

## **Presentation to the Council of Ministers**

Subject: Austrian Roma Strategy;

Implementation of the EU framework for national strategies for the integration of the Roma by 2020

1. The EU framework for national strategies regarding the integration of the Roma by 2020 was adopted by the conclusions of the Council of the European Union on 19 May 2011 and approved by the European Council in its session of 23 and 24 June 2011.

Amongst other things, these conclusions require the member states of the European Union to:

- improve the social and economic situation of the Roma, especially in the areas of education, employment, housing and healthcare;
- develop national strategies for the inclusion of the Roma or integrated packages of political measures within the scope of a more broadly couched policy of social inclusion and to update their existing strategies and packages of measures, all under consideration of their particular circumstances;
- to appoint a national point of contact that should verify implementation of the national concepts for the inclusion of the Roma and to promote the exchange of proven processes for the inclusion of the Roma;
- promote the active incorporation of the entire Roma civil society and all other stakeholders – including at a regional and local level – into the strategies for promoting the inclusion of the Roma.

In all of these areas, Austria faces special challenges: the Roma in Austria are not a homogeneous, but rather a heterogeneous group and encompass not only the members of the autochthonous minority of the Roma (Roma ethnic group), but also immigrant Roma of more recent times and – in some instances – travelling communities, above all from other EU member states. They are also characterised by the different levels of education attained, professional and social anchoring and hence integration.

2. At the beginning of 2012, Austria submitted its report “EU Framework for National Strategies for the Integration of the Roma by 2020 - Political and Legal Measures in Austria” to the European Commission. This presentation of the existing policies and projects was prepared with the participation of the affected Austrian Federal Ministries and provincial governments, the Advisory Council for the Roma ethnic group and of civil society, especially of Roma associations.

The reports of the EU member states were evaluated by the European Commission and the results summarised in its Communication entitled “National Strategies for Integration of the Roma: First step towards implementing the EU Framework” to the European Council and the European Parliament of 22 May 2012.

This evaluation results in the need for Austria to take further action, primarily in the following areas:

- to design further measures in the four core areas of education, employment, housing and healthcare,
- to develop evaluation methods and verification mechanisms,
- to establish reference data, indicators and measurable objectives, and
- to allocate funds for the indicated measures.

3. In implementation of these requirements, the following measures have so far been taken:

The Austrian Federal Chancellery’s Constitutional Service acts – by extension to its competence in ethnic group affairs – as a “national point of contact”.

In order to disseminate information about and communicate the “Roma Strategy”, a website has been created on the website of the Austrian Federal Chancellery and an email address set up: see [www.bundeskanzleramt.at/roma](http://www.bundeskanzleramt.at/roma) and [roma@bka.gv.at](mailto:roma@bka.gv.at).

National monitoring in Austria is performed by a dialogue platform that includes representatives of the Federation and the states, civil society (Roma) associations and experts from the fields of science and research. The dialogue platform convened three times in 2012 on specific topics such as the presentation of the first Austrian report, the presentation of EU financing instruments and questions on employment and access to the labour market. Further sessions of the dialogue platform are planned for 2013 – always with the involvement of the civil society organisations – especially on the core topics of the EU framework.

A further planned step involves undertaking a social science study into the situation of the Roma and Sinti in Austria, which is intended to serve as the basis for the requirement to design additional measures, especially in the areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing, and will be commissioned with the involvement of the responsible Austrian Federal Ministries and states.

Should the measures addressed in this presentation to the Council of Ministers incur costs, these are to be covered by the allocated budget of the respective Austrian Federal Ministry.

Therefore, with the approval of the Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, the Federal Minister for Education, the Arts and Culture, the

Federal Minister for Health and the Federal Minister for the Interior, I do hereby bring forward the

M o t i o n

that the Austrian Federal Government is aware and takes note of this report.

3 January 2013  
The Federal Chancellor:  
FAYMANN