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**13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Europe**  
**Dialogue with Roma and Traveller civil society**  
**on “Defending the rights of Roma and Traveller children”**  
**Strasbourg, 10-11 May 2022**

## **Conclusions**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Dialogue with the Roma and Traveller civil society addressed the rights of the child as a specific category of human rights, thus responding to the fact that many children in Europe, including Roma and Traveller children, are in particularly vulnerable situations today, including due to crisis and emergency situations – economic hardship, the global pandemic and the Russian invasion to Ukraine. Children’s rights and rule of law-based approaches must be assured by governments, by the Council of Europe, and by Roma and Traveller civil society organisations.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Europe Dialogue with Roma and Traveller civil society on the topic of defending the rights of Roma and Traveller children came at a crucial time. It is imperative that children’s rights and rule of law-based approaches are strengthened by the Council of Europe, by its member States and by the Roma and Traveller civil society. On top of the longstanding discrimination and human rights violations that Roma children in Ukraine were facing, their lives are now being shattered by war.

The meeting brought together representatives of different Roma and Traveller civil society organisations and different services of the Council of Europe Secretariat and member State authorities currently working for the protection and promotion of the rights of Roma and Traveller children. It aimed at developing co-operation between these organisations and the Council of Europe Secretariat to promote active measures at member State level to safeguard and develop Roma and Traveller children’s access to rights, and to promote children’s active participation in decision-making. The meeting took stock of current violations of the rights of Roma and Traveller children in member States and of states’ responses to these infringements. It provided an overview of the new Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) and relevant legal instruments, policies and practices to support the full realisation of the rights of Roma and Traveller children at European and national level. The meeting was also an occasion to share examples of good practice and children’s rights initiatives implemented by member States’ governments, municipalities and civil society organisations.

### **I. Roma and Traveller Children in the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) - Children’s rights in action: from continuous implementation to joint innovation**

The new Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) takes into account the COVID-19 pandemic and tries to draw first lessons from it, even in the development of strategic objectives. Amongst ongoing activities that are still relevant and need to be continued from the previous Strategy, the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee on the Rights of the Child (CDENF) will pursue its standard setting activities regarding:

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- the best interest of the child (BIC) in parental separation and care proceedings.
- the reporting mechanisms for professionals on violence against children.

In terms of new activities to be initiated during the first biennium, the CDENF will amongst others focus on:

- Review of CM/Rec (2019)11 on effective guardianship of unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration.
- Comprehensive and age-appropriate sexuality education as a means of preventing violence, including online violence.
- Review of policy guidelines on integrated national strategies against violence.

The new Strategy will continue to look for synergies related to priorities and actions proposed by other Council of Europe Strategies and Action Plans such as the Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025).

Specific references to Roma and Traveller children in the new Strategy are related to the following areas: freedom from violence for all children; equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children; access to and safe use of technologies for all children; child-friendly justice for all children; giving a voice to every child; children in crisis and emergency situations.

The Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) now includes a new priority area on children's rights in crisis and emergency situations. This aims to cover issues such as access to a healthy environment and taking action to fight climate change, the right to protection in conflict zones, migration or forced displacement or the impact of a public health crisis on the rights of the child. Given the current tragical context in Ukraine, it will now be important to also focus on how children's rights are affected during armed conflicts and how to mitigate the devastating effects of war on children in the region.

The newly adopted Council of Europe's Strategy for the Rights of the Child will also look at situations of vulnerability of children including children living in difficult economic situations or in poverty, child victims of trafficking, children living and/or working on the streets. The proportion of children at risk of poverty and excluded from social services or equal access to education remains unacceptably higher among Roma and Travellers.

## **II. Anti-discrimination approach and responses to current violations of Roma children's rights in Ukraine and emerging concerns regarding Ukrainian Roma refugees in different member States**

The war is devastating for all inhabitants of Ukraine, but especially for vulnerable groups such as children, women, elderly persons, or persons with disabilities. Children affected by the conflict live through severe trauma that may interfere with their ability to live a normal life.

