NEGATIVE: Roma

By Katherine Baker

***Resolved: The European Union should substantially reform its immigration policy.***

Case Summary: AFF argues that Roma should be given EU citizenship and the right to freely migrate in the EU. They claim EU countries have a habit of ignoring these rights and conducting mass deportations of Roma in violation of EU law and human rights obligations, and this plan sets mandatory standards EU nations must follow and sanctions if they don’t.

NEG can argue that much is already being done to counter anti-Roma actions, and that the AFF’s plan won’t solve. They can also argue that increased efforts at Roma integration would lead to backlash and anti-EU rhetoric, destabilizing and possibly dissolving the EU. The AFF can only solve for immigration policy, not social attitudes, social segregation, poor education, etc. Immigration policy won’t solve the underlying issues and anything else is extra-topical and outside AFF’s ability to change.

Negative: Roma 3

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Negative: Roma

INHERENCY

Roma Framework bring Roma inclusion onto EU agenda. Lots of new legislation and policies have been enacted recently

Violeta Naydenova and Martina Matarazzo, 2019. (Naydenova - Senior Policy Analyst at the Open Society European Policy Institute. She has principal responsibility for tracking, analyzing, and devising strategies to influence how the European Union develops policies, funds initiatives, and crafts legislation that focus on Roma, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination. Matarazzo - Independent Consultant on Human rights and migration in the EU.) “Post-2020 EU Roma Strategy: The way forward” 30 May 2019. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/post_2020_eu_roma_strategy_-_the_way_forward.pdf>

It is generally agreed among activists and policymakers that the main added value of the EU Roma Framework

is to have brought Roma inclusion onto the agenda of the EU institutions, national governments and some

enlargement countries since 2011, and kept it there. Thanks to the EU Roma Framework, the EU and

government institutions have increased the use of a number of available policy instruments. In addition, they

have also created new policy instruments, structures and legislation aimed at preventing the socio-economic

exclusion of Roma and discrimination against them.

Several milestones for Roma Framework initiatives and a new post-2020 Roma Strategy

Violeta Naydenova and Martina Matarazzo, 2019. (Naydenova - Senior Policy Analyst at the Open Society European Policy Institute. She has principal responsibility for tracking, analyzing, and devising strategies to influence how the European Union develops policies on Roma, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination. Matarazzo - Independent Consultant on Human rights and migration in the EU.) “Post-2020 EU Roma Strategy: The way forward” 30 May 2019. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/post_2020_eu_roma_strategy_-_the_way_forward.pdf>

Since the launch of the EU Roma Framework, four Council initiatives were put in place. These are important milestones on Roma inclusion in the EU: • In 2011 the ‘Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020’ gave a boost to Member States to develop their NRIS. • In 2013 the ‘Council recommendation on effective Roma integration measures in the member states’ was the first legal instrument on Roma, which obliged member states to report to the EC annually on the progress achieved in implementing their NRIS. • In 2016 the ‘Accelerating the Process of Roma Integration - Council Conclusions’ for the first time recognised antigypsyism as the root cause of Roma social exclusion and discrimination, and asked the EC to propose a post-2020 strategy on Roma integration. In 2019 the Romanian presidency of the Council of the European Union prepared a note to the member states delegations in Brussels, which emphasised the need for the EC to propose an ambitious new EU framework for the post-2020 period on Roma integration, and called on member states and enlargement countries to do the same. One important recent initiative is the announcement by the German foreign minister Heiko Maas that his government will advance a post-2020 EU Roma Strategy during Germany’s EU presidency, due in the second half of 2020. The new strategy will call on member states to continue working on Roma inclusion.

