU Platform for Roma Inclusion
12.50-13.00	<b>Wrap up: Main agreements and upcoming activities</b>
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch
14.30	Departure of participants