

## **Together towards Roma Equality: Implementing the EU Roma Strategic Framework Online Roundtable, 22 February 2021**

Discrimination against Roma is an everyday reality of European societies, characterised by systemic racism and antigypsyism. Despite EU efforts to guarantee the inclusion and equal treatment of Roma, these communities continue to be subject to inequality, social exclusion, poverty and discrimination across all areas of life. Unfortunately, the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies adopted in 2011 has been insufficient to deliver a major breakthrough in improving the situation of Roma in Europe, so the new EU Roma strategic framework for equality, inclusion and participation published in 2020 is all the more important.

Equality bodies can make an important contribution to effectively implementing the EU's new strategic framework. By reason of their various competences and expertise, equality bodies play a central role in promoting equality and in fighting discrimination experienced by Roma in many jurisdictions. Their considerable experience can be particularly valuable in the development and monitoring of the National Roma Strategic Frameworks. For this purpose, it is key to further strengthen the engagement and cooperation among relevant actors working with Roma, including civil society.

This online event will bring together the European Commission, Member State representatives, civil society representatives and equality bodies to identify best ways to cooperate for our common goal of furthering Roma equality and to identify the roles national equality bodies can and should play.

### **Objectives**

The primary objective of the roundtable is to discuss and identify ways to improve cooperation in light of the new EU Roma Strategic Framework. The roundtable aims to:

- Increase awareness of equality bodies about the EU Strategic Framework;
- Enable equality bodies to exchange insights regarding their involvement in the development and monitoring of the national Roma strategic frameworks and EU funding for Roma equality, and discuss ways to strengthen their contribution;
- Develop a common understanding of each participant's roles and challenges; and
- Help coordination of different actors to ensure a more effective implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework.

The roundtable's conclusions will be collected in a short summary to guide the work of equality bodies in contributing to the implementation of the EU Roma Strategic Framework.

# Agenda

*Host: Mr **Tamás Kádár**, Deputy Director and Head of Legal and Policy, Equinet*

## 09:45-10:25    Opening session: Setting the scene

Ms **Tena Šimonovic Einwalter**, Chair of Equinet Executive Board

Ms **Irena Moozova**, Director for Equality and Union Citizenship, European Commission

Ms **Ann-Charlotte Nygard**, Head of Unit, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building,  
European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, (FRA)

Q&A

Comfort break

## 10:30-11:30    Session I: Existing situation and challenges

*This first session will be focused on:*

- ✓ *Lessons learned from the implementation of the framework and focus of actions for improving the design and implementation during the new period in particular in the field of equality and non-discrimination; and*
- ✓ *The roles their different organisations play and the challenges they face in contributing to the implementation of the EU Framework*

Ms **Jacqueline Healy**, Public Sector Duty Manager, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Ireland

MEP **Romeo Franz**, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Greens/EFA, Germany

Ms **Andrea Bučková**, Head of the government plenipotentiary for Roma communities (National Roma Contact Point), Slovakia

Ms **Susanne Pfanner**, Head of the Austrian National Roma Contact Point's Office, Federal Chancellery, Austria

Mr **Bernard Rorke**, Advocacy officer, European Roma Rights Centre

Ms **Belén Sánchez-Rubio**, Head of the International Department, Fundación Secretariado Gitano, Spain

Q&A

Comfort break

## 11.45-12.50    Session II: Building bridges

*This session will:*

- ✓ *Discuss concrete actions needed to develop and how these will lead to a better implementation of the EU Framework and to a more efficient fight against Roma discrimination; and*
- ✓ *Discuss ways and forms of cooperation and synergies, with a particular focus on the role and contribution of equality bodies*

Ms **Elena Karekla**, Officer, Office of the Commissioner for Administration and Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman), Cyprus

Ms **Marisa Horta**, Head of The Support Unit for Roma Communities (NACI), Portuguese High Commission for Migration, Portugal

Ms **Hristina Petkova**, Policy officer, Non-discrimination and Roma coordination unit of Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST), European Commission

Mr **Andrey Ivanov**, Project Manager, Roma Integration, Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Unit, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Ms **Elena Iordănescu**, Public manager, Ministry of Investments and European Funds (National Roma Contact Point), Romania

Ms **Gabriela Hrabanova**, Executive Director, European Roma Grassroots Organisation Network

Q&A

Comfort break

## 12.50-13.00    Closing Remarks

Mr **Tamás Kádár**, Deputy Director and Head of Legal and Policy, Equinet