Roma inclusion is on the agenda of both the European Parliament (EP) and the European Commission (EC)

Violeta Naydenova and Martina Matarazzo, 2019. (Naydenova - Senior Policy Analyst at the Open Society European Policy Institute. She has principal responsibility for tracking, analyzing, and devising strategies to influence how the European Union develops policies on Roma, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination. Matarazzo - Independent Consultant on Human rights and migration in the EU.) “Post-2020 EU Roma Strategy: The way forward” 30 May 2019. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/post_2020_eu_roma_strategy_-_the_way_forward.pdf>

The first EU Roma Week took place in 2016 and was organised by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Brussels and a number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), on the occasion of 8 April -

International Roma Day. The main achievement of the EU Roma Week is to have kept Roma inclusion on the

agenda of both EP and EC. It has been an annual hub of networking and awareness-raising between politicians,

policymakers, experts and activists. Since 2017 the initiative has enjoyed the patronage of Vera Jourová, the

Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality (DG JUST), together with the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR).

European Parliament addressing root causes of anti-Roma racism

Violeta Naydenova and Martina Matarazzo, 2019. (Naydenova - Senior Policy Analyst at the Open Society European Policy Institute. She has principal responsibility for tracking, analyzing, and devising strategies to influence how the European Union develops policies on Roma, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination. Matarazzo - Independent Consultant on Human rights and migration in the EU.) “Post-2020 EU Roma Strategy: The way forward” 30 May 2019. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/post_2020_eu_roma_strategy_-_the_way_forward.pdf>

Over the years, the European Parliament (EP) has passed many resolutions addressing the Roma population. These have boosted awareness of the topic among Brussels and national policymakers. As of 2011, the EP adopted four resolutions emphasising antigypsyism: • The Resolution of March 2011 on the ‘EU strategy on Roma inclusion’ called on the EC and member states to create a concrete strategy and policies targeting the Roma population in Europe. • The Resolution in 2015, ‘International Roma Day – anti-Gypsyism in Europe and EU recognition of the memorial day of the Roma genocide during WWII’. • The Resolution in 2017 ‘On fundamental rights aspects in Roma integration in the EU: fighting antiGypsyism’ is the most comprehensive resolution and was proposed by MEP Soraya Post. It called for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and asked the EC to focus on antigypsyism in the post2020 EU Framework, in addition to social inclusion. The latest resolution, from February 2019: ‘On the need for a strengthened post-2020 Strategic EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies and stepping up the fight against antiGypsyism’.

Infringement proceedings against discriminators

Violeta Naydenova and Martina Matarazzo, 2019. (Naydenova - Senior Policy Analyst at the Open Society European Policy Institute. She has principal responsibility for tracking, analyzing, and devising strategies to influence how the European Union develops policies on Roma, social inclusion, and antidiscrimination. Matarazzo - Independent Consultant on Human rights and migration in the EU.) “Post-2020 EU Roma Strategy: The way forward” 30 May 2019. <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/post_2020_eu_roma_strategy_-_the_way_forward.pdf>

The EC has launched three infringement proceedings on Roma school discrimination against three member

states - the Czech Republic in 2014, Slovakia in 2015 and Hungary in 2016. This is a turning point for the EC in regard to justice and rule of law in monitoring member states’ implementation of the Racial Equality

Directive. Another crucial step is that following the proceedings the EC began ‘fact-finding missions’, visiting

member states and checking the situation of Roma population on the ground. Such meetings are periodically

carried out in the three EU countries mentioned above.

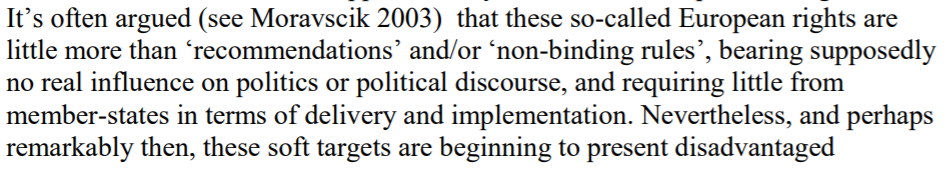
Multiple efforts to fight discrimination and promote Roma culture are underway

European Commission, 2019. (Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council) “Report on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies – 2019” 5th of September, 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0406&from=FR>

