Education des enfants roms en Europe
Education of Roma children in Europe

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Reference framework for educational policies in favour of Roma, Sinti and Travellers

Implementation of Recommendation (2000)4 on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe

Directorate General IV
Directorate of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education
Division for the European Dimension of Education

SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION

This document supplements Recommendation (2000) 4, adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in February 2000, on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe, and suggests strategies for developing national educational policies in favour of Roma.

Recommendation (2000) 4 states that *"policies aimed at addressing the problems faced by Roma/Gypsies in the field of education should be comprehensive, based on an acknowledgement that the issue of schooling for Roma/Gypsy children is linked with a wide range of other factors and pre-conditions, namely the economic, social and cultural aspects, and the fight against racism and discrimination",* and that they *"should be backed up by an active adult education and vocational education policy".*

This publication contains a series of examples of measures aimed specifically at Roma, which may be considered as recommendations to the member states of the Council of Europe intended to promote and further the implementation of Recommendation (2000) 4 at national level.

It is aimed primarily at political decision-makers (education ministries, local authorities, politicians), but also at education professionals, civil society (associations, non-governmental organisations), Roma communities and all interested citizens.

It covers all aspects of the education field. Following an explanation of the reasons why such a document on educational policies is necessary (A) and specific discussion of the role of school (B), it suggests practical implementation strategies (C) in the form of a grid setting out educational policy options, divided into four inter-related goals that together make up a comprehensive vision of educational policy in favour of Roma in Europe: **1. schooling; 2. social inclusion; 3. cultural identity and Roma cultural heritage; and 4. empowerment and participation**.

This document was drawn up on the basis of research into, and analysis of, the specific requirements and needs of Roma, carried out by two experts from the Roma community (Delia Grigore and Dominique Steinberger). It was subsequently supplemented with the contributions of

European experts at meetings organised as part of the project and by the European Roma and Travellers Forum.

It summarises specific aspects and attempts to suggest educational policy solutions. Such an all-embracing approach is necessitated by the specific situation of Roma, who face educational, social, cultural and economic problems all at the same time. From this overall perspective, education is not considered in isolation, but in relation to cultural identity and heritage, integration into society, preparation for employment and involvement in the community.

A. BACKGROUND

The Roma, Sinti and Traveller population[1] accounts for about 10 million[2] people in Europe, 50% of whom are of school age; 75% of these people are illiterate and live in extreme poverty. Various measures implemented over a period of several years in relation to schooling and all kinds of training systems have come to nothing.

A number of factors must be taken into account when it comes to schooling and education, training and literacy schemes, for example, including: **the very high rate of illiteracy,** which affects young people who are still of school age but no longer – or in some cases almost never – attend school and have developed coping strategies; and **the terrible poverty, depending on the country, in which the various Roma populations live**: appalling living and housing conditions (tiny makeshift houses, shacks, huts, wheel-less caravans turned into houses, tents, no running water, no electricity, hardly enough to eat), which make it impossible for children to go to school.

Another aspect that must be taken into account in relation to schooling is the **cultural dimension**.

In some cases, school is perceived by the various Roma communities as an instrument of assimilation and loss of cultural identity. If Roma are to be more accepting of school, consideration must be given to the many cultural taboos that exist. Some of these are based on the bad experiences of parents, who no longer trust schools. At present, they see the education system as a very grim world made up of intolerance and rejection. These initial difficulties are compounded by housing, employment and health problems.

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[1] Roma, Travellers, Sinti, kalé etc.
[2] *Roma, Gypsies, Travellers* - Jean-Pierre LIEGEOIS, Council of Europe, 1994

Children enjoy a certain degree of freedom in the various communities; in many cases, it is they who make decisions, or are behind their parents' decisions, including those relating to schooling. If a child refuses to go to school, his or her parents will have virtually no influence over that decision; on the other hand, if the child decides to go to school, his or her parents will not object and the child will give school a try.

