



EC Staff Working Paper

Community Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion

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Introduction

- Paper highlights the many gaps and failures that plague the EU and Member State's approach to Roma inclusion.
- We have a sense of déjà vu, we see the many problems, but there is yet no ambitious strategy, no long term planning, no direct commitment for an EU Roma Strategy.
- The approach of the Commission for this paper was minimalist and sends a clear signal that the EC is rather reluctant to get seriously involved.
- The paper is revealing, it compiles some interesting examples contains useful information, it fails when it comes to solutions for the many "lessons learned".
- It fails also in its last part as there are no meaningful conclusions.
- It is a reflection of the passive stance, the EC is far more focused on passing the entire responsibility to Member States rather than focusing on the initiatives it could kick-start and coordinate.



Issues highlighted in the paper:

- Opportunistic approach when it comes to implemented Structural Funds' projects, lack of strategic approach,
- Underlines problems but offers no solutions when it comes to enforcing anti-discrimination legislation and combating structural discrimination,
- The virtual non-existence of a debate on Roma inclusion in the Social Inclusion OMC and Employment Strategy and the lack of reporting,
- The absence of effective monitoring mechanisms, indicators and benchmarks, which would enable the EC to measure the impact of policies,
- The lack of effectiveness of awareness campaigns,



Good parts of the document:

- A comprehensive inventory of “off the shelf” available instruments,
- Encouragement and indications on how instruments could be used,
- A useful assessment of gaps and failures under ‘lessons learned’,
- Some indication of possible solutions, acknowledgment that improvements across the board are needed,



And the bad parts:

- The document lacks vision and reflects unwillingness for long term planning, denotes a minimalist not an ambitious approach,
- The overall conclusions are inconsistent with the content,
- Derogates responsibility of 'good governance' solely to the Member States', EC fails to acknowledge that it is also accountable as source of legislation and resources,
- Reuse of past findings, denoting lack of progress in addressing issues,
- Lack of creative solutions to the identified problems,
- Fails to call for a strategic approach on behalf of the EU,



Concluding remarks of EU Roma Policy Coalition:

- We expected a **EC paper with a vision, we got an inventory**, however we still regard the Staff Working Paper as a first step towards the adoption of and EU Roma Framework Strategy,
- We believe that the findings of the paper **do make the case for an EU Roma Strategy even more stronger**, unfortunately the conclusions do not match that,
- The EC needs to be come up with an ambitious Framework Strategy matched by an Community Action Programme and a institutional coordination mechanism (Unit),
 - The Strategy has to be ambitious in scope and approach, envisaging clear and quantifiable targets and setting benchmarks,
 - The strategy has to benefit of an effective monitoring mechanism, progress or adversely lack of progress needs to be measurable, (the current Roma Inter Service Group could be a basis for such a body,)
 - The Strategy has to be complementary and build upon current initiatives such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion,
 - The Strategy should be devised in close cooperation with Civil Society, especially Roma NGOs (national and international level),
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Concluding remarks of EU Roma Policy Coalition (2):

- Taking into account the Council Conclusions of December 2007 and June 2008 European Councils,
- The EU High Level Conference on Roma, in September, must be a turning point that will bring strong developments that
- The conclusions of the Conference must translate into ambitious policy making to benefit Roma across the European Union,