Antidiscrimination measures most reported by Member States include: fighting antigypsyism by awareness raising on the benefits of Roma inclusion; awareness raising about diversity; and combatting anti-Roma rhetoric and hate speech (10-12MS). Few Member States invest in measures that seek to protect Roma women and children by fighting multiple discrimination, (domestic) violence, or underage and forced marriages (2-4 MS). Only 4 Member States report investing in measures to ensure the effective enforcement of the Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC). Even fewer refer to local or regional desegregation measures (3MS), or fighting trafficking in human beings (2MS). Only one Member State reported measures to prevent unlawful evictions or begging with children; and to promote cross-border cooperation. What about the substantive focus of the measures? Here we find that Member States most often invest in promoting Roma culture and heritage as a way to raise awareness and fight antigypsyism indirectly among the general public (22%). Somewhat fewer measures target awareness raising to directly fight discrimination and intolerance (18%). Other measures focus on capacity development of institutions (15%), Roma civil society (12%) and human rights monitoring mechanisms (11%). Key areas that received less focus were the provision of legal support, the empowerment of Roma women and desegregation (5-6%). Only 16% of reported antidiscrimination measures targeted explicitly Roma youth, and 10% targeted Roma women.

“Non-binding” European rights are effective: They’re giving Roma real opportunities and empowerment

Neil Cruickshank, Contextually Dated 2010. (Assistant professor in Department of Political Science, Algoma University.) “NEW PERSPECTIVES ON EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP: ROMA AND MINORITY RIGHTS” No date given, but references material written in Oct 2010. <http://aei.pitt.edu/52648/1/CRUICKSHANK.pdf>





Multiple measures in place among EU Member States to promote Roma education

European Commission, 2019. (Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council) “Report on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies – 2019” 5th of September, 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0406&from=FR> (brackets added)

Most Member States (MS) invest in measures to reduce early school-leaving (18 MS). The next most frequently used measures include: considering the needs of individual pupils in cooperation with their families (14MS); increasing the access to, and quality of, early childhood education and care (13 MS); and encouraging Roma participation in – and completion of – secondary and tertiary education (11MS). Efforts are also made to fight school segregation; use inclusive teaching methods; and develop skills adapted to labour market needs (12 MS each). What about the substantive focus of the measures beyond the above goals? Here we find that Member States most often opt for measures to improve educational attainment: fighting drop-out; encouraging transition to – and completion of – secondary and tertiary education; or providing support to compensate for educational gaps, or material disadvantage. Taken together these types of measures account for 36% of all education measures. Other significant groups of measures focus on: the transition from education to employment by supporting vocational education; career development and lifelong learning; and capacity development of professionals (9-11%). Less widespread measures focus on integrated inclusion interventions and introducing Roma history and culture in the curricula (6-6%). The most widespread achievement mentioned by NRCPs [National Roma Contact Points] in the area of education is mediation. Other achievements include: development of kindergarten capacities; improved support to fighting and monitoring early school-leaving; and including Roma inclusion and non-discrimination related topics in teacher training or national curricula.

Countries already removing labor barriers for Roma

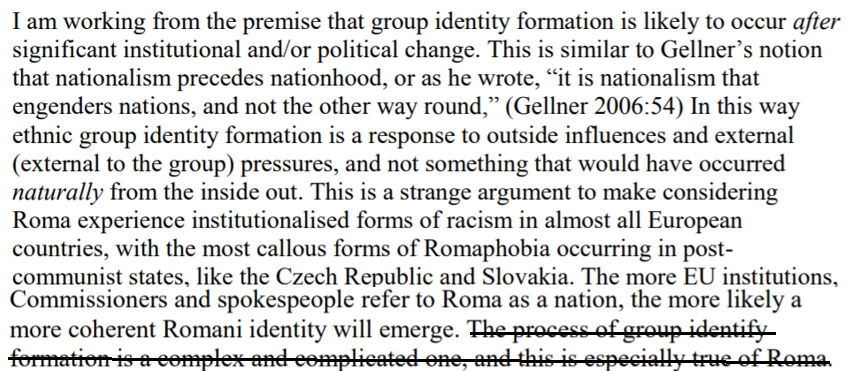
European Commission, 2019. (Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council) “Report on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies – 2019” 5th of September, 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0406&from=FR> (Brackets added)