Roma culture is submerged in a dominant culture, and thereby weakened. Parents are prepared to entrust teachers with the task of teaching their children reading, writing and arithmetic, but have little inclination to entrust little children, whose upbringing must be primarily a family responsibility, to a school system that seems foreign and often threatening (physically and culturally). The lives of Roma, Sinti and Travellers revolve around their families, which are the basic unit of social organisation and an economic and educational unit. In situations of constant change and instability, the family is a permanent, stable element. Individuals are never alone and cannot be lonely. In this context, children are brought up collectively. They commonly live among three or four generations and are socialised within this group, which offers a sense of belonging, coherence and security.

In the context of a Roma population that is constantly evolving in the face of social change, young people's education is of crucial importance, and there is a great risk of loss of identity as soon as it is taken out of the community's hands and entrusted to an "outsider", or institution.

If schools are to be accepted, they must clearly define their mission and *modus operandi* in conjunction with children and their parents. If a school's relationship of trust with Roma were to disappear, the latter would reject the school without the slightest hesitation. Even after many years of attendance, they would take the risk of ceasing to provide their children with schooling. Roma are increasingly aware that they are immersed in society, experiencing the same realities as non-Roma. They face the same problems, and observe on a daily basis that it is even harder for them to succeed, in that they often have less of a grasp than non-Roma of the instruments making it possible to appropriate the surrounding economic, social, cultural and political world.

Bearing in mind that governments now acknowledge school to be a forum for the transmission of instrumental knowledge and skills, it is essential to make Roma parents understand the point of schooling and empower them to give their children the opportunity to attend, so that they are in touch with society and in a position to build their future. For its part, the education system has a duty to put in place appropriate facilities and arrangements so as to ensure that Roma are no

longer sidelined by it, and to give Roma children the opportunity to be admitted to schools, to continue attending them and to have both their individual personalities and their culture respected within them.

B. SCHOOL : A MEANS TO CULTURAL EMANCIPATION AND FULFILMENT

Schools must reaffirm their role and be perceived by the various Roma communities as being both necessary, enabling them to discharge their legal obligation to provide children with an education, and a means to children's intellectual, psychological, social and cultural fulfilment. They must teach children to be as open as possible to other cultures and make them secure in their own culture.

Schools have to change their *modus operandi*. They must be receptive, and allow and foster cultural diversity rather than imposing a single cultural model. Curricula and content must be adapted to take account of cultural diversity, so that children from minority backgrounds – often the case for Roma children – do not have the impression of living in an illegitimate culture, when their culture and language are considered marginal, stigmatised in words and actions and receive no acknowledgement in the education process. The learning process, the teaching methods used with children and the purpose of schooling must be reviewed and geared to the pupils involved.

The school curriculum should be designed and thought out with the primary aim of fostering children's well-being and development. It must take the following factors into account, and incorporate them in a very practical way: the child's cultural assets (language, history, traditions), his or her rhythm (cultural and biological), the various economic systems in which he or she lives and his or her potential (music, singing, dancing, painting, other skills). Schools can thereby enable children to come and go between the environment in which their intellectual and social development takes place (school) and that in which their personal and cultural development takes place (family, community). There is no competition between these two environments, but rather a complementarity necessary to the child's well-being.

C. In the light of the above points, a series of measures may be suggested, divided into four different areas of action:

1.   SCHOOLING

One of the main challenges is to strike a balance between addressing the specific needs of Roma and integrating Roma into the public education system. State-run education and employment systems do not meet the needs of Roma, who must now develop skills that are valued on the labour market and arrive at individual solutions enabling them to survive and succeed in society. New educational methods and facilities must therefore be devised in order to allow Roma to participate effectively in this environment, while preserving their culture and ethnic identity.

Access to basic education entails a minimum number of years of schooling, which is not "provided" to the Roma population. At the same time, schooling is a sure path to employment. The suggested measures are aimed at improving school attendance among Roma children.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S WORK IN THIS AREA

As part of the project run in partnership with the *Association pour une Recherche Pédagogique Ouverte en milieu Tsigane* (Association for Open Educational Research in the Gypsy Community) in Strasbourg, the Council of Europe has designed an education pack for Roma pre-school children. This pack prepares Roma and Traveller children who have not attended nursery school and are neither ready nor sufficiently mature for the first primary school class to start school so that they do not fall too far behind.

