

Strasbourg, 25 July 2018

CAHROM (2018)11

**15th MEETING OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
ON ROMA AND TRAVELLER¹ ISSUES (CAHROM)
Athens, Greece, on 22-25 May 2018**

Abridged report for the GR-SOC of 11 September 2018

Introduction

The Ad Hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (CAHROM) held its 15th plenary meeting in Athens, Greece, on 22-25 May 2018. The meeting was chaired by Ms Tatjana Anđelić (Montenegro), and by Mr Ján Hero (Slovak Republic), Vice-Chair. The 36 member states present were represented by 19 women and 17 men, or 52.8 % and 47.2 % respectively. The agenda appears in the Appendix to this report. The list of participants and full report of the meeting is available from the Secretariat.

Items of information for the Committee of Ministers

The CAHROM,

Exchanges with Greek authorities and civil society

1) following opening remarks by Ms Theano Fotiou, the Alternate Minister of Social Solidarity, and Ms Katerina Giantsiou, the Special Secretary on Roma Inclusion, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, **held an exchange of views** with various Greek authorities, representatives of regional and local authorities and Roma civil society, covering priorities of the Greek National Strategic Plan for Roma Inclusion, such as the social solidarity income (SSI), free medical care and hot meals in kindergartens, the fight against poverty and school dropouts, the setting up of 240 community centres, housing and infrastructure projects, and a mapping and classification of 375 Roma settlements; **took note** of the coordination and supervisory work of the Special Secretariat on Roma Inclusion, the work of community centres, of the General Secretary on gender equality, of the General Secretary on human rights, of the Special Secretary on citizenship related issues and of the Greek Ombudsman on equal treatment;

¹ The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "*Gens du voyage*", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

- 2) **visited** on 25 May 2018 the municipality of Megara, its community centre and the Roma settlement in Vlychos within the Regional Unit of Western Attica and **met** with the mayor, the deputy mayor, the technical team for ongoing housing and infrastructure projects and representatives of the local Roma community; **heard** a presentation on the newly-established institutional framework on transitory relocation in Greece, which includes the development of housing complexes according to social housing principles and the improvement of hygienic and environmental conditions as a preliminary stage to the inclusion of Roma living in unacceptable conditions;
- 3) **welcomed** the positive developments taking place in Greece at policy, legislative and project levels and **took note** of the general support from the Roma civil society as regards these developments;
- 4) **took note**, following a presentation by the representative of the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece (KEDE) and the Spokesperson on Roma and Traveller Issues of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, of the setting up of an inter-municipal Roma network comprising 24 Greek municipalities which will act as a national interlocutor for the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion; **took note** that 16 of these municipalities signed on 12 April 2018 the Declaration against anti-Gypsyism, which has received more than 100 signatures so far;

Recent developments at national and international levels

- 5) **took note** of the current financial situation of the Council of Europe and potential impact on the work of CAHROM;
- 6) **took note** of developments concerning the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC), including the Committee of Ministers' decision to carry out an evaluation of the work of ERIAC in 2018; supported a request to see ERIAC more active in the Western Balkans; **agreed** to invite ERIAC's Executive Director to its next meeting for an exchange of views;
- 7) **took note** of recent developments and reports presented by the FRA, the OHCHR and the European Commission (DG NEAR); **took note** of the fact that the next EU Platform for Roma Inclusion, to be held in Brussels on 8-9 October 2018, would focus on health and housing inequalities, and that the launch of the 2nd phase of the joint CoE/EC programme on Roma women's access to justice "JUSTROM2" had just taken place in Athens, Greece, on 22 May 2018;
- 8) **heard** a presentation from the representatives of the Advisory Council on Youth and the Joint Council on Youth Rapporteur on Roma Issues; **took note** of the request from the Joint Council on Youth Rapporteur on Roma Issues addressed to EU Member States to have a stronger focus on minorities at the level of the European Union, recalling the relevance of the European citizens "Minority SafePack Initiative" to provide a better future for the national minorities and language communities of Europe;
- 9) **took note** of the new Instruction of the French Government to give a new impetus to the resorption of illegal encampments and shanty towns, and of various innovative aspects of the revised Slovenian National Roma Integration Strategy in the fields of education, housing, social integration and employment; **took note** of written information provided on recent developments submitted by Norway and the Russian Federation;
- 10) **took note** of recent developments in the Czech Republic, namely the purchase by the Czech Government of the pig farm in Lety; **took note** of OSCE-ODIHR's efforts in teaching and informing about the Roma Holocaust, including through reports, an ODIHR dedicated web page, and the joint CoE/ODIHR website on the Roma and Sinti genocide;