The two largest groups of measures implemented by most Member States aim at removing barriers to the labour market (15MS [Member States]) and individualised support for job-seekers (13 MS). Fewer, but still significant number of countries invest in vocational training (9MS), lifelong learning and skill development (10MS) and self-employment and entrepreneurship (8MS). The growing rates of Roma youth not in education, employment or training would certainly require even more efforts in supporting a first work experience (10MS). Two other areas that should be prioritised are: safeguards and personalised services to ensure that mainstream public employment services effectively reach out to disadvantaged Roma job-seekers; and positive action to promote Roma employment in the civil service. What about the substantive focus of the measures? Here we find that Member States most often opt for individually oriented forms of support, such as employment subsidisation, other forms of cost sharing, career-development support (mentoring, coaching) and vocational training (altogether 35% of all measures).

MINOR REPAIR

Use “Nation” Rhetoric about Roma

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Backup: EU citizenship won’t solve. Roma really need a National Identity to bring political clout

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A close up of a newspaper

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SOLVENCY

1. Racism Blocks Change.

No change can take place with distrust between Roma and mainstream society.

Athéna Tacet, 2015, updated 2016. (Tacet is a French/ Cypriot visual journalist and international reporter specializing in geopolitics and human rights.) “Integrating Roma Into Europe’s Future: Change Must Come From Within” 06/24/2015. Updated Jun 23, 2016 <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/integrating-roma-into-eur_b_7643810?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlIeia1BJvMdTFcwTnY94O705FLOzg7m3HeRpzpwy3VZzZCF92hZ-LOymfcEO8iG5Czq-oF0quVTPiSLL7YJunVxOHkDMfW9V1_qNxJlNDC62yTwZduHAikUKz53eRVIH27NFtR0VpQ6CBroxT7L58SW2QU0avSk50FB70g_7ns>

Before any discussion can take place, it is important to understand that stigmatization dramatically impairs the desired goals of Roma inclusion measures. More often than not, it is not condemned by national governments and remains a critical barrier to progress. Stereotyping is evident as 85 percent of Italians and 66 percent of French express negative views of Roma. No anti-discrimination and social inclusion policy can take place in an environment of distrust between Roma and mainstream society. In this vein, prohibition of any discrimination targeted towards the Roma is crucial for the creation of solid grounds for a constructive dialogue between national governments and Romani NGOs. Here, a particular emphasis should be put on the necessity for the Roma to take part in the decision-making processes that directly affect them.

Barriers to employment are attitudes, not citizenship. Can’t solve lack of trust by giving out a citizenship

European Commission, 2019. (Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council) “Report on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies – 2019” 5th of September, 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0406&from=FR> (Brackets added)

The two largest groups of measures implemented by most Member States aim at removing barriers to the labour market (15MS [Member States]) and individualised support for job-seekers (13 MS). Fewer, but still significant number of countries invest in vocational training (9MS), lifelong learning and skill development (10MS) and self-employment and entrepreneurship (8MS). The growing rates of Roma youth not in education, employment or training would certainly require even more efforts in supporting a first work experience (10MS). Two other areas that should be prioritised are: safeguards and personalised services to ensure that mainstream public employment services effectively reach out to disadvantaged Roma job-seekers; and positive action to promote Roma employment in the civil service. What about the substantive focus of the measures? Here we find that Member States most often opt for individually oriented forms of support, such as employment subsidisation, other forms of cost sharing, career-development support (mentoring, coaching) and vocational training (altogether 35% of all measures). More general measures to promote social inclusion, community development, adult qualification and catch-up education make up 8-9% of the measures. Only one fifth of the measures target young people, which is clearly insufficient, given the challenges of Roma youth in employment. In their reporting on 2017, several NRCPs referred to the positive impact of economic growth on the prospects for Roma employment. But even more NRCPs referred to targeted measures, such as regional employment programmes (career-counselling, vocational or on-the-job training and job matching tailored to Roma or vulnerable job-seekers). Such measures are even more effective when Roma are involved as mediators, social workers, or other service providers. NRCPs [National Roma Contact Points] emphasise three main types of challenges: capacity of implementing structures; discrimination against Roma; and attitudes and trust of Roma themselves.

