



***Information from Member States  
on progress in implementing their National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS)<sup>1</sup>***

Please respond (and therefore share with us the results from your own monitoring of the NRIS) by email to [JUST-NRCP-COORDINATION@ec.europa.eu](mailto:JUST-NRCP-COORDINATION@ec.europa.eu) **by 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at the latest.**

***Do you agree that your written answer to this questionnaire is published on our website and is therefore accessible to a wider audience? **Yes** – No***

***Would you like this decision on the publication of the contributions on our website to be an individual decision or a collective one? **Individual** - Collective***

**(1) Dialogue with regional and local authorities**

Since 2012, relevant progress has been made with regards to dialogue with regional and local authorities. In 2013, the National Contact Point relaunched a specific working group with representatives from regional governments and local authorities "Grupo de Cooperación Técnica" which aim is to foster dialogue and exchange of best practice related to Roma inclusion as well as improve how information is shared and collected. The two meetings organised in 2014 (March and November) have put the focus precisely on how to improve data collection and reporting mechanisms. It has also served as an opportunity to share and acquire more knowledge on what is the state of play of the different regions. In fact, in the meeting held in November, it was agreed that regions would reply to a short questionnaire with up-to-date information on the progress made in 2014, (following the request of information that was also sent in 2013, and the draft questionnaire sent to the members of this working group in 2012, immediately after its relaunching).

We highlight below some of the findings compiled through this questionnaire:<sup>2</sup>

- Specific Regional Action Plans aimed at the inclusion of Roma exist in Andalusia, Basque Country, Catalonia, Galicia, La Rioja and Valencia.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Roma are specifically referred to in several regional sectorial plans in most Spanish Regions (e.g.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this questionnaire, the term *National Roma Integration Strategy* also covers sets of policy measures supporting Roma integration.

<sup>2</sup> Of the 17 regions and 2 autonomous cities, we received information from 15 regions and 1 autonomous city: Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Basque Country, Cantabria, Canarias, Castile la Mancha, Castile León, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia, Melilla, & Valencia.

<sup>3</sup> Andalusia: Comprehensive Plan for the Roma Community in Andalusia 2015-2020"; Catalonia: Comprehensive Plan for the Roma Community in Catalonia 2014-2016; Galicia "Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma in Galicia" as part of the Social Inclusion Strategy of Galicia 2014-2020; Basque Country: Estrategia Vasca con el Pueblo Gitano; Valencia: Local Development Plan for the Roma Community; La Rioja: Comprehensive Plan for the Roma Community currently in drafting process. In Extremadura, there was a regional plan for the period 2007-2012.

Andalusia, Asturias, Cantabria, Castile and Leon, Galicia, Murcia, Melilla, Basque Country, Valencia etc.)<sup>4</sup>.

- In general, regional policies are in line with the NRIS adopted in Spain in 2012; in fact, some regions have carried out dissemination initiatives to inform about the National Strategy among the different institutional departments at regional as well as local level (e.g. Asturias, Castile and Leon, Extremadura, Galicia, Madrid, Murcia).
- There has been an important improvement with regards to coordination at regional and local level on Roma inclusion:
  - Many regional governments report coordination mechanisms between different departments and areas e.g. (equality, health, education, employment etc.), in general under different formats: participatory working groups, consultation councils, *ad hoc* committees, etc. (e.g. Andalusia, Aragon, Basque Country, Castile La Mancha, Castile and Leon, Extremadura, Galicia, Madrid, Murcia, La Rioja). In addition, in many regions, departments responsible of Roma policies are putting in place dissemination and communication tools (in general through internet portals) that give information on how to promote Roma inclusion and include up-to-date information on initiative carried out by different departments and stakeholders.
  - Some regions report having coordination mechanisms with local authorities also in different formats: consultation councils, *ad hoc* committees, etc. (e.g. Andalusia, Aragon, Castile La Mancha, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, La Rioja, Murcia). In some cases, this is linked to the financial support that some regions give to local authorities in order to assist them in the local implementation of Roma inclusion measures (e.g. Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Castile La Mancha, Murcia).