The main international instruments that contain provisions for the protection of children in situations of armed conflict were mentioned during the meeting: the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol, more than 25 articles in the (1949) Geneva Conventions and their (1977) Protocols,

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Security Council Resolution 1261 (1999), ILO Convention 182, or the Rome Statute. Children are protected as persons not taking part in the hostilities and as members of a vulnerable group.

The current conflict further proved the importance of strengthening and supporting civil society. With the evacuation of most international organisations and missions, the world heavily relies on first-hand information coming from NGOs and activists who remained in Ukraine, carrying out essential services of co-ordinating and delivering aid, assisting vulnerable people, documenting human rights and humanitarian law violations, reporting about the situation via social and traditional media on a regular basis and often putting their own lives at risk. Without the vital work of these local NGOs and networks, both in Ukraine and in destination countries, it would be enormously difficult to remain updated and support Ukrainians within and outside of Ukraine. Roma rights advocacy NGOs, both local and international, have played a critical role in monitoring and reporting on the specific harm suffered by Roma individuals and children. They will keep on playing an essential function in building a bridge between international organisations and Roma communities and can have an important contribution to hold the perpetrators accountable.

A brief presentation of the mandate and work of the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights was made. A significant part of the mandate is to respond to urgent emerging human rights issues, as well as structural problems in member States. This is done by conducting country visits and providing recommendations to member States and working closely with national human rights institutions and civil society organisations. Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the Commissioner has focused on responses to human rights challenges as a result of the armed conflict, in Ukraine and outside of Ukraine. The Commissioner has also carried out monitoring missions in countries receiving refugees from Ukraine (Moldova, Romania, Poland, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic), as well as in Ukraine. The war has affected human rights of all people in Ukraine, but its effects are disproportionate on people who are already at heightened risks of vulnerability. The Commissioner is particularly concerned about the risks of human trafficking, exploitation or sexual abuse particularly of displaced women and children. Roma living in Ukraine who are stateless or who lack documentation must be protected from trafficking. Professionals should be present at the borders, to ensure that vulnerability screenings are conducted, with particular respect to children.

The monitoring missions revealed that Roma families, almost exclusively consisting of Roma women and children, are facing discrimination in the provision of humanitarian aid or transportation. Concerns have been raised in respect of availability of adequate shelter for large Roma families. Many of the people the Commissioner has met during the monitoring missions are children who have suffered deep trauma and who currently need and will continue needing medical care and psycho-social assistance. The Commissioner has highlighted the need to scale up the humanitarian response and make sure that it reaches all those who need it.

The Council of Europe Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees (SRSG) conducts fact-finding missions, which is different from monitoring missions. The fact-finding missions are conducted by invitation from member States, to constructively assess the situation and then offer targeted support and assistance from the Council of Europe to those member States.

After the war in Ukraine started, the Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees gathered its focal points and also co-ordinated with all relevant entities of the Council of Europe to assess the situation. As a follow-up, a series of fact-finding missions have been conducted. The ones which already took place are in the Slovak and Czech Republic. Particularly in the Czech Republic, the quality of the organisation to receive Ukrainian refugees, who are white and come in small families is high, as opposed to discriminatory attitudes faced by Roma fleeing the war. Following the fact-finding missions and co-ordination with the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, the SRSG on migration and refugees will propose concrete support to member States.

### **III. Sharing examples of good practice and children's rights initiatives implemented by member States' governments, municipalities and civil society organisations**

During the meeting, examples of good practice of children's rights initiatives were shared, which have been implemented by member States' governments, municipalities and civil society organisations. An example was the thematic visit conducted in October 2022 by the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM) and hosted by the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The partner countries for this thematic visit were Belgium, Finland, France and Greece. The purpose of the visit was to focus on the situation of the vulnerable Roma children who are occasionally or consistently resorting to begging, focusing on measures put in place, including legislation and policies to protect and support them. Identifying children begging because of extreme precarity and poverty of their families as opposed to child victims of forced begging proved to be one the most critical challenges. Another serious challenge is the absence of specialised shelters for child victims of trafficking and/or families living on the streets.

The thematic visit concluded that there is serious prejudice among the general public and certain professionals, such as child protection professionals, or specialised police officers, regarding the Roma community, which is sometimes used as an excuse to not properly investigate potential cases of forced begging and forms of exploitation affecting the Roma community. Furthermore, it was concluded that there is a lack of institutional capacity of mediators, frontline staff, law enforcement agencies and social services and a lack of political will to help the victims. The public debate on begging is skewed politically.