Discrimination, gender roles, and limited network of Roma hold them back.

European Commission, 2019. (Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council) “Report on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies – 2019” 5th of September, 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0406&from=FR>

Ensuring effective transition from education to the open labour market, tackling discrimination by employers, and ensuring meeting of demand for labour with supply (especially among Roma youth not in education, employment and training) appear to be the most critical points in employment. In order to reduce the gender gap in employment and the rate of Roma youth not in education, employment or training it is essential to incentivise and cooperate closely with private employers and to explicitly target Roma youth and women under mainstream policies (rather than creating parallel employment structures). Improving Roma employability should also include development of IT and foreign language skills. To ensure employment, however, other barriers also need to be addressed, in particular discrimination by employers, limited social network of Roma job-seekers or traditional gender roles in Roma communities. A combination of training, supported internships and antidiscrimination measures targeting employers can play an important role.

Tackling discrimination and racism only way to create long-term change

European Commission, 2019. (Communication From The Commission To The European Parliament And The Council) “Report on the implementation of national Roma integration strategies – 2019” 5 Sept 2019. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0406&from=FR>

Experience with Roma inclusion actions shows that long-term change in any of the policy areas requires tackling antigypsyism and discrimination towards Roma, and building trust between Roma and non-Roma communities. To succeed Roma inclusion actions in all policy areas must be linked to common values and include awareness raising among the general public. To fight stereotypes, hate speech, and hate crime it is necessary to build positive narratives on Roma among mainstream society and strengthen Roma identity, via specific targeted measures to fight antigypsyism and promote recognition of Roma history (including the Holocaust). The most successful actions do not just align with, but rather transform mainstream structures and policies by fighting prejudices and stereotypes and building a positive image of Roma among policy-makers and other stakeholders.

Mainstream society, not government, the real obstacle to Roma. Example: Schools

Athéna Tacet, 2015, updated 2016. (French/ Cypriot visual journalist and international reporter specializing in geopolitics and human rights.) “Integrating Roma Into Europe’s Future: Change Must Come From Within” 06/24/2015. Updated Jun 23, 2016 <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/integrating-roma-into-eur_b_7643810?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlIeia1BJvMdTFcwTnY94O705FLOzg7m3HeRpzpwy3VZzZCF92hZ-LOymfcEO8iG5Czq-oF0quVTPiSLL7YJunVxOHkDMfW9V1_qNxJlNDC62yTwZduHAikUKz53eRVIH27NFtR0VpQ6CBroxT7L58SW2QU0avSk50FB70g_7ns>

The high number of Roma children attending special schools for mentally disabled children in countries like Hungary, Latvia, Czech Republic and Romania - to name but a few - is a clear violation of the EU’s Race Equality Directive. In Czech Republic and Slovakia, more than 20 percent of Roma children aged 15 and younger attend those special schools, an alarming figure denounced by the EU.

School segregation

Athéna Tacet, 2015, updated 2016. (French/ Cypriot visual journalist and international reporter specializing in geopolitics and human rights.) “Integrating Roma Into Europe’s Future: Change Must Come From Within” 06/24/2015. Updated Jun 23, 2016 <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/integrating-roma-into-eur_b_7643810?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlIeia1BJvMdTFcwTnY94O705FLOzg7m3HeRpzpwy3VZzZCF92hZ-LOymfcEO8iG5Czq-oF0quVTPiSLL7YJunVxOHkDMfW9V1_qNxJlNDC62yTwZduHAikUKz53eRVIH27NFtR0VpQ6CBroxT7L58SW2QU0avSk50FB70g_7ns>

A second barrier to progress is persistent segregation at school. Discrimination starts at an early age and the segregation of Roma children remains one of the most prevalent indications of discrimination against the community.