It is worth mentioning that the Government of Spain keeps running the 23.16.231F.453.01 *Roma Development Plan credit*, which co-finances in collaboration with Autonomous Communities and by extension with local authorities, comprehensive social inclusion projects aimed at Roma. In 2014 the allocation of funds by the national government was increased by 1 million euro, (the total amount in 2014 was of 1,412,500€ the total amount including regional and local co-funding was of 2,825,059.94€). A total of 73 projects were funded in all regions, (except for Navarra and the Basque Country, due to their distinct system of funding, and the city of Ceuta and Extremadura, that did not participate in 2014), with an estimated number of 116,992 Roma users (51,544 men and 64,968 women).

## **(2) Dialogue with Roma civil society**

The dialogue with Roma civil society is one of the key aspects highlighted both in the Spanish NRIS and in its Operational Plan 2014-2016. Since 2012, progress has been made especially with regards to:

- Supporting the involvement of Roma civil society in the policy cycle (planning, implementation and monitoring) at national level and capacity-building Roma civil

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<sup>4</sup> Andalusia: Andalusian Health Plan, Andalusian Plan for Social Inclusion; Asturias: Social Agenda 2014; Castile and Leon: in several Social Inclusion Plans at local level; Galicia: Galician Equality Plan 2013-2015; Murcia: Regional Social Services Plan; Melilla: Social Inclusion Plan; Basque Country: Plan Vasco de Inclusión Activa 2012-2016; Plan de Mejora de la Escolarización del Alumnado Gitano 2012-2015; Valencia: Plan for the Inclusion and Prevention of Social Exclusion.

society on how to improve their involvement and participation in the policy cycle at regional and local level. In this regard, it must be highlighted that the main financial mechanism that supports civil society organisations in Spain (i.e. IRPF) financed Roma civil society organisations and their programmes, which accounted for 7.5 million Euros in 2014. In addition, the Roma National Council (CEPG) receives the active support from the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. The main Roma civil society organisations are represented in this Council, which allows for a very active participation in the policy cycle. In 2014, the CEPG had the opportunity to participate in one of the meetings of the specific working group on Roma inclusion with regions and local authorities (CGT) and make specific proposals to the following policy documents:

- Spanish NRIS Operational Plan 2014-2016
  - Partnership Agreement of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020.
  - Indicators proposal conceived by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency.
  - Guide on recommendations on the implementation of the equality and non-discrimination horizontal principle in the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 drafted by the Women and Equal Opportunities Institute of the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality.
  - Evaluation Report of the Comprehensive Strategy against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and other forms of Intolerance.
  - Proposal to change the definition of the word "Roma" in the Spanish dictionary of the Royal Spanish Academy.
  - Visit by the European Economic and Social Committee related to the project "Better Roma inclusion through civil society initiatives"
  - Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
  - IV Cycle State Report to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention (ACFC) visit to Spain.
  - Report to the European Commission on the implementation of NRIS 2013 and 2014.
- Encouraging regional and local authorities to improve their dialogue mechanisms with Roma civil society. Several Regions have specific dialogue mechanism through which Roma civil society can be more involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of regional and local public (e.g. Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Basque Country, Castile La Mancha, Castile and Leon, Catalonia, Extremadura, Galicia, Murcia, Melilla).

It is worth highlighting that strengthening the dialogue with civil society has allowed involving specialized organisations in the implementation of the Strategy at national, regional and local level. Their collaboration in disseminating the objectives of the Strategy and Operational Plan has been key to raise-awareness on its contents and activities among Roma population and other key stakeholders.

### **(3) Allocating European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for Roma inclusion in the 2014-2020 period**

The Spanish Partnership Agreement of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020 agreed with the European Union in 2014 will combine a targeted and mainstream approach when implementing the future funds. On one side, Roma are listed as one of the main vulnerable groups that need to benefit from the funds and on the other hand, the investment priority "Socio-economic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma" under Thematic Objective 9 "promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination" has been selected to carry out specific and targeted actions. The allocation of budget to investment priorities has not been finalised, which means that we can only give general figures on the percentage allocated to social inclusion, which is 25.62%. Apart from that, there are also references to Roma population and their needs, under Thematic Objective 3, (Enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs, the agricultural sector (concerning EAFRD) and the fisheries and aquaculture sector (concerning EMFF), mentioning itinerant trading, specially in street markets, as an economic activity that helps supporting economically and socially broad sectors of the Roma population, ( and mentioning also their occupation in other sectors such as scrap collection and temporary jobs in the agriculture sector). This activity, (Itinerant trading, focused in selling food, clothes and shoes), shall be eligible for support measures aimed at SMEs foreseen in this OT. Similarly, the initiatives for eradication of slums and areas of high degradation are mentioned in the SWOT analysis of the spatial analysis of the Partnership Agreement.

