

**REPORT ON THE
II EUROPEAN ROMA SUMMIT**

**SPANISH PRESIDENCY
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION 2010**

***PROMOTING POLICIES
IN FAVOUR OF
THE ROMA POPULATION***

**Held in Córdoba
on 8 & 9 April 2010**



INDEX

1.CONTEXT.....	2
2.INAUGURATION SESSION: OFFICIAL INTERVENTIONS.....	4
3. PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL POLICIES WITH THE ROMA POPULATION.....	6
4.ASSESSMENT OF POLICIES: PROGRESS AND LIMITATIONS.....	.8
5. IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR ROMA INCLUSION.....	10
5.1 Roundtable one. Principle two: “Explicit but not exclusive targeting.” Segregation versus integration. Specific projects with Roma versus general projects.....	10
5.2 Roundtable two. Principle five: “Awareness of the gender dimension.” Gender, inequalities and discrimination.....	11
5.3 Roundtable three. Principle seven: “Use of Community instruments.” How can EU instruments be more effective at local level?.....	12
5.4 Roundtable four: Principle nine: “Involvement of civil society.” Attracting civil society towards Roma causes.....	14
6. HEALTH OF THE ROMA POPULATION AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES.....	15
7. CONCLUSIONS OF THE PLENARY SESSION AND THE ROUNDTABLES... ..	17
7.1 Substantial progress in the debates but scarce in practice.....	17
7.2 The commonly assumed principles.....	18
7.3 The need for a stronger effort and commitment.....	19
8.CLOSING SESSION.....	21
JOINT DECLARATION BY THE TRIO PRESIDENCY (SPAIN, BELGIUM & HUNGARY) ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECOND ROMA SUMMIT HELD IN CÓRDOBA (8 & 9 APRIL 2010....	24

The Second European Roma Summit with the slogan, *Promoting policies in favour of the Roma population*, was a success due to the active participation of those present, the issues addressed and the quality of the interventions and debates. The event was an opportunity to take stock of the progress made since the First Summit and to identify priorities and challenges for the immediate future.

Despite of the observed advances , it was emphasised that, in general, the living conditions of many members of the Roma population are not only failing to improve but are deteriorating; likewise, human rights and equal treatment guarantees have yet to become a reality for all the Roma. Therefore, those present at the Summit launched a clear message on the need for a renewed joint effort to reverse this trend, with the effective use of the existing legal, political and financial instruments.

This task requires the involvement of the Member States, entrusted with the prime responsibility, and the European Commission, which is to provide support, drive, backing and co-ordination. The Joint Declaration by the TRIO (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) at the end of the Summit marks an important step forward in the commitment to give priority to Roma issues on the European agenda from a perspective of continuity.

1. CONTEXT

The *Second European Summit on the Roma population* was held in Córdoba on 8 & 9 April 2010 in the framework of the International Roma Day and under the slogan *Promoting policies in favour of the Roma population*. It was a high-profile event, not only because of the speakers, but the profile of those present, the issues debated and the expected impact of the event on the policies of the Member States and the European Union with the Roma.

This Summit was a continuation of the First Summit held in the year 2008 in Brussels, highlighting the significant progress made in the last two years. However, that progress has not prevented the situation of extreme exclusion and discrimination still suffered today by many Roma in Europe, raising the need for urgent measures to reverse that trend. The Summit was preceded by a European Parliament Resolution,¹ a

¹ European Parliament (2010) *European Parliament resolution, 25 March 2010, on the II European Summit on the Roma Population*. P7_TA-PROV(2010)0085. Available in:

progress report and a Communication from the Commission on the economic and social integration of the Roma in Europe, which outlines new measures to be taken by the Commission.²

The objectives of the Summit were to generate debate on the progress made in recent years in European and national policies and the goals that should be met in the immediate future. Emphasis was placed on the need to ensure that the Roma perspective is central to Community policies, including the 2020 strategy, the importance of ensuring access to and the adaptation of financial instruments and the progress expected from the tasks of the Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion and the implementation of its Common Basic Principles.