Roma education key to successful inclusion

Athéna Tacet, 2015, updated 2016. (French/ Cypriot visual journalist and international reporter specializing in geopolitics and human rights.) “Integrating Roma Into Europe’s Future: Change Must Come From Within” 06/24/2015. Updated Jun 23, 2016 <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/integrating-roma-into-eur_b_7643810?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlIeia1BJvMdTFcwTnY94O705FLOzg7m3HeRpzpwy3VZzZCF92hZ-LOymfcEO8iG5Czq-oF0quVTPiSLL7YJunVxOHkDMfW9V1_qNxJlNDC62yTwZduHAikUKz53eRVIH27NFtR0VpQ6CBroxT7L58SW2QU0avSk50FB70g_7ns>

Marginalized and segregated from mainstream education, Romani children receive an inferior level of education and fewer opportunities for the future. For a successful social inclusion of Roma into the mainstream community to occur, fostering equal treatment for Roma and non-Roma children in schools is paramount.

Mainstream society, not government, the real obstacle. Example: Employment

Athéna Tacet, 2015, updated 2016. (French/ Cypriot visual journalist and international reporter specializing in geopolitics and human rights.) “Integrating Roma Into Europe’s Future: Change Must Come From Within” 06/24/2015. Updated Jun 23, 2016 <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/integrating-roma-into-eur_b_7643810?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlIeia1BJvMdTFcwTnY94O705FLOzg7m3HeRpzpwy3VZzZCF92hZ-LOymfcEO8iG5Czq-oF0quVTPiSLL7YJunVxOHkDMfW9V1_qNxJlNDC62yTwZduHAikUKz53eRVIH27NFtR0VpQ6CBroxT7L58SW2QU0avSk50FB70g_7ns>

In addition to segregation at school, Roma face discrimination in all other areas of society, including freedom of movement within the EU, access to housing and healthcare and job opportunities. In Czech Republic, 79 percent of Roma face discrimination when looking for employment. This multifaceted discrimination represents a significant structural obstacle to the community’s full participation in society.

Integrating Roma into workforce would reduce racism

Athéna Tacet, 2015, updated 2016. (French/ Cypriot visual journalist and international reporter specializing in geopolitics and human rights.) “Integrating Roma Into Europe’s Future: Change Must Come From Within” 06/24/2015. Updated Jun 23, 2016 <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/integrating-roma-into-eur_b_7643810?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuYmluZy5jb20v&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAABlIeia1BJvMdTFcwTnY94O705FLOzg7m3HeRpzpwy3VZzZCF92hZ-LOymfcEO8iG5Czq-oF0quVTPiSLL7YJunVxOHkDMfW9V1_qNxJlNDC62yTwZduHAikUKz53eRVIH27NFtR0VpQ6CBroxT7L58SW2QU0avSk50FB70g_7ns>

With this in mind, allowing Roma people to contribute to the economic development and prosperity of the communities that they are part of could in turn foster a more tolerant climate with greater openness and social cohesion.

Anti-Gypsyism is rampant in European institutions

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

We, who claim to be most concerned about and committed to inclusion, need to change the way we work. This starts with some hard truths about the real obstacles to inclusion. Anti-Gypsyism, as a form of exclusion, is not haphazard. It is embedded in our domestic institutions and structures. It runs through public offices, schools, hospitals, the labor market, the welfare system, police, and elections. A Roma child denied schooling with everyone else is not the result of one rogue, racist teacher—a whole system, built and entrenched over time, has led to this.

Roma power only way to build trust in institutions

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Only when the excluded and the exploited are a constituent part of setting priorities for public institutions and funds will we experience a change in the way schools educate, hospitals cure, police protect, the economy works, and elections give free voice. Only then will we have trust in our public institutions.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Violence against Roma

Link: Helping Roma without addressing racism only leads to more backlash

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

Another influence was the financial crisis, which brought with it anger and economic anxiety. Against this backdrop, a backlash ensued against governments and the EU committing millions of euros “for Roma.” Opportunistic politicians quickly realized the potential of empty slogans like “Gypsy criminality,” “Roma privilege,” and “unwillingness to integrate” to gain quick and cheap votes. Others realized they risked losing votes if they did anything positive for Roma.