Although the planning phase of ESIF has not been finalised, the framework will be as follows:

#### **ERDF**

- **National level:** the Operational Programme for Sustainable Growth includes the pillar on "Integrated and Sustainable Urban Development" with an allocation of 1,000 million Euros, 20% of which is reserved for activities under Thematic Objective 9. Municipalities with more than 2,000 inhabitants are eligible to apply to these funds.
- **Regional level:** some regions have programmes specific activities, especially in the area of housing although as all programmes have not been approved it is too early to have more specific information.

#### **ESF**

- **National level:**
  - The Operational Programme Social Inclusion and Social Economy includes the investment priority on Roma and therefore it is through this OP that specific measures for Roma inclusion will be promoted. This OP provides an ESF allocation of around 800 million Euros (2.5 % more budget than in the previous 2007-2013 period). This OP is based on a double approach: 1) integrated approach, which addresses the needs of the Roma population in health, household, employment and social areas on a twofold strategy: by setting up actions focussing specifically on people (vulnerable groups themselves) and/ on systems and structures (labour market, social policies, companies, etc.). 2) specific approach, which targets Roma inclusion through: i) Personalised integration pathways specifically addressed to Roma population; ii) Employability projects for Roma women in order to increase their access and continuity in employment; iii) Support measures to regulate the economic activity of the Roma population; iv) Promotion of social economy as an employment opportunity for Roma; v) Reinforcement measures to increase the level of education of Roma

- pupils and their families in order to prevent school dropouts; vi) Implementation of integrated assistance programmes to adequate the public services to the Roma needs (e.g. health, household, employment and social services). Amongst the actions aimed at Systems and/or Structures the most relevant are: 1) awareness-raising and communication campaigns to fight against stereotypes; 2) capacity building of public services staff in order to make them aware of the specific needs of the Roma population, mainly the women. 3) Support to the economic, social and physical regeneration of the most deprived urban and rural areas in which Roma population concentrates (in conjunction with ERDF).
- The Operational Programme Employment, Education and Training and the Operational Programme for Youth Employment do not foresee measures specifically targeted at Roma. However, as Roma is one of the vulnerable groups prioritised in the Partnership Agreement, intermediary bodies will be encouraged to ensure that Roma are among the beneficiaries.
- **Regional level:** several regions have foreseen specific actions targeted at Roma under the specific investment priority "socio-economic inclusion of marginalised communities such as the Roma" in their Regional Operational Programme ESF 2014-2020 (Aragon; Baleares; Cantabria; Castile La Mancha; Extremadura and Murcia).

Roma are likely to benefit from all investment priorities under the OP ESF 2014-2020, particularly from those under TO 9.1., which is also reflected in all Regional OPs. In particular, the investment priority "Equality between men and women in all areas, including in access to employment, career progression, reconciliation of work and private life and promotion of equal pay for equal work" also addresses Roma inclusion in the OPs in some Regions (e.g. Murcia, Melilla). Moreover, in its Partnership Agreement, Spain included additional investment priorities under Thematic Objective 9, which can also address Roma inclusion. These are also reflected in regional ERDF OPs, such as "Development of territorial agreements, local employment and social integration initiatives, local participatory development strategies that are actively supported by regional and local authorities as well as by social partners and NGOs" which is considered to have a positive impact on Roma inclusion in some Regions that included it in their OP (e.g. Murcia).

In addition to the above-mentioned investment priorities, which include Roma among the main target groups, some regions (e.g. Andalusia, Catalonia, Madrid) foresee special measures that fall under the activities Youth Employment Initiative, which forms part of the national OP ESF 2014-2020.

It is worth highlighting that the multi-fund option has been envisaged in certain measures where the ESF and ERDF intervention scope is in close connection, such as the socio-economic regeneration of the most deprived urban/rural areas.