- 11) **heard** a presentation from Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Faith, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, United Kingdom, on disparities experienced by Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in England;
- 12) **heard** a presentation by Dr Franz Salm-Reifferscheidt, Ambassador at large for the Roma people of the Sovereign Order of Malta, about projects conducted in eight member states (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Hungary, Romania, the Slovak Republic and Ukraine), including *inter alia* sanitary facilities, ambulances, kindergartens, tutorials, parental/mother consulting, apprenticeship, music schools, football clubs, riding lessons, summer camps, agricultural and factory projects; **took note** of the Order of Malta's willingness to develop similar projects in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia; **took note** of the interest expressed by the President of the Greek Roma Women's Association to see the Sovereign Order of Malta become also active in Greece;
- 13) **held a tour de table** with representatives from Austria, Croatia, Finland, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, as well as from the OSCE-ODIHR, responding to the open question from Germany: "*Which member states collect data specifically on antigypsyist (antiziganist) crimes? How is this data collected and what have their experiences in collecting this data been like?*"; and **fixed** 12 June 2018 as the deadline for submitting written information to the Secretariat that would then be circulated to the CAHROM member on behalf of Germany;
- 14) **took note** of the mapping and classification of Roma settlements and camps in several member states, whilst noting that a limited version or such a mapping exists in others (see full meeting report); **agreed** to keep this item on the agenda of its next meeting with a focus on the monitoring and results of social mapping;
- 15) **heard** a presentation from Ms Irene Pfsidou from the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) on initiatives undertaken following on from the Council of Europe's 4th Dialogue with Roma and Traveller civil society on "Transition from Education to Employment" (Strasbourg, September 2017); **noted** that CAHROM members could communicate questions or experiences through the CEDEFOP online platform; **noted** that a call to submit good practices on vocational and education would soon be circulated via the Secretariat;
- 16) **noted** that Croatia, under its Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, would host an International Seminar entitled "*Transition from education to employment for Roma youth*" on Brijuni island on 25-26 September 2018 which would be an opportunity to provide additional follow-up to both the 4th Dialogue with Roma and Traveller civil society and the 11th meeting of the EU Platform for Roma Inclusion from November 2017; **invited** CAHROM members and observers to indicate by the end of June 2018 to the Secretariat their interest in participating in this event;
- 17) **had an exchange** with Ms Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo, Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, on her forthcoming report on Forced Marriage in Europe, as well as with the Special Secretary on Roma Inclusion under the Greek Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Social Solidarity, and a representative of the Department of Social Protection and Fighting against Multiple Discrimination within the General Secretariat on Gender Equality of the Greek Ministry of Interior, on the situation regarding child/forced marriage in Greece; **took note** of the proposal made by Albania to further reflect on a methodology that could help member states in addressing child and forced marriages, in particular within Roma and Traveller communities; **agreed** with Albania's proposal that the Council of Europe/CAHROM could initiate guidelines/a broader campaign regarding child/early and forced marriages;