Good practices on advancing Roma children's rights were also shared by the Roma Education Fund (REF). Founded in 2005, it provides grants and scholarships to entities and individuals, it influences systemic changes in education systems, fosters Roma participation and documents best practices for policy reforms and programmes. REF interventions include, among others: facilitation of access, enrolment and attendance of early childhood education and primary school service; addressing financial and transport barriers in accessing preschool and primary schools for Roma children; involvement of Roma teacher assistants; strengthening the capacity of pre-school and primary school for Roma children. To respond to the challenges and shortfalls in early childhood (ECD) and primary education, REF and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in North Macedonia have implemented a project since 2006, improving ECD outcomes and school readiness of over 4 400 Roma children aged three to six.

Another good practice shared with the participants was the Joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe INSCHOOL: Inclusive schools - making a difference for Roma children. The results of the

project's implementation in Romania have been shared, specifically on setting up support mechanisms and resources for pilot inclusive schools and on the provision of support to teachers to promote inclusion and to improve the learning outcomes of Roma children. Parents' participation in school-led activities led to acceptance and respect for diverse traditions and life experiences and positively supported education in the spirit of respecting inclusive values. It was also emphasized that the perception of school staff on "inclusive culture" is positive. The total number of cases of repeating the school year decreased and the schools in the network obtained better results in terms of the quota of students who passed the national assessment compared to previous years.

#### **IV. The work of International Organisations and Roma civil society networks to protect and promote the rights of Roma and Traveller children under crisis**

It is a matter of grave concern that the issue of Roma children in state care has not been a priority for those communicating and framing Roma inclusion priorities up to 2030. This omission is all the more striking in the wider context of the European Commission's active stance on child poverty reduction and its commitment to deinstitutionalization, the expansion of support services to prevent new entries into the public care system, with specific mention of the need to focus on children living in poverty, marginalized Roma children, and children with disabilities.

Billions of Euros have been made available by the European Commission for the 2014-2020 period to support the transition from institutional care to community-based living. Despite the undoubted progress made in reducing the number of children in state institutions in many countries, there are increasing concerns about the process itself. In Bulgaria, experts have expressed concern about the lack of co-ordination, consultation, and monitoring mechanisms at central level. On the ground, severe under-resourcing of the child protection system has led to poor quality of alternative care placements, acute staff shortages, and a high turnover of social workers who lack training and supervision. In the Czech Republic, progress on deinstitutionalisation has been stalled by political resistance from within an obsolete childcare system where, as one minister of labour has put it, "the interests of the employees prevailed over the best interests of children". A visiting delegation from the European Parliament to neighbouring Slovakia in 2020 reported a "lack of implementation of the existing good strategies and the strikingly slow speed of the deinstitutionalisation process." As Roma children are disproportionately placed in state care, the failures of deinstitutionalization policies have a disproportionate impact on Roma families.

In many countries, the structural racism that reproduces such extreme poverty and renders so many Roma families 'at risk' goes largely unquestioned, and the dysfunctional systems which put disproportionate numbers of Roma children into state care institutions go effectively unchallenged.

States and institutions must get beyond this denial of racism and put the rights and interest of the child first. They must prioritize funding for basic child welfare services on a service provision basis to ensure an adequate level of preventative work and avoid the under-financing of the regions and city districts most in need.

An update on the European Court of Human Rights judgments and on the status of execution in cases concerning the rights of Roma children to education was shared with participants.

Among the difficulties in the execution process caused by the epidemic, it was mentioned that the pandemic was often used to justify problems with implementing measures, such as gathering information related to the implementation or reporting.

## **V. Gender-sensitive approach in the promotion of the rights of Roma and Traveller children**

Trafficking in human beings is not only a serious crime, but also a gross violation of human rights and an offence of the dignity and integrity of human beings. The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is based on the recognition of trafficking as a human rights violation. Anti-trafficking policies are often gender-blind, missing to recognise that men and women, boys and girls are not exploited in the same manner and do not have the same needs of assistance as a consequence of their form of exploitation.