Finally, with regards to enhancing the implementation compared to 2007-2013, several initiatives have been carried out mainly through two mechanisms:

- Euroma Network and Euroma Plus project, led by Spain: in the past two years, several workshops and seminars have been organised with the aim of promoting Roma inclusion through these funds and ensuring that Roma benefit from the mainstream measures funded by ESIF. As a result of these initiatives, the network has issued

several publications that are available on its website ([link](#)). We include below the list of the most recent ones:

- Making Use of European Structural and Investment Funds for Roma Inclusion. A Guide for Local Authorities (2014)
- Tackling Roma Needs in the 2014-2020 Structural Funds Programming Period. Guide to Improve the Planning Process (2013).

These two guides have been distributed among relevant stakeholders, (including regions and local authorities, by the NRCP, and published in the website of the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality).

- Consultation to Roma civil society organisations on the Spanish ESIF Partnership Agreement 2014-2020: the CEPG was consulted during the planning phase of the Partnership Agreement.
- The DG for Services to Family and Children, (NRCP), published a guide in 2014 on how to use the 20% ESF allocation for social inclusion, which included several references to the Roma population, and examples on how to address the needs of the Roma population in the OPs : *Guía de orientaciones y recomendaciones prácticas para la promoción de la inclusión social a través de los fondos estructurales y de inversión de la UE (período 2014-2020)*: <http://www.msssi.gob.es/ssi/familiasInfancia/inclusionSocial/docs/GuiaInclusionSocialFondosestructurales.pdf>

#### **(4) Reinforcing the role of the National Roma Contact Point (NRCP)**

Since 2012, the role of the National Roma Contact Point has been reinforced, (even more staff and economic resources are needed in order to tackle all tasks related to this role), in particular with regards to its coordination role. As mentioned in question (1) and (2), the NRCP has dedicated additional resources to improve coordination mechanisms, especially in the areas of data collection, monitoring and evaluation not only with representatives from other ministries (employment, health, housing, education, etc.) but also regional and local authorities and Roma civil society. As the NRCP is progressively reinforcing this coordination role it is more often consulted in the design of many sectorial policies led by the different ministerial departments.

As part of this coordination role, the NRCP adopted the NRIS Operational Plan 2014-2016, the instrument, which is currently being used to plan and monitor the implementation of the NRIS. This Operational Plan foresees the elaboration of an annual progress report, which is currently being finalised. It describes the actions and measures implemented by all ministries and the NRCP but it also includes a section on: progress in regions; coordination and governance; implementation mechanisms; relevant initiatives and projects carried out in 2014 and those foreseen for 2015. This report will be published and uploaded on the website of the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality in the first trimester of 2015.

In addition, the NRCP has played an important role in the programming of the ESIF 2014-2020 actively participating in the design of the Partnership Agreement as well as in

the consultation process. It led the creation of an Inter-fund Committee between ESF, ERDF and EARDF with the aim of ensuring that Roma are especially taken into account in the planning and implementation of ESIF 2014-2020. It is worth highlighting that the Directorate General of Services for Family and Children has been negotiating with the Spanish ESF managing authority the potential allocation of more than 1 million euro for the period 2014-2020 from the OP Technical Assistance. The NRCP being within the competences of this DG, it will most probably benefit from this new allocation of funds.

Finally, the NRCP has actively been involved in two initiatives to promote the use of ESIF to eradicate slums and shanty towns and improve the living conditions of Roma (housing): one organised by the High Commission of Human Rights (Madrid, January 2014) and one organised by the Council of Europe (Madrid, May 2014). It has also organised a seminar on the youth guarantee and Roma (October 2014) in partnership with the region of Andalusia to ensure that Roma benefit from the measures foreseen in the OP Youth Employment. Documents about both events available here: <http://www.msssi.gob.es/ssi/familiasInfancia/inclusionSocial/poblacionGitana/actividadesJornadas.htm>

#### **(5) Fighting discrimination effectively**

Since 2012, many measures have been taken to fight discrimination in the four key areas (education, employment, healthcare and housing). Some have been targeted measures to fight discrimination against Roma and some have been mainstreamed measures aimed at ensuring that the principle of equality and non-discrimination is respected in the policy cycle and in the services aimed at citizens.