Through the Council of Europe's in-service training programme for teacher trainers and education professionals, about 40 training seminars are held each year, some of them on Roma issues (use of teaching material, Roma culture and history in schools, Roma school mediators, etc.).

The Language Policy Division is drafting a common reference framework for Romani language skills, which will serve as a guide for course designers. Initially, this framework will set out common objectives and standards that will apply to local variants of Romani and the various language skills, and also serve as a basis for designing literacy and teacher training materials.

Specific objectives	Measures	Responsibility	Expected outcomes
1. Making schools more attractive, welcoming places for Roma children	School curriculum - Introducing specific content relating to Roma identity (history, lifestyle, literature, music, etc.) - Designing more flexible school curricula, with more optional courses meeting a wide range of educational needs - Promoting non-formal learning - Including informal learning, traditions and heritage in formal curricula Teacher training - Raising teachers' awareness through intercultural education and training them to deal with prejudice, exclusion and marginalisation - Encouraging and supporting young Roma to become teachers School governance and management - Promoting inclusive school management - Developing a school environment that prevents discrimination, bullying and segregation - Developing working relationships and communication with Roma families and communities - Including Roma parents in governing boards - Promoting dialogue and exchanges among all students in a climate of respect for human rights and a spirit of responsibility	Ministry of Education and its local outposts Collaboration with the ministry responsible for minority affairs Schools Teacher training institutes Research institutes	Reduction in truancy among Roma children Reduction in discrimination against Roma children Increased participation and interest in school life among Roma parents Greater respect for cultural diversity among students A significant number of teachers of Roma origin
2. Combating discrimination against Roma children at school	- Discouraging tacit selection based on ethnic origin and income criteria - Promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding through the provision of appropriate information on the distinctive	European and international organisations Non-governmental organisations and associations	Fewer prejudices and negative stereotypes concerning Roma Better understanding of

	features of Roma (curriculum content, educational fact sheets, teaching modules, teacher training, visits to the Roma community, joint local development projects) - Supporting active citizenship and a shared sense of belonging to the school's organisational culture - Learning how to approach national authorities responsible for combating discrimination (for example, appealing to the Ombudsman in relation to schooling issues) - Taking general steps to prohibit and punish segregation	Research institutes Schools	Roma among non-Roma teachers Understanding between cultures and fewer conflicts at school Knowing one's rights and being able to stand up for them Equal access to schooling for Roma children
3. Preparing Roma children for schooling within the general education system	- Developing and making available tools designed to bring pupils up to the required standard, and offering second-chance courses to children who have not had access to pre-school education (such as the education pack for pre-school children produced by the Council of Europe, summer schools, remedial classes) - Raising awareness among Roma parents and communities so that they participate in pre-school education - Supporting the establishment of bilingual nursery school classes in those regions and communities in which there is a demand for them from Roma families - Setting up bilingual nursery schools (Romani/majority languages) in those Roma communities that have Romani as their mother tongue - Developing and approving a bilingual pre-school curriculum - Gradually introducing bilingual education at all levels in schools with a large number of Roma children, starting with pre-school and primary education - Training nursery school teachers in bilingual education	Municipal department responsible for education Primary and nursery schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma communities	Roma children having fair access to basic education and starting primary school with basic knowledge and at the same level as non-Roma children Informed Roma parents who take an interest in the school and in their children's education Roma children better prepared for primary school (particularly by breaking down language barriers), and higher primary school attendance among Roma children