The work agenda combined plenary sessions with four parallel roundtables, with the aim of encouraging the active participation of those present.

After the inauguration event, the two morning plenary tables focused on taking stock of the progress made in the recent years in policies with the Roma and defining the challenges and changes for the future. The afternoon roundtables examined in depth four of the Common Basic Principles adopted within the Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion, specifically, “explicit but not exclusive targeting”, “awareness of the gender dimension”, “use of Community instruments”, and “involvement of civil society”.³

The morning of the second day was dedicated to taking a close look at the health of the Roma and the effects of social inequalities on the Roma, and to presenting the summary of conclusions, followed by a debate. In the closing session, ministers from different countries spoke about the challenges ahead.

The Spanish delegation was headed by the Minister of Health and Social Policy, Trinidad Jiménez, and the Minister of Equality, Bibiana Aído Almagro. The European Commission was represented by its Vice President, Viviane Reding, and the European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor. There was also a large representation of the European Parliament and senior figures of

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0085+0+DOC+XML+V0//ES>

² European Commission (2010) *Commission Staff Working Document "Roma in Europe: The Implementation of European Union Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion – Progress Report 2008-2010*. 7 April 2010. SEC(2010) 400 final. European Commission (2010) *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. The social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe*. 7 April 2010. COM/2010/0133 final. Both texts available in English in: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=518>

³ European Council (2009) *Council Conclusions on Inclusion of the Roma*. 2947th Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting. Luxemburg, 8 June 2009. Available in: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/108377.pdf



international agencies, such as Theodore Ahlers, from the World Bank, Kori Udovicki, from the United Nations, Member of the Madrid Club, Philip Dimitrov, and the philanthropist, George Soros. Additionally, a total of six ministers from different European countries participated in the Summit as speakers, and many Roma leaders and activists voiced their opinions during the different sessions.

The Summit, which brought together in the region of 500 persons, gave individuals from wide ranging fields (political figures, senior public servants from national and international organisations, NGO activists, etc.) the opportunity to participate. The Summit was covered by a large number of national and international journalists, for whom a press conference was also held. At the end of the Summit, a Joint Declaration by the Trio (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) was presented, outlining the commitments and challenges of the three presidencies.

In the scene of the Summit different institutions, such as the Fundamental Rights Agency, the EURoma network, the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament, ternYpe International Roma Youth Network and the Soros Foundation, organised events and meetings. The Summit took place in a context that propitiated cultural expressions and events. After the inauguration, the Gelem, Gelem hymn was interpreted and the afternoon saw the Prize-giving Ceremony of the Roma Culture Institute and the River Ceremony to commemorate International Roma Day. The convention centre, Palacio de Congresos, housed the photography exhibition on the Roma, "A Butterfly Flaps Its Wings", by the photographer and writer, Zsuzsanna Ardó.

2. INAUGURATION SESSION: OFFICIAL INTERVENTIONS

The Spanish Minister of Health and Social Policy, *Trinidad Jiménez García-Herrera*, opened the session by thanking all the participants and reiterating the Spanish Presidency's commitment to the Roma. Afterwards, she outlined the main problems currently faced by the Roma in Europe with regard to access to education, employment, housing and health, as well as the discrimination suffered by the Roma. She highlighted the importance of giving priority to initiatives with women and young people, as well as to cultural initiatives aimed at ensuring equality and making diversity a part of social cohesion and citizenship. She insisted that the full inclusion of the Roma in our society is a collective project that requires everyone's involvement and that the Spanish Presidency is determined to promote Roma policies. Lastly, she stressed that the Action Plan for the Development of the Roma Population, aimed at making continuing progress on the significant advances already achieved in the last decades, will be approved precisely during the Córdoba Summit.



The Mayor of Córdoba, *Andrés Ocaña Rabadán*, welcomed those present to the city and reminded them that, historically, Córdoba has been, and wants to continue to be, the city of diversity. This is why the city has important programmes in place aimed at promoting the Roma population in the areas of education, housing and employment which are primarily targeted to East European Roma. He highlighted the important role of municipalities in policies with the Roma, since that is where their rights must be assured, co-existence fostered and interculturality encouraged.

