



In the Framework of the Serbian Decade Presidency 16 th International Steering Committee Meeting was held in Belgrade on May 25-26, 2009.

Following recommendations and conclusions were made:

I OPENING SESSION

Slovakia is holding the Decade of Roma Inclusion Presidency from July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2010. Priorities of the Slovak Presidency are:

- Integrated school system and multi-cultural education
- Roma identity
- Fifth year of Decade – revision of National Action Plans

II DECADE IMPLEMENTATION REPORTS

- ISC members remind Decade countries as well as International partner organizations, that one of the basic principles of the Decade is Roma participation in development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Roma policies/ programs/projects at all levels.
- The implementation of NAP is key: governments need to allocate budget resources for NAP implementation and to make sure that it is reaching Roma. Governments need to build its capacities to absorb available funds and not to use the crises as an excuse to scale back funding for Roma.

III COMBATING DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

- All governments of the Decade should take the principles and recommendations of the Belgrade Education Conference as a “roadmap” for the coming phase of their work on education accelerating progress to the goals of a genuine inclusive education for all children.

- Countries should report back to the next ISC meeting hosted under the Slovak presidency on actions taken in putting these recommendations into action.
- Decade watch engages to follow progress in national strategies especially in four key areas:
 - Scaling up interventions for early childhood
 - Desegregation of education
 - Making the classroom environment more responsive
 - Education financing

Reporting back before the next EU Roma summit 2010.

- Partner organizations committed to support this renewed engagement of states, working closely together in support of and within the Conference recommendations.

IV EUROPEAN ROMA PLATFORM

- Marks an unprecedented step forward in terms of engagement to develop a coordinated and comprehensive approach to Roma inclusion characterized by explicit but exclusive targeting. There is a need to make explicit that the platform will be engaged in the Western Balkans.
- The Platform is understood as a progress synergy with the Decade.

V MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Roma should be involved in census process-data collection and analyses, questionnaires should be translated in Romani, awareness raising campaigns on census participation significance should be implemented.
- Repeating the comprehensive survey on the status of Roma in the region after 5 years of Decade implementation is an important issue.
- We should be focusing not just on production of new data but on using the data that already exists.
- Local level participation should be a key component in terms of evaluation of impact and data collection.

VI COMMON INITIATIVES AND ACTUELITIES

ACCES FOR PERSONAL DOCUMENTATIONS

- ISC members appeal to all relevant decision makers to maintain the issue of personal documentation and civil registration of the Roma high on the agenda of the Roma Decade, to provide necessary funding and work constructively and actively in finding adequate solutions. Without this there is no social inclusion.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CRISES

In the period of economical and financial crises governments should not lose focus on the most disadvantaged groups

ROMA DECADE AND IPA FUNDS

- Governments in the accession process, participating in the Decade, need to **make sure that targeted indicators on Roma** are included in all in the accession process IPA projects relevant for the Decade commitments;
- Decade structures and Roma civil society should be **fully involved** in planning and evaluation of the IPA funds
- Decade national coordinator of Macedonia should establish **a group of Western Balkan Roma** and call a meeting in autumn 2009 **to review implementation** of these conclusions together with the EC
- Slovak presidency should invite **other relevant DGs of the European Commission to join the ISC** and the indicators working group

DECADE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

In the spirit of the Declaration for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015, the Roma Decade participating countries are invited to make use of the Decade IS Report, and specifically consider the following general recommendations:

- Governments are encouraged to strengthen the established institutional structures dealing with the Roma policies
- High level representation of the Roma Decade reflected in the high political position of the National Coordinators should be maintained, and the position needs clear definition of responsibilities and tasks.
- The consultative/advisory bodies in the countries involving both relevant Ministries' representatives and Roma represents one of the benefits of the Roma Decade.
- Technical units of the Roma Decade of all the countries need to be improved and extended in order to fulfill the extensive list of tasks and responsibilities.