4. Diversifying education services in order to meet the needs of Roma and traveller children	- Developing alternative forms of schooling: mobile schools, school passport, distance education, intensive schooling courses, back-to-school education programmes - Producing a teaching record or school record to ensure continuity in the schooling of traveller children - Arranging meetings between children, parents and schools in order to review the child's schooling - Making it easier for teachers to contact the various schools attended by the child, so that the child's educational progress can be taken into account	Ministry of Education and its local outposts Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma communities and mediators	Increase in school attendance among Roma and traveller children and reduction in illiteracy Taking account of the child's rhythm, as dictated by periods of travel Better integration of traveller children into the school system, while allowing travel to continue
5. Making schooling more accessible and better geared to Roma children	- Introducing positive measures to encourage Roma children to attend lower and upper secondary school and university - Providing a range of comprehensive information about the teaching offered at all levels (for example, through vocational guidance, communication between school and parents, involvement of non-governmental organisations and associations) - Bringing school closer to Roma communities and making it more accessible to them (for example, by providing a transport service where necessary or setting up schools open to all children in areas where Roma live) - Setting up a system of school mediators from Roma communities	Ministry of Education and its local outposts Collaboration with the ministry responsible for minority affairs Municipal department responsible for education Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma communities Mediators	Increase in school enrolment and attendance among Roma children Schooling made more accessible and attractive, and better geared to the educational needs of Roma children More accessible information for Roma Establishment of a relationship of trust between school and Roma communities
6. Promoting equity and social policies in favour of Roma children	- Making textbooks and educational materials available to disadvantaged Roma children free of charge - Making sports equipment available to children	Municipal department responsible for education and social welfare Non-governmental	More disadvantaged Roma children encouraged and helped to attend school

		organisations and associations (charity) Leisure and drop-in centres Schools	Roma children from disadvantaged backgrounds attend school rather than working
	- Providing Roma children with some meals and free medical care - Distributing assistance to poor Roma children enrolled at school through increased education allowances, free access to transport, free school meals (at least a sandwich) and the award of grants - Making grants available (means-tested grants and scholarships) as a way of encouraging Roma children to continue their studies - Highlighting the academic success of Roma children, so that they set an example and serve as a model for other Roma children and parents		
7. Introducing appropriate programmes for Roma children who have dropped out of school or are failing academically	- Identifying the causes and social background of pupils from Roma communities who have dropped out of school (migration, unemployment, lack of confidence in school) - Offering remedial measures such as fast-track "second-chance" learning programmes and vocational training - Offering evening classes and extra-curricular activities to Roma children who are failing academically - Making free, optional remedial and academic support programmes available to Roma children outside the school curriculum	Ministry of Education and its local outposts in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour and the ministry responsible for minority affairs Municipal department responsible for education and employment Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Research institutes Private sector	Significant number of Roma school drop-outs go back to school: children re-integrated into the education system Increase in the number of children at school and completing compulsory schooling Improvements in academic and vocational achievement among Roma children Relationship of trust between school and Roma communities

8.			
9. Setting up education and training programmes leading to a qualification	- Providing vocational training, particularly in those sectors most sought-after by the market, so as to make them accessible to Roma children (for example, through vocational guidance with an emphasis on traditional occupations and branches of activity) - Providing young unemployed Roma, those outside the education system and those having left school at a young age with opportunities for non-formal learning	Ministry of Education and its local outposts, in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour and the ministry responsible for minority affairs Municipal department responsible for education and employment Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Trade unions	A number of Roma children better prepared to enter the labour market Reduction in the number of unemployed young Roma

2. SOCIAL INCLUSION (vocational training, adult education)

Strategies to promote Roma education must be backed up by more comprehensive strategies to combat poverty and improve employment opportunities. Education is the best long-term means of integrating Roma into society and giving them access to equal rights and opportunities. The aim is to provide members of the Roma community (illiterate young people and adults) with basic education in order to offset the gaps resulting from their lack of schooling, as well as practical and technical training designed, firstly, to develop the "utilisable" resources found within these communities, and, secondly, to improve their vocational opportunities. These measures must go hand in hand with local and regional action plans that help Roma to find jobs, start businesses and exercise the trades they know.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S WORK IN THIS AREA

The Council of Europe is putting together a training handbook for Roma school mediators. Positions such as that of Roma mediator or school assistant can be made more effective by promoting high-quality initial training geared to the needs on the ground. This handbook will contain an occupational profile, training modules for mediators and other essential practical information.