- 18) **took note** of the conclusions, recommendations and follow-up initiatives of the 6th International Roma Women's Conference on "Political participation: the case of Roma and Traveller women" (Strasbourg, 6-7 November 2017) presented by the CAHROM Gender Equality Rapporteur; **took note** of the message delivered by the Congress Spokesperson on Roma and Traveller Issues who encouraged municipalities to form structures for political participation, such as the national Roma networks set up in Greece and Ukraine, and underlined the importance for political parties of setting-up measures to encourage especially Roma and Traveller women to enter into politics;
- 19) **heard** a presentation from the Secretariat about the objectives of the 5th Council of Europe Dialogue with Roma and Traveller civil society entitled "Roma and Travellers' Political Participation as voters and candidates" that would be held in Strasbourg on 20-21 June 2018;

Work programme and working methods

- 20) **noting** that its proposed Terms of Reference for 2018-2019 include under "specific tasks" the drafting of a Committee of Ministers Recommendation on the inclusion of the teaching of Roma history, including the Roma Holocaust, in textbooks and school curricula, **considered** that the CAHROM thematic report on this topic, as well as other existing relevant Council of Europe, OSCE-ODIHR and IHRA texts and materials, could serve as a basis for a preliminary draft; **agreed** to set up a working group of five CAHROM members (Armenia, Finland, Germany, the Slovak Republic as Vice-Chair, and Switzerland) and a consultant; **agreed** to invite Ms Mirjam Karoly, former OSCE-ODIHR CPRSI Senior Adviser and now member of the Committee on the genocide of Roma of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), to be the consultant; and **invited** OSCE-ODIHR and other interested international observers to contribute to the drafting process;
- 21) **instructed** the Secretariat to circulate the updated guidelines for CAHROM rapporteurs (document CAHROM (2018)3) to the entire committee for written endorsement by 12 June 2018;

Thematic reports

- 22) **examined and endorsed** the CAHROM thematic report on the teaching of Roma history, including the Roma Holocaust, in textbooks and school curricula following a visit held in Košice, Slovak Republic, on 7-9 November 2017 (document CAHROM(2017)32), the report of the study visit to the UK Forced Marriage Unit on child and forced marriages within Roma and Traveller communities held in London on 7-8 December 2017 (document CAHROM (2017)33), as well as the conclusions of the thematic report on Roma and Travellers' Access to justice with a focus on women following a visit held in Helsinki, Finland, on 21-23 March 2018 (document CAHROM (2018)5);
- 23) **discussed follow-up** to the thematic report on addressing and combating trafficking of human beings within Roma communities, with a focus on street children and prostitution (document CAHROM (2015)7) following the visit to Tirana, Albania, in March 2015, as well as to the thematic report on child/early and forced marriages within Roma communities in the context of promoting gender equality (document CAHROM (2015)8) following the visit to Bucharest, Romania, in April 2015;
- 24) **agreed** that, following its endorsement by the thematic group, the full report of the thematic visit to Finland on access to justice would be approved by written procedure and published on the CAHROM website, and that the above-mentioned report on addressing and combating trafficking of human beings within Roma communities, with a focus on street children and prostitution, would be updated with new developments through an appendix and recirculated to the CAHROM for written endorsement and publication on the CAHROM website;