Below we highlight the most recent non-discrimination initiatives although this is not an exhaustive list. A more detail description of initiatives are available on the "[Manual Investing in Equality and Non-Discrimination: Towards More Efficient and Inclusive Public Policy - Training handbook on how to mainstream the principle of equality and non-discrimination into public policy design, implementation and assessment](#)" (also included in the list below).

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>More information</b>
Manual on investing in equality and non-discrimination: towards more efficient and inclusive public policies	<a href="#">Link</a>
Pilot training course on equality and non-discrimination held for 25 civil servants in April 2014	<a href="#">Link</a>
Dosta! Campaign led by the Council of Europe whose objective is to raise awareness on prejudice and stereotypes in the society against Roma	<a href="#">Link</a>
Social discrimination of the Roma community: from stereotypes to media and antiziganism. An initiative from the Andalusian	No on-line information is

Initiative	More information
<p>Federation of Roma Women FAKALI.</p> <p>Journalists against racism, publication by the Romani Union which analyses and compiles articles that contribute to the reinforcement of prejudices and stereotypes of Roma in the media.</p>	<p>available</p> <p><a href="#">Link to 2013 publication</a></p>
<p>Annual report “Discrimination and the Roma community” by Fundación Secretariado Gitano</p>	<p><a href="#">Link to report from 2013</a></p>
<p>Inclusion of specific questions on Roma in the survey “Perception on discrimination” by the Sociological Research Centre (initiative together with Institute of Women and Equal Opportunities)</p>	<p><a href="#">Link to survey from September 2013</a></p>
<p>Inclusion of various specific questions related to the Roma population in the periodic study on the evolution on racism and xenophobia in Spain.</p>	<p>To be published in 2015</p>
<p>Celebration of the International Romani Day (8 April) at state level as well as in various Regions</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality and Regions</p>
<p>Collaboration between the Ministry of Education and Sport and the University of Alcala on the trans-disciplinary course “Roma in Spain, history and culture” for 30 students</p>	<p><a href="#">Information about the course in 2014</a></p>
<p>Exposition of Roma Lives coordinated by the Roma Culture Institute. The exposition has toured several Spanish and European cities.</p>	<p><a href="http://vidasgitanas.es/">http://vidasgitanas.es/</a></p>
<p>Thematic cinema season O DIKHIPEN at the national Filmoteca in September 2014</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
<p>Specialised Roma Culture Institute which aims is to promote Roma Culture in Spain but also at EU level</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
<p>Roma Handbooks published by the Roma Culture Institute</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
<p>Project Sar San? on teaching Romani language, coordinated by the Roma Culture Institute</p>	<p><a href="#">Link</a></p>
<p>Project “Intergenerational research and awareness on the Roma women’s situation”</p>	<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and KAMIRA</p>
<p>Project “Recommendations to fight against discrimination in the media”</p>	<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and KAMIRA</p>
<p>“Promotion, spreading and protection of human Rights with the participation of the Roma community” Training in Madrid and</p>	<p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and</p>



Initiative	More information
Cantabria	Association for Roma Women <i>Alboreá</i>

A large number of municipalities in several Regions (e.g. Castile and Leon, Catalonia, Galicia, Murcia, Basque Country, La Rioja) have organised a variety of awareness-raising activities that focused on the promotion of positive attitudes among the general population towards Roma. Furthermore, municipalities (e.g. in Aragon) organised training sessions for NGOs in order to inform them about the NRIS and its measures, including measures to combat discrimination. In this regards, it is worth noting that in 2014 the Women and Equal Opportunities Institute, in partnership with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces, has carried out an analysis of equality and non-discrimination practices in municipalities through which it has compiled over 100 initiatives. As a result of this work, it is foreseen to create a network of municipalities against discrimination that will most probably be launch in 2015.