The Second Vice President of the Spanish State Council of the Roma People, *Antonio Vázquez Saavedra*, affirmed that the Spanish Roma are extremely proud of the fact that this Second Summit is being held in Spain and that it marks a historical event. He recalled the words of Gunter Grass, who described the Roma as "*The true Europeans [.....] who can teach us what real border-transcending is*" and stressed that this is a time of hope which we should not let slip away. We therefore need a different political approach and a new framework for analysis, where there is more room for participation and involvement, where more projects are developed and where the conferral of dignity on the Roma culture is promoted. He called for a commitment, stressing that the most hated people in Europe must begin a new historical era.

The Equality and Welfare Counsellor of the Regional Government of Andalusia, *Micaela Navarro Garzón*, stressed that the policies with the Roma must leave paternalism behind and foster real participation. She pointed out that education is the key to Roma inclusion in the medium term, and highlighted the importance of working from the perspective of rights and duties and promoting the culture, ensuring that the latter does not serve to perpetuate customs that affect the development of the Roma. She also confirmed that the approval of the New Statute of Autonomy 2009 marks a qualitative leap, in a region with approximately 350,000 Roma.

The Vice President of the European Commission and European Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, *Viviane Reding*, began by pointing out that the spirit of coexistence and tolerance of the city of Córdoba must be the keynote of the initiatives with the Roma. This respect for diversity is in the foundations of the European Union and includes guaranteeing fundamental rights, justice and free movement. She highlighted the important progress made in the last few years but also mentioned the serious situations of exclusion. We must work towards ensuring that the Roma enjoy the same rights and opportunities as the rest of us. The policies with the Roma must be addressed with an open approach within the framework of the 2020 strategy. She valued the importance of developing a Plan for the Platform in the medium term, advancing in the Common Basic Principles, developing inclusion models and making the most of the potentials of the Structural Funds. She remarked that it is in Society's interest to solve problems of exclusion because of the costs that exclusion entails, and that we must foster a positive image of the Roma in society.

3. PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL POLICIES WITH THE ROMA POPULATION

The objective of the first roundtable was to take stock of initiatives with the Roma from the point of view of international organisations, bearing in mind the new scene, identifying the key elements and the challenges to overcome in the future. The roundtable chaired by the **Spanish Minister of Health and Social Policy, *Trinidad Jiménez García-Herrera***.

The President of the Open Society Institute, *George Soros*, began by highlighting that in the last twenty years, Europe, particularly countries with large numbers of Roma, has seen very strong economic growth which, instead of contributing towards improving the living conditions of the Roma, has had the opposite effect. Not only are there many Roma in a situation of exclusion, but they also face discrimination and violation of fundamental rights, as evidenced in recent rulings of the European Court of Human Rights. He stressed that to break the vicious circle of Roma exclusion we need to begin with education, and therefore suggested that the experiences of the Roma Education Fund be adopted and promoted by the Commission and copied at national level. The Roma issue, he stressed, is a European issue, which is why the European Union must build on the Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, developing a medium-term European Strategy and targeting all efforts to a common objective. He emphasised the need for the Roma to benefit from the European Funds, in line with the principle of *explicit but not exclusive targeting* and to actively involve the Member States. Lastly, he asked that the words and proposals of the Córdoba Summit be translated into practical measures by the Community Institutions.

The World Bank's Director of Strategy and Operations for the Region of Europe and Central Asia, *Theodore Ahlers*, began by pointing out that the data on the situation of the Roma in Europe are alarming. Based on the experience of the World Bank, he made four recommendations: The need for a Forum to co-ordinate policies, which could be the Platform; the need to promote specific instruments that facilitate change; the need to assess the different models of measures so as to provide evidence of the policies that work and quantitative information on the results; and the need to substantially increase the economic resources. He stressed that the inclusion of the Roma is a European issue, and the measures and projects should therefore be designed at European level and subsequently adapted. He remarked that public policies should take into account the economic impact of exclusion because, although the inclusion of the Roma costs money, studies show that the return on the investment is much greater.