The target groups are **young Roma, Roma parents/adults** (with responsibility for children's education), **adults with specific training needs** and **non-Roma parents** with a view to countering prejudice and discrimination.

Specific objectives	Measures	Responsibility	Expected outcomes
1. Instituting dialogue and co-operation between school and the Roma community	- Employing Roma school mediators - Organising regular meetings between school management, teachers and Roma parents/adults - Drawing up and implementing a local action plan	Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Regional councils	Better co-operation and more institutional dialogue regarding practical problems to be resolved by local authorities, Roma communities and schools

	specifying responsibilities on both sides		
2. Involving Roma parents in school management	- Encouraging Roma parents to sit on the school's governing board - Encouraging Roma parents to take part in the parents' association	Schools Roma communities Governing board	A number of Roma sitting on governing boards Active participation by, and empowerment of, Roma parents within school parents' associations and governing boards
3. Providing basic education for uneducated adult Roma	- Offering training courses for adults (legislation, curriculum, teaching material, teacher training, budget) - Showing Roma parents how to use the education pack, and involving them in its use	Adult education centres Schools Roma communities Non-governmental organisations and associations	Greater participation by parents of Roma children in the implementation of measures aimed at their children Increase in the number of Roma adults with a better chance of finding a job and gaining access to vocational training and general rights
4. Providing specific vocational training (for unskilled adults) in accordance with the needs and demands of the Roma community	- Helping people to define their needs and the necessary training profiles - Drawing up an individual and/or collective training and work plan - Offering vocational training courses, work sessions, short training courses, workshops	Schools and vocational training centres Vocational training centres and institutes Non-governmental organisations and associations Mediators	A number of Roma adults with a better chance of finding a job Better quality of life for members of the Roma community Roma parents better able to support their children
5. Making members of the Roma community aware of the need for schooling from an early age	- Conducting awareness-raising campaigns on the importance of school for integration into society - Using tools such as the Council of Europe's pre-school	European and international organisations Media Municipal department responsible for education	More positive image of school within Roma communities More Roma children aged 3 to 6 at school More support for Roma parents in preparing their children for school and enrolling them

	education pack within communities - Encouraging Roma parents to enrol their children at nursery school	Non-governmental organisations and associations Pre-school education facilities	
6. Providing a vocational guidance service for Roma young people/adults	- Making it easier for Roma to gain access to information and advisory services at schools, employment centres and local councils, and encouraging the employment of Roma as careers advisers - Designing specific training courses for advisers working in the Roma community - Providing an opportunity for skills assessments and careers advice (or advice on a change of occupation)	Schools Academic and careers advice centres Specialised or trained education staff Municipal department responsible for social services and employment Private sector	Better provision of information to Roma young people and adults about employment, vocational training and courses of study Better chance of integration into society through employment
7. Awareness-raising and provision of information to non-Roma parents	- Covering specific topics in regular meetings with parents - Organising voluntary activities involving Roma and non-Roma parents	Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations	Better relations between Roma and non-Roma parents and a reduction in negative attitudes towards Roma
8. Countering prejudice and stereotypes among the majority population	- Establishing a partnership between Roma communities and local media outlets with a view to promoting a more accurate image of Roma - Conducting awareness-raising campaigns designed	Media Municipal department responsible for minority affairs Non-governmental organisations and associations Public bodies	More positive attitude towards the distinctive features of Roma culture Gradual elimination of stereotypes and prejudice against Roma Inclusion of Roma in community activities

	to counter racism and discrimination through presentation leaflets, advertising, shows, publications and so on. - Encouraging dialogue between Roma and non-Roma through local activities	working to combat discrimination	

3.   CULTURAL IDENTITY AND ROMA CULTURAL HERITAGE

The prerequisite for implementing the various measures set out in the reference framework for educational policies in favour of Roma is the need to preserve and foster Roma cultural identity and heritage in a spirit of diversity.