The Convention requires State Parties to use gender mainstreaming and a child-sensitive approach to the development and implementation of prevention policies and programmes. Furthermore, parties are required to take specific prevention measures with regard to children, notably by creating a protective environment for them.

The active inclusion of representatives from these communities is critical, not only for the identification of the problems, but also for their resolution. It is necessary to take measures directed at decreasing the risk of trafficking in human beings within the Roma communities through the application of preventive actions and the so-called multi-component approach which is directed at empowerment and increasing the employment within the Roma communities.

Although the lack of official disaggregated data according to ethnicity precludes a reliable assessment of the occurrence of human trafficking in the Roma communities, numerous reports indicate that Roma, in particular Roma women and children, are particularly vulnerable to trafficking. According to research conducted by the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and People in Need (PiN) in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, trafficking in human beings affects Roma disproportionately. There is evidence that Roma are highly vulnerable to trafficking due to structural forms of ethnic and gender discrimination, poverty and social exclusion which results in low educational achievement, high levels of unemployment, domestic violence and difficult living conditions that predominantly affect women and children. The school drop-out rate of Roma girls who are forced to marry, in many cases for a dowry, was highlighted as one of the breeding grounds of human trafficking. Treating early or forced marriages, which by their nature are child marriages, as a "cultural specificity" is wrong and needs to be addressed at all levels, from the social to the justice system.

## **VI. Fostering child and youth participation in decision making**

The "Reaching In: promoting Roma children's impactful participation in inclusive public decision making in Europe", initiative of Eurochild, University of Central Lancashire and Open Society Foundations, worked on

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enabling marginalised children to impact public decision making in Europe, particularly decisions about services – health, education and social care. Effective strategies to foster Roma children and youth participation have been shared with participants, such as: working with authorities to identify opportunities; providing funding to grassroots Roma and pro-Roma organisations; consulting children on what issues are important to them and how they want to express their views; linking these with service planning and advocacy opportunities.

The European Youth Foundation (EYF) is a fund set up in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial support to European youth activities and is part of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. It provides financial and educational support to youth NGOs from 50 countries and over 1250 youth organisations are registered. The youth sector priorities for 2022-2025 are: revitalising pluralistic democracy; young people's access to rights; living together in peaceful and inclusive societies; and youth work. The EYF is an important tool that can be used to encourage and promote Roma children and youth participation.

Young Travellers are also deeply affected by their lack of fundamental rights, such as those in accommodation. Civil society organisations are committed to progressing the implementation of the Expert Group Report on Traveller Accommodation, with state support, but the pace of progress is slow.

Civil society organisations, such as the Irish Traveller Movement, are committed to support young Travellers through dialogue fora and build their capacity through youth leadership training. Another targeted action of the Irish Traveller Movement is promoting the visibility of the Irish Traveller youth in the National Action Plan Against Racism.

Before the war, the Ukrainian NGO "ARCA" has completed research on the needs of Roma Youth in Ukraine. Research shows that youth workers have a general idea how to work with Roma children and youth from vulnerable groups. Volodymyr Yakovenko, the head of ARCA noticed that after the war there will be many new young faces due to their current involvement and to see changes, support for youth NGOs and young activists in many respects: mentoring, coordination, support programmes, salaries, etc. The needs and problems of the Roma youth must be better reflected in the action plans of the EU Roma national strategic frameworks.

«After the war, world will be different. Its future will depend on our decisions».

## **II. Recommendations**

### **I. Roma and Traveller Children in the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) - Children's rights in action: from continuous implementation to joint innovation**

1. The member States and the Council of Europe should create action plans for systematic, regular and structural co-operation with Roma civil society organisations and work towards jointly implementing projects based on what Roma people themselves find most appropriate, suitable, effective and sustainable.
2. Inter-governmental organisations, such as the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe must ensure that children's voices, including hard-to-reach Roma children's voices, are heard and considered in all relevant decision-making procedures.
3. Based on the links between the lines of action of the Strategic Action Plan on Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025) and the Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2022-2027), the Council of Europe organisation and its member States should support:
  - a. further opportunities for the participation of Roma children in European and national activities and events
  - b. further awareness-raising action aimed at fighting stereotypes and discrimination of Roma and Traveller children
  - c. access of Roma and Traveller children to new technologies
  - d. action to fight child poverty and child labour amongst Roma and Traveller children, as repeated cycles of poverty are one of the main root causes for a lack of equal opportunities for children in any context
  - e. action aimed at protecting Roma and Traveller children against particular risks, such as early or forced marriages or trafficking in human beings.