***Livia Járóka*, Member of the European Parliament** began her intervention by announcing that the European Parliament has adopted a new resolution on the occasion of the Córdoba Summit *stressing the need to prepare an exhaustive European Strategy for the inclusion of the Roma population*. She reminded those present that, in Europe, one third of the Roma is poor and that this exclusion, which is particularly set in certain micro regions, costs Europe a lot of money. Education is the best mechanism for combating exclusion and should be a priority. The policies with the Roma should

particularly take into account the Common Basic Principles: two, *explicit but not exclusive targeting* and, four, *aiming for the mainstream*. Europe, she stressed, has to find a solution to this issue because it is a common European problem. Over the last four years the European Parliament has been calling for legislative progress and clear commitments, and there is a mandate from the European Parliament for a strategy to be prepared with objectives and indicators.

The Member of the Madrid Club, Philip Dimitrov, began by highlighting that a more ambitious political commitment is needed, in the shape of more economic investment; the return on this investment will multiply in time. He also reminded those present that this is a moral issue, since the Charter of Fundamental Rights applies to all European citizens. The priorities, in his opinion, must begin with education and access to employment, particularly taking into account the gender perspective and the local dimension, which is where more effective action can be taken. He explained that, in this area, the objectives of the Madrid Club are to monitor structures and policies, ensure that the legal framework protects the rights of individuals and to promote respect for and appreciation of Roma culture.

Pierre Lellouche, French Secretary of State for European Affairs, began by emphasising that Europe has traditionally been a land of shelter, immigration and solidarity and that today the Roma are second-class citizens in Europe. The Roma in Europe, he affirmed, must have the same rights and duties as the rest of the citizens, and discrimination is unacceptable. He centred on a particular problem which he feels is taking on a European dimension - human trafficking by networks of mafias, of which the Roma are prime victims. He stressed that this issue must be addressed at European level, but also highlighted the responsibility of the countries where these networks come from. We need to protect the victims of human trafficking, he affirmed, especially women and children, and we cannot use free movement as an excuse for turning a blind eye to organised trafficking, which must be stopped. As an example of bilateral co-operation in this area, he gave details of the agreement between France and Romania and the return policy currently being followed, and stressed that it would be recommendable to extend it to other countries.

Kori Udovicki, UN Assistant Secretary-General and UNDP Regional Director for Europe and the CIS, began by reminding those present that the inclusion of the Roma in Europe is a very complex issue which requires the participation of all the stakeholders. She therefore explained the approach of the United Nations, which involves working at regional level and establishing realistic objectives. She stressed that the priorities must focus on promoting education and employment, as well as eliminating prejudices and stereotypes. She spoke for a European strategy, with a follow-up and an assessment system necessarily combined with data gathering. She reminded everyone that we are precisely half way into the Decade and it is time for renewed efforts, setting more realistic objectives and increasing the involvement of the European Commission.

4. ASSESSMENT OF POLICIES: PROGRESS AND LIMITATIONS

The second plenary session was chaired by *Belinda Pyke*, Director of the DG for Equality, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the objective of which was to examine the current policies, their results and the changes that should be made to the policies to achieve a stronger impact. The chairwoman briefly outlined the core ideas of the Communication presented by the Commission and stressed that the prime responsibility for Roma inclusion lies with the Member States, although remarking that the European Union can play a very relevant role in pushing through policies and instruments. She also referred to the European Strategy 2020 and to one of its emblematic initiatives, the platform against poverty, which includes vulnerable groups like the Roma as well as other objectives related to education and employment. She valued the progress made by the Spanish Presidency, its proposal for the EPSCO conclusions and the commitments of the Trio.