As regards to the implementation of policies aimed at improving the situation of the Roma and removing the gap between the Roma and the majority population in several areas, it is worth highlighting initiatives carried out by several regions in the area of:

- Education (e.g. school and learning support – which is usually directed at the general populations but takes into account the specific needs of Roma children) that aim to prevent early school dropout (e.g. Andalusia, Asturias, Castile and Leon, Catalonia, Galicia, La Rioja, Murcia, Melilla, Basque Country).
- Housing: several regions have included within their ESIF regional programmes measures aimed at eradicating shantytowns through rehousing activities (e.g. Andalusia, Catalonia, Madrid).
- Employment: most regions have selected the investment priority on active inclusion and will implement measures and actions aimed at promoting labour inclusion among vulnerable groups, such as Roma.
- Health: several regions have foreseen specific measures with the aim of improving the health of Roma (Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Cantabria, Extremadura, La Rioja, Madrid, Navarra, Basque Country, Valencia). Andalusia has foreseen for example a specific Health Programme for Roma Women.

Finally, we would like to highlight that on the occasion of the International Romani Day, 8 April, the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality as well as many regions (e.g. Basque Country, Castile and Leon, Catalonia, Galicia, La Rioja, Melilla, Valencia) have organised events, conferences, presentations and activities related to the promoting Romani culture and knowledge about Romani culture among general society. Andalusia and Catalonia annually organise ceremonies in which Roma Awards are given to persons to recognise their achievements in the social and cultural promotion of the Roma community. The Spanish Roma Culture Institute also organises annually Roma Culture Awards, in several categories (Roma Concord award; communication award; etc).

## **(6) Monitoring transformation and enabling policy adjustment**

As mentioned in question (4) relevant progress has been made with regards to monitoring. As these have mostly been described in questions 1, 2 and 4, we briefly include below a reference to the main initiatives carried out:

- Adoption of a National Roma Social Inclusion Strategy 2012-2020 in March 2012.
- Relaunching of a specific working group on Roma inclusion with representatives of regional and local authorities (Grupo de Cooperación Técnica) in 2012.
- Adoption of the NRIS Operational Plan 2014-2016.
- Bilateral monitoring meetings with ministries involved in the NRIS and operational plan since 2012 (once per year).
- Response to monitoring questionnaires by regional governments on progress related to Roma inclusion policies.
- Active participation of the NRCP in the Roma Inclusion working party of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. The NRCP has actively involved the regional and local authorities informing and consulting them on the templates presented in the working groups as well as requesting their opinion and feedback on the working documents.
- Publication of an annual progress report and planning update (once per year). The first report on the NRIS Operational Plan 2014-2016 will be published in the first trimester of 2015.
- Coordination mechanisms with the CEPG (Roma State Council): regular meetings and thematic working groups with representatives of Roma civil society organisations.
- The NRIS foresees the elaboration of studies in key areas (education, employment, housing and health) that will be used to monitor and evaluate the objectives of the NRIS:
  - In 2014, the Second Roma National Health Survey (NHS) has been carried out. The results and its comparison with the National Health Survey for general population will be presented, in a public presentation, at the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality. The comparative study between NHS for Roma and general population will be published in March 2015 and disseminated at national and international level in different meetings and events in order to highlight the inequities and raise awareness on specific needs for moving forward health equity.
  - The study on housing will be carried out in 2015 and 2016 (publication is foreseen in 2016).

The Government of Spain annually evaluates the 23.16.231F.453.01 *Roma Development Plan credit*. In the following link you can find reports corresponding to the years 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012.

<http://www.msssi.gob.es/ssi/familiasInfancia/inclusionSocial/poblacionGitana/MemoriasEvaluacion.htm>

At regional level, those regions with specific action plans on Roma inclusion (Andalusia, Catalonia, Galicia, Basque Country) confirm they have monitoring and evaluation mechanisms according to predefined indicators which tend to include implementation and results-based indicators that are partly in line with NRIS<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, the Region of

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<sup>5</sup> Note that La Rioja foresees to include NRIS-based monitoring indicators in its regional action plan, which is currently being drafted.

Andalusia highlights a close cooperation with regional research institutions which provide technical assistance in the monitoring of the Comprehensive Plan for the Roma Community in Andalusia. Despite the absence of regional action plans, some regions (e.g. Aragon, Castile and Leon) have put in place specific mechanisms (e.g. a Roma Working Group) that are aimed at monitoring and evaluating measures for Roma inclusion.