Thematic visits

- 25) **took note** of an oral summary on the thematic visit on enhancing the effective realisation of Roma childrens' compulsory school education as the most efficient tool towards the mid-term improvement of the situation of Roma communities, and the added value of ensuring access to vocational education for Roma youth, held in Chişinău and Vulcăneşti, Republic of Moldova, on 24-26 April 2018;
- 26) **noted** that a thematic visit on Roma access to employment, with a focus on Roma women and youth, would be held in Enschede and Tilburg, the Netherlands, on 12-14 June 2018, and that Finland, Greece, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Spain and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", as well as representatives of the Youth Department, the ROMACT project team and the European Commission (DG NEAR) would participate;
- 27) **noted** that a thematic visit on Roma integration, policy development and coordination practices in countries with a small Roma population would be held in Rīga, Jelgava and Jūrmala, Latvia, on 3-5 October 2018, and that Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Lithuania, Norway and Slovenia, as well as ECMI, would participate;
- 28) **noted** that a thematic visit on solving the lack of identity documents and statelessness would be held in Tirana, Albania, on 14-16 November 2018, and that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Ukraine, as well as representatives of ECMI and the EU Delegation in Albania, would participate;
- 29) **noted** that a thematic visit on governmental support for the promotion of Romani arts and culture and Holocaust remembrance, as well as related international cooperation, would be held in Berlin, Germany, in early 2019; **instructed** its Bureau to proceed with the selection of the partner countries among those having expressed interest (Austria, Belgium, Latvia, the Republic of Moldova, Norway, the Slovak Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom), giving priority to countries that have participated less in thematic visits so far, and taking into consideration their motivation and experience related to the topic;
- 30) **noted** that a thematic visit on the promotion of Romani culture(s) and the impact of traditions in the development and implementation of national Roma integration policies, including how to address possible opposition between customary law and state legislation, would be held in the Russian Federation in June 2019, and that Croatia, Lithuania, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", as well as ECMI, would participate;
- 31) **took note** of new proposals for future thematic visits, namely on national experiences of social and/or geographical mapping of Roma communities and their concrete impact on policy developments proposed by "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"; on health-related issues including reproductive health and vaccination proposed by Finland and supported by Spain; on Roma migrants and refugees proposed by the Republic of Moldova; on how to stimulate Roma participation in governmental institutions proposed by the Republic of Moldova and supported by ECMI; on Roma self-reliability and responsibility to participate in society as any other citizens proposed by the Netherlands;

Arrangements for the next meetings

- 32) **agreed** to hold its 16th plenary meeting in Strasbourg from 16 to 19 October 2018;
- 33) **agreed** the agenda of its next meeting (see full meeting report);

- 34) **thanked** the French authorities for their invitation to host one of the 2019 CAHROM plenary meetings in Toulouse, under the French Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers;
- 35) **took note** of the draft report circulated by the Secretariat and **agreed** to adopt the final report by written procedure by 6 June 2018.

Appendix: Agenda of the 15th CAHROM meeting, Athens, Greece, 22-25 May 2018

Tuesday, 22 May 2018

I. OPENING OF THE 15th CAHROM MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

- 1.1. Opening of the CAHROM meeting and adoption of the agenda
- 1.2. Opening remarks by the hosting authorities

II. EXCHANGE WITH GREEK AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

- 2.1 Exchange with the Greek Government on the Greek National Strategic Plan for Roma Inclusion
- 2.2 Exchange with Greek Roma civil society
- 2.3. Exchange with the Central Union of Municipalities of Greece

III. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AT NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS AND OPEN QUESTIONS TO CAHROM MEMBERS, PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

- 3.1 Recent developments at national and international levels
- 3.2 Open questions

Wednesday, 23 May 2018

IV. EXAMINATION OF CAHROM THEMATIC REPORTS (PARALLEL WORKING SESSIONS)

V. RAPORTEURS' FEEDBACK ON PARALLEL WORKING GROUPS

VI. CAHROM WORKING METHODS AND PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES

- 6.1 Setting-up a CAHROM drafting group on a proposed CM recommendation on the inclusion of the teaching of Roma history, including Roma Holocaust, in textbooks and school curricula
- 6.2 Exchange with the Sovereign Order of Malta
- 6.3 CAHROM thematic groups and visits 2018-2019
- 6.4 Revised guidelines for CAHROM rapporteurs

Thursday, 24 May 2018

VII. OVERVIEW OF GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIAL MAPPING OF ROMA AND TRAVELLER COMMUNITIES IN MEMBER STATES

VIII. ROMA WOMEN, CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- 8.1 Transition from education to employment
- 8.2 Child/early and forced marriages
- 8.3 Political participation

XI. ARRANGEMENTS/PROPOSALS FOR THE AGENDA OF THE NEXT PLENARY MEETING

X. ADOPTION OF THE LIST OF DECISIONS

Friday, 25 May 2018

FIELD VISIT TO MEGARA MUNICIPALITY AND THE ROMA SETTLEMENT OF VLYCHOS