

A strategy for Roma inclusion

In February 2012, a coordinated long-term strategy for Roma inclusion for the years 2012–2032 was adopted. The 20-year strategy should be seen as a strengthening of the minorities policy that applies to the five national minorities: Jews, Roma, Sami, Swedish Finns and Tornedalers.

The Government plans to set aside some SEK 58 million in 2016–2019 for measures for Roma, in addition to the regular funds available for the national minorities.



The strategy is based on the proposals in the final report of the Delegation for Roma Issues (SOU 2010:55). It has a human rights perspective, with special emphasis on the principle of non-discrimination. The overall goal of the 20-year strategy is that a Roma who turns 20 years of age in 2032 is to have the same opportunities in life as a non-Roma. Women and children have particular priority.

The strategy contains goals and measures in several areas:

- education;
- employment;
- housing;
- health, social care and security;
- culture and language; and
- organisation of civil society.

A number of the measures between 2016 and 2019 are presented here.

Work at municipal level
Municipalities have a key role in the work to improve the situa-

tion of Roma as they are responsible for activities that are crucial for Roma opportunities for inclusion in society. The Government has therefore decided that Borås, Gävle, Haninge, Stockholm and Uppsala be granted funding over a two-year period to participate in development activities for Roma inclusion. This decision follows a previous initiative involving pilot municipalities in 2012–2015.

The Stockholm County Administrative Board has been instructed to coordinate and follow up efforts within the framework of the strategy in 2016–2019. The task includes helping municipalities to develop working methods and procedures for Roma inclusion and ensuring that these are spread to municipalities, county councils and relevant agencies.

Mediator activities
Central to the work of Roma inclusion is bridging the mutual trust gap that sometimes exists between Roma and the public sector and that prevents Roma from participating fully in society.

The National Agency for Education and the National Board of Health and Welfare have been instructed to produce an educational programme for mediators who have Roma language and cultural skills to serve as a link between individuals and the public sector. The mediators are active in preschools, schools, social services or workplaces on issues related to these activities.

The Swedish public employment service (Arbetsförmedlingen) has also employed mediators to spread information and knowledge among Roma on the service and support the agency can offer.

Increased knowledge in social services

The National Board of Health and Welfare has been instructed to conduct education and training aimed at social services on welcoming and inclusive procedures with a particular focus on Roma. The initiative is to be based on the education and training materials previously produced by the National Board of Health and Welfare.

Increase knowledge of Roma

The National Agency for Education has been instructed to implement initiatives to improve knowledge in schools regarding the national minorities, with a focus on Roma. The Agency is to spread information and knowledge through existing channels and also implement targeted efforts in a number of municipalities.

Counter discrimination in the housing market

The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning is to implement an initiative to counter the discrimination of Roma in the housing market. The task includes creating a network of Roma representatives, property owners and landlords. Guidance material targeting property owners and landlords will also be produced.

Culture contributes to inclusion

The Swedish Arts Council has been tasked with implementing initiatives to strengthen Roma cultural actors and their cooperation with various cultural institutions. The task includes conducting dialogue meetings at regional level and distributing special funds for Roma cultural

activities. The Institute for Language and Folklore has a special assignment to carry out initiatives to preserve aspects of the Roma language and highlight the intangible cultural heritage of Roma.

Participation and influence

The strategy clearly states that Roma participation and influence must be hallmarks of the strategy at all levels.

Consultation with Roma

The Government Offices, relevant agencies and municipalities have in various forms held and further developed consultation with Roma experts and representatives. The Government Offices has appointed a Roma reference group to provide information and viewpoints on how the Government can develop governance and measures in the strategy.

Civil society participation

Another way to ensure participation and influence is to create conditions for Roma civil society to participate in the work. The Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society has therefore been tasked with offering training in running associations and experience exchanges between Roma and non-Roma organisations. The Agency has also been tasked with distributing funds to civil society organisations that intend to carry out health promotion initiatives for Roma.

Efforts to counter anti-Gypsyism

The Commission against Anti-Gypsyism, appointed in 2014, presented its final report in June 2016. The report, which



includes proposals on measures and methods to counter and prevent anti-Gypsyism, was circulated for consultation in late 2016.

Follow-up and evaluation

In 2014, the Stockholm County Administrative Board, in close cooperation with Roma representatives and relevant agencies, produced a current status report on how activities in the previous five pilot municipalities for Roma inclusion ensure Roma access to their rights. The County Administrative Board's current assignment includes conducting similar follow-ups.

International efforts

The EU has decided that its Member States must adopt and implement national strategies for Roma inclusion. The Commission follows up the work of the Member States annually.

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