## (7) Main challenges and successes

As it has been described, since 2012, there have been **important improvements and successes**, mainly in the following areas:

- **A more comprehensive and participated design and planning:** the design and planning has been based on a long-term strategy (2012-2020) and the adoption and implementation of 3-year operational plans. This has allowed a more focused implementation and monitoring. The fact of involving key stakeholders in the design and planning phase both at national (relevant ministries and Roma civil society organisations) and regional and local level has been a factor of success as it has allowed a more realistic approach to commitments.
- **A progressive system of coordination and reporting** that takes into account the capacity, knowledge, resources of the stakeholders. Instead of establishing a comprehensive system of reporting, this has been developed in collaboration with ministries (at national level) and with regional governments, trying to be realistic to the information that can be collected and building on the previous year's experience but most of all trying to use tools that are not time-consuming and that present the information in a way that it can be useful for stakeholders.
- **Put the focus on a key priority area** so as to raise awareness or improve tools and knowledge. For example, in 2014, the focus was put on youth employment. A seminar was organised with the aim of making proposals on how to ensure that Roma benefit from youth employment actions and measures that will be implemented within the ESIF Youth Employment OP 2014-2020. This help to foster the dialogue and coordination with key stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Youth Employment OP. Specific recommendations and proposals can be found in the summary of the seminar.
- **Progressive alignment of national and regional policies:** since 2012, the NRCP has tried to promote this through the different coordination mechanisms. As a result, the NRIS and its objectives are better known among the key stakeholders, namely regional governments that have the competences to promote specific actions and measures on Roma inclusion.
- **Inclusion of the investment priority on "marginalised communities, especially Roma" in the ESIF Partnership Agreement 2014-2020:** the NRCP has been actively involved in the design and planning phase of the new programming period not only highlighting the importance to select the investment priority on Roma but also ensuring that mainstream measures take into account the particularities and needs of Roma population. There is an increased awareness among ministries and regional governments of the importance of addressing Roma in the ESIF Operational Programmes.

With regards to the challenges, the NRCP would like to make progress in the following areas:

- **Ensure public administrations combine a mainstream approach with a targeted approach** when it comes to Roma inclusion. It is important to foresee specific measures targeted at Roma aimed at compensating possible disadvantages as well as ensuring that Roma benefit from mainstreamed programmes and services.
- **Ensure that issues related with Roma are addressed through the ESIF Operational Programmes 2014-2020:** having selected the investment priority "marginalised communities, especially Roma" is crucial but it is as important to ensure that Roma benefit from other Operational Programmes (ESF, ERDF, EARDF).
- **Continue improving the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms** through better data collections tools and studies. Identifying adequate indicators is a challenge for all stakeholders. It will also be important to ensure that the mid-term studies foreseen in the NRIS 2012-2020 are carried out, in particular, those related with health and housing.
- **Continue improving the coordination mechanisms between the national and the regional level** ensuring that all policies are aligned. In this regard, it would be important to work so as to encourage regions to improve their planning and coordination mechanisms and those regions with Roma inclusion plans receive adequate support.
- **Continue improving the dialogue mechanisms with Roma civil society organisations** both at national and regional level, implementing, when necessary, capacity building programmes.
- **Assigning more resources and budget to the NRCP** to ensure an adequate implementation of the Strategy as well as a more effective coordination with the national government, the regions and local authorities, and an appropriate organisational capacity to strengthen the role of the National Roma Council.

## (8) Additional information

Several practices and programmes with transfer-potential related to Roma inclusion can be highlighted at regional level.<sup>6</sup>

- In Andalusia, the project “Gender Mainstreaming in Roma Education” is a transnational project, which aims to improve the access to and continuity in education for girls and women in situations of socio-economic disadvantage. The project applies a gender mainstreaming approach in policies and programmes – this approach has been recognised as a methodology that improves the educational status of Roma at risk of social exclusion. [More information](#)

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<sup>6</sup> Criteria used to include these practices and programmes in this section: 1) their innovation in terms of methods; 2) involvement of a variety of stakeholders; 3) positive impact on Roma social inclusion. In some cases, although the practice or programme is not necessarily innovative it has been included as it was the first time such a programme was implemented at regional level (e.g. Canarias). It is worth noting that no detailed or systematic analysis of the practice has been carried out.