Specific action must be taken to encourage and support the promotion of Roma culture and history if Roma children are to be integrated into a multicultural environment. Promoting Roma culture among teachers by means of lectures, training seminars and teaching material, organising festivals and public exhibitions on Roma history and culture and creating a Roma cultural route are still essential measures with a view to preserving and developing Roma cultural heritage as part of the European cultural heritage and strengthening Roma identity.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S WORK IN THIS AREA

The Council of Europe is producing teaching material suitable for use by Roma and non-Roma teachers working with classes made up of both Roma and other children. This material, in the form of publications or sets of educational fact sheets covering a number of topics, such as history, culture, cinema, literature and theatre, will foster mutual understanding of differences, which is the basic principle underlying the intercultural approach. It will be used in both formal education and non-formal educational settings such as cultural centres or museums of Roma culture and history. Some of this material can be used in the community by children and their parents.

The Roma cultural route is to be launched as part of the Council of Europe's project on education for Roma children.

Specific objectives	Measures	Responsibility	Expected outcomes
1. Promoting Roma culture and history through formal and non-formal education	- Incorporating Roma culture into school festivals and leisure centre activities - Establishing a network of museums of Roma culture and history and Roma cultural centres and theatres - Developing appropriate educational tools for the youngest pupils, covering aspects of Roma history and culture - Developing extra-curricular programmes designed to destigmatise Roma identity and enhance the self-awareness of Roma, including: *summer schools on Roma culture and artistic creation for Roma children; *the publication of magazines for Roma children and journals for Roma teachers, and the production of audio-visual recordings and materials on Roma; *setting up theatres for Roma children	Ministry of Education Schools European and international organisations Cultural centres Roma communities	Official curricula include specific content relating to Roma culture School activities cater for cultural diversity, particularly that of Roma Development of appropriate educational tools for teachers, such as educational fact sheets on Roma history and culture Better understanding of Roma culture and history among Roma children, and greater respect for their own ethnic identity Understanding of Roma culture and history among non-Roma children
2. Developing teaching material in the Romani language	- Producing books, CDs, audio cassettes and comics in the Romani language - Encouraging the use of the Romani language in existing teaching material (translation into Romani)	Ministry of Education and its local outposts Collaboration with the ministry responsible for minority affairs European and	Educational tools in the Romani language developed by and for the Roma community Production of new teaching material geared to the specific needs of the Roma population

	- Introducing optional Roma language, history and culture classes into school curricula	international organisations Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma communities Research institutes	
3. Enhancing the self-esteem of Roma children by consolidating their mother tongue within the ordinary school system	- Gradually introducing bilingual teaching at all levels in schools with a large number of Roma children, starting with pre-school and primary education - Teacher training (basic, in-service and further training, summer schools) - Developing and approving curricula and textbooks - Information campaigns for parents on the importance of using the Romani language as a language of instruction	Ministry of Education and its local outposts Roma NGOs	Construction of ethnic identity and enhanced self-esteem among Roma children
4. Encouraging artistic expression among Roma with a view to fostering intercultural learning	- Bringing the Roma cultural route alive through presentations in schools by facilitators/mediators, based on cultural projects - Discovering little-known artists and promoting their talents and work by means of cultural events - Organising music, painting, sculpture, dance and song festivals and inviting Roma to take part - Organising activities involving Roma and non-	Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Municipal and regional departments responsible for education and culture European and international organisations Museums and cultural centres	Artistic expression used as a vehicle for mutual understanding and harmonious coexistence Appreciation of, and respect for, Roma culture and its forms of artistic expression Better mutual understanding between Roma and non-Roma children Greater emphasis on non-formal activities and hidden curricula as