The Deputy Director-General of the DG for Regional Policy, *Katarina Mathernová*, began by affirming that the Roma are the true losers of the transition and that the ten Common Basic Principles are fundamental, especially the second, *explicit but not exclusive approach*, and the fourth, *aiming for the mainstream*. She went on to mention the recent modification of Article 7 of the Regulation on the Structural Funds and the relevance and opportunities that the modification entail for the Roma, since the intention is to enable housing interventions based on an integrating and desegregating approach. She made reference to the Pilot Project set up by her Directorate General and stressed its value as a policy-learning, assessment and data-gathering tool. She also stressed the importance of the senior-level visits organised jointly between her Directorate General, the DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the DG for Agriculture, as a political tool.

The Deputy General Director of the European Social Fund's Managing Authority, *Carlos Tortuero*, presented the EURoma initiative, a network initiated as a result of a Spanish proposal made up of thirteen countries, each of which represented by the bodies responsible for the European Social Fund and the policies with the Roma. Its main objectives are sharing information, generating knowledge and transferring good practices in the framework of managing the Structural Funds. He stressed the added value of a network of this kind in the context of Europe, particularly in relation to exchanging information, developing co-operation and association relationships, co-ordination between administrations, and exploring specific issues. He presented the publication prepared by the EURoma network on the occasion of the Summit, which provides an overview of the results being obtained with the Roma population through the Structural Funds, and the challenges ahead.

The Council of Europe's Director General of Social Cohesion, *Alexander Vladychenko*, explained some of the initiatives introduced in the last few years by this institution, such as the Committee of Experts on Roma, initiatives in the area of mediation in education and health and awareness-raising campaigns. He placed special emphasis not only on the exclusion problems, but also on the discrimination and the lack of Human Rights guarantees suffered by the Roma. In this respect, he made reference to the work carried out by the European Commission against Racism Report on the II European Roma Summit.

and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, and to his recommendations for making progress in the area of eliminating prejudices and stereotypes and promoting equal opportunities. Lastly, he stressed that Roma issues must be reinforced at European level, and that European politicians have a moral duty to raise public awareness, defend Roma history and culture and create the right conditions for effective dialogue.

The Executive Director of ERIO, Ivan Ivanov, began by voicing the concern of many Roma leaders, as although there has been a great deal of debate on this subject in the last few years, they have not seen any significant results. He therefore echoed the demands of the European Roma Policy Coalition and stressed that urgent measures need to be taken, particularly with regard to defending the rights to education and employment. He pointed out that now is the time to advance towards a specific policy and a specific plan, giving priority to social and economic inclusion and based on guaranteed rights and equal access to goods and services. He spoke for a European integrated policy, in which the Structural Funds are an essential financing tool, and he emphasised that the Platform must go further and have a specific and operative action plan place. Lastly, he advocated for more political weight for the Platform and for developing defined Principles in the framework of the Platform.

Ludovit Galbavy, Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for the Roma Community, addressed those present in the capacity of the country holding the Presidency of the Decade for Roma Inclusion, and explained the objectives and the main initiatives of the Decade, as well as the results achieved in the last five years of the Decade. He particularly stressed the relevance of political processes in initiatives with the Roma, which should have a long-term perspective and focus on the key areas for Roma inclusion: employment, education, housing and health. He also mentioned the importance of co-operation between countries and the role that international institutions can play.

The Director of the European Union's Agency for Fundamental Rights, Morten Kjaerum, began by affirming that, according to research studies conducted by the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the Roma are prime targets of discrimination. The problem is therefore not just a question of social inclusion but of discrimination and rights. He stressed the need to approach all social inclusion policies from the perspective of Human Rights, justice and the promotion of equal opportunities. The challenge is therefore to achieve effective rights. He emphasised that the policies with the Roma should take into account certain principles and criteria which have already proven their effectiveness, such as the involvement of all the stakeholders, the leading role of the Roma, the integrated and multifaceted approach, and co-operation and association. He also mentioned the need to define clear objectives, establish indicators and place special emphasis on the role of Roma women.

5. IMPLEMENTING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR ROMA INCLUSION

Four roundtables were held in parallel, which explored the content, meaning and implications of four of the Common Basic Principles adopted within the European Platform for Roma Inclusion, as well as how those principles can guide and steer policies and measures carried out in the different territorial areas by the different stakeholders.