### **II. Anti-discrimination approach and responses to current violations of Roma children's rights in Ukraine and emerging concerns regarding Ukrainian Roma refugees in different member States**

1. As an immediate responsibility, humanitarian corridors must be respected so families and children can leave safely, and humanitarian aid organisations can get access to those who remain.
2. The Council of Europe organisation and its member States must engage in long-term measures required for the rehabilitation of children affected by the war in Ukraine such as:
  - a. ensuring the safe return and resettlement of displaced populations
  - b. ensuring psychosocial and physical healing of traumatised children, rehabilitation of basic educational and health services
  - c. ensuring that the truth about the victimization of children is made public; and
  - d. strengthening the normative and institutional framework.
3. Governments must incorporate the protection of children, with a special attention to the most vulnerable children, prominently in their foreign policies and they must use their collective weight and influence to deny political legitimacy, diplomatic recognition, the supply of weapons or the flow of funds to those responsible for committing atrocities and abuses against children.



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4. Member States must ensure that Ukrainian children who left Ukraine are enrolled in schools in host countries as soon as possible, following the example of many European governments, which have proven commitment and flexibility in this regard.
5. The governments of Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland, which receive the largest number of Roma refugees from Ukraine (above 50 000) should:
  - a. develop non-discrimination rules for social service workers that consider the cultural characteristics of national minorities, including Roma from Ukraine (education, language, number of people in the family)
  - b. adopt laws and policies which clearly prohibit the segregation of refugees and ensure their enforcement. States should not provide support for humanitarian actors, when there is evidence of discriminatory practices.
6. Governmental and non-governmental actors co-ordinating humanitarian aid should ensure that reading materials and essential school supplies for children are included.
7. Governments should support mobile child protection teams providing psychosocial care, mental health support, and protection services and set up child friendly spaces across the countries, for both Roma refugee children and for those who remained in Ukraine.
8. Access to schools, wherever safe and possible should be ensured, to offer a sense of normality and stability amidst an environment of violence and disruption.
9. Governmental and non-governmental actors co-ordinating humanitarian aid should deliver family hygiene kits, baby diapers, maternal health kits, disinfectants and bottled water to health and social institutions.
10. Governmental and non-governmental actors co-ordinating humanitarian aid should work with partners to provide safe drinking water supplies through water trucks and delivering bottled water.
11. Governments should launch a humanitarian cash transfer programme to support tens of thousands of the most vulnerable families with children.
12. Governments should simplify the procedure for obtaining assistance for certain categories of undocumented people who do not have a sufficient documentation.
13. Non-governmental organisations should continue to monitor human rights violations, and documenting war crimes against Roma.

### **III. Sharing examples of good practice and children's rights initiatives implemented by member States' governments, municipalities and civil society organisations**

Recommendations to member States following the thematic ADI-ROM visit on "Legislation and policies related to begging, with a special focus on children, important in combating child poverty and child trafficking":

1. Establish a clear legal definition of child trafficking and review the practice of requalifying a possible trafficking offence as a lesser offence.
2. Train prosecutors and judges on human trafficking and the rights of children participating in the criminal justice system.
3. Train specialist investigators familiar with the characteristics of child trafficking in collecting evidence, including forensic evidence to carry out preventive actions.