Link: Efforts to improve Roma’s lives backfired

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The Decade of Roma Inclusion and the EU Framework for Roma Integration were two of the most significant international political developments for Roma in the last 10 years. Did they improve life for Roma in Europe? On the contrary—for many, life has gone from bad to worse.

Link: Appearing inclusive, without addressing real racism, opens door for more abuse

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

This status quo exposed by the Decade of Roma Inclusion—the international appearance of progress concealing a devastating regression at home—works well for a narrow elite. Too many politicians, civil servants, experts, staff of international organizations, donors, and local NGOs comfortably entrench themselves in the industry of report writing, conferences, and usually EU-funded projects.

Link: Roma discrimination is a good political move for getting votes

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

Indeed, last summer, the government calmed ethnic-majority protesters by demolishing hundreds of Roma houses. Today, Bulgaria and countries like it have ample funds to improve the situation of Roma—but national political elites don’t dare risk punishment at the ballot box by enacting policies favorable to Roma.

Link: Anti-Roma actions bring votes and money

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

Anti-Gypsism, as a form of exploitation, brings political power to some—anti-Roma campaigns bring in votes—and economic gain to others. Increasing the number of Roma children in schools for those living with disabilities, for instance, increases those schools’ revenues.

Impact: Riots, evictions, violence, and killings.

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

This toxic mix increased opposition to Roma children in ethnic-majority schools and Roma families living in ethnic-majority neighborhoods. Anti-Roma riots, forced evictions, violence, and killings became part of life for Roma—particularly in Hungary and Bulgaria, where the decade was born. The economic crisis catalyzed anti-Gypsyism as an effective weapon in domestic politics.

Impact: Violent backlash, and Roma are harmed

Lorenzo Tondo, 2019. (Lorenzo Tondo is a Guardian correspondent covering Italy and the migration crisis.) “Neo-fascist violence keeps Roma out of Rome neighbourhood” 3 Apr 2019. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/apr/03/neo-fascist-violence-keeps-roma-out-of-rome-neighbourhood>

Hundreds of neo-fascists, far-right activists and local residents took to the streets of a Rome suburb on Tuesday in a violent protest against 70 Roma people, including 33 children and 22 women, who were to be temporarily transferred to a reception centre in the area. Demonstrators set fire to cars and bins, destroyed food that was meant for Roma and prevented their entry into a shelter for vulnerable people.

1. Anti-EU political backlash

Link: Without addressing racism, help for Roma encourages anti-EU politics

Zeljko Jovanovic, 2015. (director of the Roma Initiatives Office.) “Why Europe’s “Roma Decade” Didn’t Lead to Inclusion” SEPTEMBER 21, 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/why-europe-s-roma-decade-didn-t-lead-inclusion>

In western EU countries, the fear of Roma immigration coupled with long-entrenched anti-Roma stereotypes fueled antimigration and anti-EU politics. Mainstream political parties, wary of far-right electoral gains, implemented a dual strategy of hardline anti-Roma politics at home, with sympathetic policy gestures internationally.

Link: Fear, anxiety and skepticism about the EU leads to the rise of populist authoritarian figures

Meagan Araki, Annie Chang, Troy Lindell, Alison Wendler 2017. (members of the “Challenges to European Unity Task Force” at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, Univ. of Washington) March 2017 CHALLENGES TO EUROPEAN UNITY: OPTIONS FOR U.S. POLICYMAKERS <https://jsis.washington.edu/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Task-Force-J-Report-2017_Lorenz.pdf>

Additionally, the complications surrounding EU accession and instability in Turkey and the Balkans present unique challenges to the dynamic of the EU. These real and perceived threats have induced fear and anxiety into the European public. As these security threats have worsened with little to no progress made, Euroscepticism has grown and enabled the populist movement. By capitalizing on this sentiment, populist parties have gained increasing support throughout Europe. Populists promise to take back power from the corrupt and inefficient political elite, and give it back to the general public. Europeans have increasingly turned to strongman figures who value strength and security over tolerance and unity.