- In Aragon, a project led by Roma NGOs manages five buildings in which Roma families live. The families are provided with educational support (for children) as well as socio-labour insertion (for adults).
- In Asturias, the socio-educational programme in the municipality of Siero focuses on the reduction of early school leaving of Roma students in several secondary education schools by applying an approach that includes the participation of Roma parents and families as well as awareness-raising among teaching personnel.
- In the Basque Country, the regional government launched the Eraberean network which aim is to combat discrimination on racial or national origin, ethnicity, and sexual orientation and gender identity. Twelve social organisations working in the fields of immigration, promotion of Roma and LGBT groups are part of this network. [More information](#)
- In Cantabria, the Platform Romanés and the Marqués de Valdecilla Foundation developed a Mediation Health Programme. It is also worth highlighting that in 2013 the Public Health Social Protection Programme of Cantabria adopted a regulation to ensure that healthcare is given to those who do not have access to the National Health System, which is being implemented since its adoption.
- In Canarias, the socio-labour training programme for Roma in Santa Cruz (Tenerife) offers training on basic and specialised professional skills for the unemployed Roma population of the municipality. Together with the trainees, a personalised itinerary is developed. This individualisation allows for the scheduling of training sessions, job search and, eventually, labour insertion.
- In Castile and Leon, the programme “Social accompaniment of families in situations of housing exclusion in the municipality of Segovia” was awarded the qualification “good” in the 10<sup>th</sup> international competition for Best Practices of the United Nations. [More information](#)
- In Catalonia, a series of activities under the Catalanian Comprehensive Plan for the Roma Community have transfer potential: the communication strategy to improve Roma participation in the design and implementation of programmes affecting them; family education (parents complete their school education at the same school as their children); training of trainers in Romani for primary and secondary school teachers; university access group for students older than 25 years; sociocultural mediation in 10 municipalities; working group including representatives of the Roma community and the public audiovisual corporation of Catalonia in order to improve the public image of Roma in the media.
- In Extremadura, a mentoring programme was launched in collaboration with Fundación Secretariado Gitano whereby 10 young Roma students selected from 70 students from the region have had the opportunity to get involve in activities related to the type of jobs they aspired to. This is contributing to motivating other Roma young people as these 10 students are seen as role models in their community.
- In Galicia, a change in the intervention methodology based on pathways to integration was launched in 2012. During 2014, progress on the methodology designed in 2012 and 2103 were conducted. Furthermore, the concept of eligible social intervention has been changed, it now includes elements directly linked to itineraries, residential component (social intervention linked to access to standard housing) and the educational component (linked to school support, health guidelines, etc.).

- In La Rioja, a training course aimed at Roma leaders was organised. It consisted of a leadership course in the field of management of organizations and projects. It addressed with the following content: Module I. Social Policies aimed at the Roma in Europe, Spain and La Rioja (Plans and relevant institutions). Diagnosis in La Rioja; Module II: leadership and projects; Module III: Groups and leadership communication; Module IV: Housing. In total 15 people participated. It is also worth highlighting the initiative "Norias Market", a street market in Logroño that takes place on Sundays in which 225 families participate. There is a waiting list, given the demand (97 applicants). Apart from boosting and regulating the commercial activity it also offers a place for multicultural coexistence (the market has been running for 9 years). The project is managed by the Rioja Association of Social Commerce (promoted by the Association Roma Promotion of La Rioja, Cajarioja Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of La Rioja). This project has been assessed by the Ministry of Health and Social Policy in 2012 as "good practice" and has been presented to the EU as a management model and example of good practice. Finally, it is worth noting the creation of the Cooperative Vendors "Woolfran Groupe".
- In Madrid, the project "ARTEMISA" is a network of different NGOs, including Roma organisations, which focuses on the fight against the exclusion of Roma in the fields of health and education. Roma mediators work in close cooperation with health centres and educational bodies and provide accompaniment and orientation for Roma families. [More information](#)
- In Murcia, the Tucúe community intervention project in the neighborhood of San Gil in the municipality of La Union is a comprehensive programme which involves different areas of action: urban infrastructure, housing associations and social cooperation, social services, education, health, culture, employability and training.