

International Charitable
Organization “Roma women fund “Chiricli”.

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Ukraine

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Working Session 16

Tolerance and non-discrimination

Statement on behalf of the Coalition of Roma NGOs in Ukraine "Strategy 2020"

The Coalition of Roma NGOs in Ukraine "Strategy 2020" was established by the Roma NGOs from different regions of Ukraine in 2015.

The Action Plan for the implementation of the “Strategy for the protection and integration of the Roma minority in the Ukrainian society for the period up to 2020” was adopted in Ukraine in 2013. Despite the commitments of the government to improve the situation of Roma and the acknowledgment that Roma face discrimination in the access to education, employment, health and social services, the government did not undertake adequate actions to redress the condition of Roma in Ukraine, specifically in the areas provided by the action plan: education, employment, housing, health and social services and civil registration.

Recent political developments in Ukraine have further negatively affected the situation of Roma, in particular, of those displaced from Crimea and the Eastern Ukraine. Negative attitude towards Roma persists within society, while there is limited recognition of the discrimination Roma face in many areas of life.

Local organizations that are engaged in to protection of the rights of the Roma minority in Ukraine with the support of IRF¹, during 2014 carried out monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan in 10 regions of Ukraine.

The monitoring results showed that the Action Plan requires changes and it must be done in line with the international standards. It is also require the development of practical tools and indicators for its effective implementation in strong cooperation with the Roma communities.

So far, most of the activities for the implementation of the Action Plan have been done by the Roma NGOs through the projects implementation supported by international donors, for example the Roma mediators program, the ROMED² program, the projects supported by Open Society Foundation and International Renaissance Foundation.

Despite all the difficulties of the implementation of the Action Plan I would like to mention some positive results achieved during last 2 years. Following the adoption of the AP, several local authorities conducted consultations with the Roma NGOs; local working groups have been

¹ International Renaissance Foundation. www.irf.kiev.ua

² www.coe-romed.org

established to develop the AP. The problems of Roma people have been voiced at national and local level. The dialog and cooperation have been Roma NGOs and Ministry of culture of Ukraine established with the, which is responsible on coordination of the implementation of the AP and Strategy and with the Ministry of Social Policy. The Coalition of Roma NGOs conducted working meetings with number of national authorities on specific topics. As a result we are expecting the establishment of the Intergovernmental Coordinating working group that will ensure coordination and constant monitoring of the implementation of the AP. Odessa regional administration requested technical support from CPRSI on civil registration issues. 2 national meetings will be conducted by the ODIHR in cooperation with the State Migration Service and Ministry of Culture of Ukraine till the end of 2015.

The Coalition appeals to ODIHR with a request to assist in the implementation of such initiatives:

- In case the Intergovernmental Coordinating working group will be established by the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, to provide technical and expert support to its work.

Detailed information - the State intergovernmental coordination working group should be composed of representatives of the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Justice, Migration Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Social policy, the State Employment Service, the Ministry of Health, Roma NGOs and international experts.

- To train the local authorities on International Standards, i.e how to develop real Action Plan with concrete measure, indicators, gender component and etc.

- To assist the Coalition in lobbying the local authorities to appoint Roma focal points at the regional levels to ensure effective cooperation between all relevant stakeholders in implementation of the Action Plan.

- To raise attention to the needs of internally displaced Roma (more than 10 000 Roma³ had to leave Donetsk and Lugansk regions).

- To ensure better coordination between the international organizations in particular, the OSCE ODIHR, the Council of Europe, European Commission. Especially in the field of work with the police, Romani women and youth.

Recommendations to the Ukrainian national and regional authorities and NGOs

- To review and amend the NAP and regional Action Plans in close consultation with Roma civil society and in line with the international standards (with clear measures, results and indicators).

- To organize consultations with the international human rights organizations on the revised NAP.

³ <http://www.chirikli.com.ua/index.php/en/library/item/93-monitoring-the-human-rights-situation-of-roma-in-ukraine>

- To conduct regional thematic visits on education, employment, housing and health, civil registration documents and, in particular, passports and birth certificates, Romani women's and youth issues.
- To collect comprehensive gender disaggregated official data on the number of Roma in Ukraine as well as on their socio-economic situation in cooperation with Roma NGOs, Roma mediators.

Sincerely, Zemfira Kondur

On behalf of the Coalition of Roma NGOs

"Strategy 2020"

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