5.1 Roundtable one. Principle two “Explicit but not exclusive targeting.” Segregation versus integration. Specific projects with Roma versus general projects.

This roundtable was chaired by the Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Brussels, *Jan Jařab*. The participants were the Director of Fundación Secretariado Gitano, *Isidro Rodríguez Hernández*, the Commissioner for Polígono Sur in Seville, *Jesús Maeztu Gregorio de Tejada*, the President of the National Agency for the Roma of Romania, *Ilie Dincă*, the Director of the Roma Education Fund, *Tobias Linden*, and the Director of the European Social Fund (ESF) of the European Commission’s Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, *Thomas Bender*. The debate focused on the implications of this principle in the use of the Structural Funds, housing policies, access to general services, school integration and the use of the ESF.

The principle “explicit but not exclusive targeting” is based on the conviction that without a specific Roma target, the policies, programmes and projects may not reach the Roma population. On the other hand, policies and programmes exclusively aimed at the Roma may be segregating and, as a result, disapproved by society as a whole. Explicit targeting means that policies must be sensitive to the culture and characteristics of the Roma population, and must always empower the beneficiaries to gain access to general programmes. A good balance between Roma access to broader programmes and to programmes adapted to those who cannot gain access to general resources is the most adequate approach (Isidro Rodríguez).

The Spanish experience shows that the situation of the Roma has improved a great deal in the last decades, mainly because the social protection systems and policies (housing, employment, access to pensions) have been inclusive with the Roma. At the same time, these broad policies aimed at the population as a whole have been supplemented with specific measures aimed at solving the specific problems faced by the Roma, for example, living in shanty towns, or at compensating for disadvantages found to be insuperable. It is important for the services to be localised, adapted to the population living in the area, and conceived in a participative manner (Jesús Maeztu).

Target or explicit services must be used to include the Roma in general policies (Toby Linden); the emphasis must be placed on the particular needs of each group, given that not all Roma find themselves in the same circumstances. We must ensure that the general services are not excluding. On the other hand, we should not reject the role of affirmative policies which have also had positive results with the Roma. Experience

has shown that different targeting can function in different contexts (Thomas Bender); however, what we must always reject is segregation and all measures conducive to it.

In the debates, this working group reinforced the need to move towards a European Strategy, with a strengthened role of the Platform, in which the Structural Funds are to play a more inclusive role. *Targeting*, i.e., explicit measures, are necessary for overcoming segregation, which requires, for instance, that the Operative Programmes of the Structural Funds make explicit reference to the Roma.

5.2 Roundtable two. Principle five: “Awareness of the gender dimension”. Gender, inequalities and discrimination.

This roundtable was chaired by the Spanish Secretary-General for Equality Policies, **Isabel María Martínez Lozano**, with the participation of **Gabriela Hrabaňová**, of the Czech State Council for the Roma Community, **Soraya Post**, of the International Roma Women’s Network, **Carmen Santiago Reyes**, of the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF), and **Ostalinda Maya Ovale**, of the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC). They addressed issues related to discrimination against Roma women and their participation in social intervention processes at national and international level.

Principle number five conveys that Roma inclusion policies need to take account of the problems and circumstances of Roma women, and makes reference to such issues as multiple discrimination, access to healthcare and child support, domestic violence and exploitation. Despite the progress made in the last few years, evidence was given of the heterogeneous situation and vulnerability of Roma women in Europe. To overcome this, we need to investment in key policies (housing, education, employment), and ensure that the gender perspective runs through the Ten Common Basic Principles. Equality must be demanded at all levels, not only in access to basic services but also in active participation in social and political processes. For this, a more active and vindicatory role is required of Roma women, as well as a more ambitious claim for prominence.

Roma women face challenges inside and outside their communities. Inside, they must transform traditional aspects that hinder their promotion; and outside, they must be more vindicating on the issue of the Roma exclusion in general and combating racism and discrimination, etc. To achieve this, it is very important to strengthen and promote *role models* based on the many Roma women who are already activists and are playing a leading role in society. The persons who participated in this group called on the administrations to offer more support to Roma women, as well as more spaces for meetings, debates and exchanging thoughts.