	Roma cultural centres and the various schools - Highlighting the expressive potential of music with a view to encouraging intercultural dialogue - Organising educational activities based on Roma stories and narratives	Roma community	part of general school activities
5. Promoting translation and Romani language teaching as occupations	- Developing training modules for learning the Romani and Sinti languages - Introducing specialised courses in translation and interpretation from and into the Romani language - Balancing the status of the Romani language in relation to that of the majority language, both within the school system and in society in general	Ministry of Education and its local outposts Collaboration with the ministry responsible for minority affairs Training centres Universities Research and training institutes	Strengthened Roma cultural identity through learning of the Romani language Establishment of a corpus of professional translators for the Romani language More Romani language teachers available
6. Acknowledging Roma history as an integral part of national and European history	- Launching a Day of Remembrance for Roma - Producing educational fact sheets on Roma history and culture, emphasising the role of Roma in European history, including topics such as marginalisation, discrimination and the Holocaust - Producing monographs, educational fact sheets and textbooks on Roma history, and distributing them to schools, museums and Roma cultural centres	European and international organisations Ministry of Education and its local outposts Collaboration with the ministry responsible for minority affairs Research institutes	Teaching aids for Roma history Commemoration of the Roma Holocaust Availability – and increasing number – of educational tools for teachers
7. Promoting Roma cultural heritage	- Encouraging the organisation of workshops	Museums and cultural centres	Awareness of, respect for, and promotion of

with a view to intercultural dialogue	at cultural centres and museums, with an emphasis on interaction between Roma and non-Roma participants - Incorporating aspects of Roma culture into cultural festivals - Celebrating key events in Roma history at local, national and European level	Out-of-school educational facilities Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma communities	Roma cultural heritage Inclusion of Roma cultural heritage in the European cultural heritage
8. Promoting Roma literature and providing Roma with a framework for cultural expression in schools	- Providing assistance for the organisation of competitions and prizes and the dissemination of publications - Drawing attention to existing Roma literature by printing and distributing it - Encouraging the writing and dissemination of stories, narratives, short stories and poetry - Making school premises available for cultural events (exhibitions, shows, etc.)	Schools Non-governmental organisations and associations Ministry of Education and its local outposts Collaboration with the ministry responsible for minority affairs Publishing houses, libraries Media Roma communities	Existence of Roma literature acknowledged and highlighted; Roma literature included in national and European literature Roma young people and adults having self-respect and a positive image of their identity Improved attitudes towards Roma Improved image of school within the Roma community, and greater confidence in school
9. Drawing attention to Roma culture through the media	- Using the media (newspapers, radio and television) as a forum for conveying a positive image of Roma (traditions, examples of positive practices) - Organising extra-curricular intercultural education activities, such	Media Ministry of Education and the ministry responsible for minority affairs and the media and its local outposts	Fewer negative stereotypes and prejudices Understanding and appreciation of Roma culture Self-respect and positive image in the eyes of others

	as panel discussions based on debate and an effort to come up with new ideas, interactive workshops; discussion groups, photographic and art exhibitions, leaflets, booklets, posters, shows involving Roma and non-Roma pupils, joint celebrations and summer schools for Roma and non-Roma pupils - Giving Roma culture a high public profile - Organising public campaigns on enhancing self-esteem	Non-governmental organisations and associations	

4. EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION (civil society and Roma community leaders)

A major challenge facing contemporary societies is to ensure that minorities share on an equal footing in the decision-making process and the exercise of power. European Roma do not participate in these processes, and have been living in exclusion for centuries. The effect on Roma has been to devalue their cultural and traditional resources, skills and identity, in turn putting them in a position of economic and social dependence. In order to remedy this situation, Roma must be given the resources to become emancipated at all levels, so that they can play a full part in deciding their future. One of the most important steps is to introduce provisions designed promote Roma participation in local and national decision-making processes, and set up training courses giving Roma the necessary knowledge and skills to exercise their rights. For their part, Roma must make an effort to take part in the initiatives launched.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S WORK IN THIS AREA

As part of the Council of Europe's project on the education of Roma children, representatives of the Roma community are involved at each stage, and play an active role in the implementation of policies concerning them. The idea of involving community representatives in developing the project is in keeping with the more general principle of encouraging direct participation by, and empowerment of, members of these communities.