Brink: EU on the brink of breakdown

George Soros, 2017. (Chairman of Soros Fund Management and of the Open Society Foundations, is the author of The Tragedy of the European Union: Disintegration or Revival?) “Anti-EU rhetoric is a threat to democracies” JANUARY 05, 2017 <https://www.irishexaminer.com/opinion/commentanalysis/arid-20437691.html>

I am particularly worried about the fate of the EU, which is in danger of coming under the influence of Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose concept of government is irreconcilable with that of open society. Putin, is not a passive beneficiary of recent developments; he worked hard to bring them about. He recognised the weakness of his regime: it can exploit natural resources but cannot generate economic growth. He felt threatened by “colour revolutions” in Georgia, Ukraine, and elsewhere. At first, he tried to control social media. Then, in a brilliant move, he exploited social media companies’ business model to spread misinformation and fake news, disorienting electorates and destabilising democracies. That is how he helped Trump get elected. The same is likely to happen in the European election season in 2017 in the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy. In France, the two leading contenders are close to Putin and eager to appease him. If either wins, Putin’s dominance of Europe will become a fait accompli. I hope that Europe’s leaders and citizens alike will realise that this endangers their way of life and the values on which the EU was founded. With economic growth lagging and the refugee crisis out of control, the EU is on the verge of breakdown. The EU is set to go through an experience similar to that of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

Brink & Example: Hungary now has authoritarian government, putting EU at high risk right now

Philippe Dam 2020 (master’s degree in international administration; Human Rights Watch’s advocacy director for Europe and Central Asia) 1 Apr 2020 “Hungary’s Authoritarian Takeover Puts European Union at Risk” <https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/01/hungarys-authoritarian-takeover-puts-european-union-risk>

On Monday, under the pretext of addressing the COVID-19 public health emergency, [Hungary's](https://www.hrw.org/europe/central-asia/hungary) parliament gave [green light to the Orban-led government](https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/03/23/hungarys-orban-uses-pandemic-seize-unlimited-power) to rule with unlimited power for an indefinite time. Prime Minister Viktor Orban can now suspend any existing law and implement others by decree, without parliamentary or judicial scrutiny. Elections have been suspended. The law allows for new criminal penalties of five years in prison for publishing vaguely defined “false” or “distorted” facts – another blow to media freedom in the country. With this law, Hungary becomes the first country in the European Union to virtually abolish all democratic checks-and-balances. How has it come to this? In the past [10 years](https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/05/16/wrong-direction-rights/assessing-impact-hungarys-new-constitution-and-laws), the government has spared no efforts to [curb judicial independence](https://www.hrw.org/europe/central-asia/hungary), restrict [civil society](https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/07/17/hungary-determined-silence-any-critics-left-standing) activities, and gain near full [control over the media](https://www.euronews.com/2019/06/12/don-t-be-fooled-hungary-s-government-remains-a-threat-to-european-values-view). Having repeatedly failed to appreciate the gravity of the situation, EU institutions risk making the same mistake again.

Link & Impact: Weak EU leads to rise of dictatorship and loss of freedom for millions more

Kenneth Roth 2020 (executive director of Human Rights Watch, one of the world's leading international human rights organizations; former federal prosecutor in New York; graduate of Yale Law School) 27 Apr 2020 “Stopping the Authoritarian Rot in Europe” [https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/27/stopping-authoritarian-rot-europe#](https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/27/stopping-authoritarian-rot-europe)

Rot tends to spread when it encounters no resistance. Dictator wannabes prey upon weakness. EU and member state leaders now need to ask themselves: is the EU only a trading bloc or also a club of democracies? The answer to that question used to be obvious. Sadly, it no longer is. Ten million EU citizens now live under authoritarian rule. How many millions more will have to suffer the loss of their freedoms before Europe’s leaders draw the line?

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