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4. Removing administrative obstacles and offer adapted solutions and more flexibility in the issuance of shelter, healthcare and schooling.
5. Improving bilateral co-operation between country of origin and country of temporary destination.
6. Increasing specialized accommodation facilities to meet the needs of emergency protection for children who have been exploited or are at risk of exploitation.
7. Increasing institutional capacity to provide assistance to children and develop preventive socio-economic programs for children at risk of exploitation (school attendance, etc.).
8. Build the capacity and human resources of law enforcement agencies and social services with staff who are trained to work in Roma communities and include Roma mediators in multi-disciplinary mobile teams with access to accredited interpreters to overcome language barriers if needed.
9. Establish standardised protocols involving law enforcement agencies, social services, child protection services, schools and teachers, judiciary, civil society, associations, including Roma civil society and associations and mediators to prevent begging, identify potential victims of child trafficking, process and assist child victims of trafficking.
10. Enhanced co-operation between Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior.
11. Reliable data collection to monitor anti-trafficking responses through its inclusion in the protocols and mechanisms to identify child victims of trafficking.
12. Developing a standardised training module complemented by training platforms such as the Council of Europe HELP online courses.

### **IV. The work of International Organisations and Roma civil society networks to protect and promote the rights of Roma and Traveller children in crisis**

Recommendations to member States regarding the problems in child-care systems, including on the issue of disproportionate numbers of Roma children being removed from their families:

1. Prioritise national funding for preventive social work programmes to reduce the number of Roma children in state care
2. Provide financial support to implement programmes for the return of children in state care to their families
3. Increase the number of preventive social workers, enabling improved community social work by reducing the caseload per worker. Ensure sufficient resources in the national budgets and make efforts for the maximum utilisation of the European Union funds with the aim to socially include Roma communities.

### **V. Gender-sensitive approach in the promotion of the rights of Roma and Traveller children**

For decreasing the risk of trafficking in human beings within Roma communities, member States should:

1. Address misconceptions which have prevented officials from distinguishing between Roma "traditional cultural practices" and cases of child trafficking (whether for forced begging, forced marriage or other purposes) by involving Roma cultural mediators and employing Roma staff in centres for social work and also by convening joint working groups (involving centre of social work – CSW staff and Roma community representatives) to develop specific strategies to address patterns of both forced child begging and forced child marriage that do not depend only on the criminal justice system to respond once possible cases are reported.

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2. Apply the model of Roma health mediators in all municipalities where there is a strong presence of Roma and increase the mediators' capacity through training.
3. Ensure the registration of all Roma children and their involvement in the educational and health-care systems.
4. Ensure that schools take action to reduce the number of school drop-outs and play a more substantial child protection role with respect to children who show signs of dropping out, starting full-time work before reaching the age when compulsory education ends. Preventive action in schools can include a wide range of measures to encourage Roma children to stay at school and to reduce the de facto exclusion of Roma children, for example by making it easier for children who have missed a term or even a year of compulsory education to return to school and resume their studies.
5. Provide both child protection specialists and law enforcement officials with training to enable them to identify the characteristics of forced marriage.
6. Provide training aimed at increasing the capacity of prosecutors and judges in order to achieve full application of the law concerning early marriages and pregnancies.
7. Strengthen the capacity of state-run institutions and NGOs to identify Roma children who have been trafficked, as well as others at risk of being trafficked for the purpose of labour exploitation, particularly forced begging. This could be achieved by allocating responsibility for checking on the well-being of children living in or working in the street to a specific agency (such as specialist staff in CSWs) and providing the agency concerned with adequate training and resources. It is often more appropriate for child protection specialists from CSWs or NGOs, than law enforcement officials to make initial contact with the children concerned, for example by providing them with services in the places where they beg or in a nearby drop-in centre where they are provided with a meal or snack. There is often a child protection concern (if the child is suffering from neglect) even if there is no evidence of exploitation.
8. Develop specialised programmes directed towards the Roma communities in the fields of health prevention, family planning, vocational training and inclusion in the labour market.
9. Ensure sufficient resources in the national budgets and make efforts for the maximum utilisation of the EU funds with the aim to socially include Roma communities.

### **VI. Fostering child and youth participation in decision making**

1. Governments should acknowledge the structural roots and complex impact and manifestation of antigypsyism for young people. The Council of Europe organisation and member States should support local, national and international Roma and Traveller youth groups and youth-organisations to create safe spaces that are important for the development of young people participation in society.
2. Governments should strengthen the capacity of youth organisations by enabling inclusive and impactful Roma and Traveller youth and children's participation:
  - a) Spreading information among Roma and Traveller youth and children about rights, policies, opportunities.
  - b) Creating mechanisms for Roma and Traveller youth and children for direct communication.