One of the activities implemented as part of the project on "Education for Democratic Citizenship" launched in 1997 was the establishment of sites of citizenship (sites of citizenship relating to Roma/Gypsy and traveller populations were set up in Bulgaria, Spain, Ireland and Portugal). These sites are involved with the management of democratic life, and encourage members of certain groups – particularly victims of social exclusion – to play an active role in their own personal development and that of the community, as well as in decision-making processes and participatory democracy.

Specific objectives	Measures	Responsibility	Expected outcomes
1. Launching education projects with a view to encouraging Roma to participate in the decision-making process and the implementation of policies concerning them	Setting up information and support offices for Roma with a view to: - evaluating the effectiveness of measures taken concerning them, - informing Roma about government measures - developing programmes in conjunction with Roma organisations and/or organisations working on behalf of Roma - developing activities designed to further the Roma cause, run by non-governmental organisations and Roma associations	Local and national authorities Non-governmental organisations and Roma associations	More active participation by Roma in local and national decision-making processes Roma acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to exercise their rights Roma participate more fully in the community and take a greater interest in local affairs Better standard of living for Roma
2. Training Roma in the necessary skills to improve communication between public authorities and Roma	- Employing mediators at local level to encourage mediation with public authorities	Local authorities Roma communities and mediators Non-governmental organisations and associations	Necessary skills for communication between the Roma community and local authorities Skills giving Roma better access to public services More effective communication of information about civic rights and responsibilities

3. Promoting the emancipation of Roma through civic awareness and a collective sense of belonging	- Creating posts for Roma advisers responsible for analysing issues relating to the Roma minority, at both national and local government level - Setting up training programmes on the structures of participatory democracy - Setting up citizenship training programmes for Roma leaders and activists	National authorities Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma communities	Collective sense of belonging among Roma More confidence in democratic institutions Better understanding of rights and responsibilities
4. Promoting the emancipation of Roma by fostering their potential for self-organisation and encouraging self-help schemes	- Teaching young Roma how to set up and implement local development projects - Encouraging self-management and community spirit based on civic rights and responsibilities - Promoting solidarity, self-help and equity through training programmes for adults and young people	Ministry responsible for minority affairs and its local outposts Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma and non-Roma communities	Higher level of education among young Roma Setting up of support groups Provision of technical assistance for the resolution of economic and social problems Development of partnership relationships with local authorities Greater solidarity between members of the Roma community and between Roma and non-Roma
5. Promoting the emancipation of young Roma	- Organising courses, training programmes and classes in diplomacy for Roma youth leaders and young directors of non-governmental organisations and associations - Setting up networks of young Roma - Organising awareness-raising and training activities with a view to giving young Roma the	Ministry responsible for minority affairs and its local outposts Training centres Non-governmental organisations and associations Roma community	Fostering the potential of young Roma leaders so as to further the community's development More young Roma civil servants pursuing careers local authorities and government departments

	resources to work more effectively within their associations - Promoting the employment of Roma civil servants in local authorities and public services		
6. Promoting the emancipation of Roma women within their families and local communities	- Setting up workshops for Roma women so as to give them the opportunity to learn an a trade or undertake vocational training - Developing the necessary training programmes to make women more able, and better prepared, to participate in the politica process and stand up fo their rights - Giving a higher profile to activities undertaken by Roma women, through the establishment of networks	Non-governmental organisations and associations Training and adult education centres Ministry of Labour and its local outposts	Policies and strategies in favour of Roma address and incorporate women's issues Emancipation of Roma women through the acquisition of skills enabling them to secure an income, and thus greater independence, without undermining their traditional Roma culture Roma women better prepared to participate in the political process

CONCLUSION

These strategies cannot cover all the different kinds of action needed in the education field. This document suggests a series of measures that may be envisaged at local and national level in order to implement Recommendation (2000)4, and may be adapted to the specific features of the Roma community in the country in question and national legislation. Some of the measures referred to are based on innovative practices in various countries, where integrated strategies are starting to emerge. Such strategies should be pursued in all countries in which the Roma minority is present. In order to optimise the benefits of these strategies, it is important to bear in mind that initiatives to promote Roma education must be backed up by more comprehensive strategies to combat poverty and improve job opportunities.