It was suggested that the Structural Funds should have minimum requirements based on human rights’ standards and that the pre-adhesion funds should take into account, in a specific manner and as a condition for using them, the situation of Roma women. On another front, it was repeatedly stressed that it is necessary to gather data broken

down by ethnic group and gender for the purpose of designing and monitoring policies.

5.3 Table three. Principle seven: “Use of Community instruments”. How can EU instruments be more effective at local level?

This table was chaired by *Apolonio Ruiz Liger*, Vice Governor of the Council of Europe’s Development Bank, with the participation of the Serbian Vice Prime Minister for European Integration and Minister of Science and Technological Development, *Božidar Đjelic*, the Swedish State Secretary for Integration and Gender Equality, *Christer Hallerby*, the representative of the Department of Debrecen, Hungary, *Tibor Pávay*, the Director of the World Bank’s Human Development Department for the Region of Europe and Central Asia, *Tamar Manuelyan Atinc*, and *Niall Crowley*, in representation of Equinet, a network of independent and expert bodies in combating discrimination. They addressed issues related to the pre-adhesion instruments, European policies at local level, the role of municipalities, the effectiveness of senior-level visits, the economic costs of Roma exclusion and the effectiveness of the Anti-discrimination Directives.

Principle seven stresses that Member States should make full use of Community instruments - legal, financial and co-ordination – in developing and implementing policies targeted to the Roma. Lack of data, expertise and stable policies impede better use of Community instruments. If we add the lack of expertise, especially of Roma entities, and the dispersion and complexity of the different financial instruments (Božidar Đjelic), this means that the Community instruments are often inaccessible. Simplification, better co-ordination and support in access to these instruments are necessary.

For the Community instruments to be effective at municipal level, municipalities must realise that they must take stock of the Roma issue, develop communication and take effective measures (Christer Hallerby). This requires specific measures, empowering politicians and professionals, and introducing structures that potentiate the most important role of municipalities – ensuring that the Roma perspective is central to their policies.

The research study into the costs of exclusion clearly reveals three things (Tamar Manuelyan Atinc): that the Roma population does not successfully participate in the labour market; that this generates big losses for society, from the perspective of productivity and taxation; and that investment in education inclusion is the most profitable. Going by demographic trends, it appears that this situation can deteriorate even more, especially in certain countries. It is therefore stressed that the priority is to invest in education, with special emphasis on the transition from primary to secondary education.

The equal treatment bodies of many European countries are particularly concerned with discrimination against the Roma community. In addition to measures in the areas

of education and employment, we need to allocate resources to promoting equal treatment, combating prejudices and stereotypes, and empowering communities to defend their rights (Niall Crowley). To do this, we need to overcome two fundamental problems: on the one hand, the low level of information on complaints, discrimination offenses, etc., against which we must strengthen the culture of exercising rights and empower the Roma; and, on the other hand, we need to promote defence actions and invest in awareness-raising.

The participants in the debate stressed the need to take specific steps: suggesting that the 2020 strategy should take the costs of exclusion into account, that future Structural Funds regulations should make reference to the Common Basic Principles, that measures should be pushed through within the framework of Article 7, following the criteria of integrality and principle two (explicit but not exclusive targeting), and that the Platform should play a key role in supporting and boosting these measures. Several participants stressed that the European Funds should be made conditional on the administrations following the principle of desegregation.

5.4 Roundtable four: Principle nine: “Involvement of civil society”. Attracting civil society towards Roma causes.

Roundtable number four was chaired by the Senior Advisor of OSCE ODIHIR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti, **Andrzej Mirga**. The participants were **Lisa Jordan**, of the European Foundations Centre, **David Mark**, of Civic Alliance of Romania, **Kinga Góncz**, Member of the European Parliament (ESP, HU), **Juan de Dios Ramírez Heredia**, former Member of the European Parliament, and **Orhan Galjus**, journalist. They addressed the role of the Foundations, Roma organisations and leaders, the media and the European Parliament.

Principle nine stresses that Member States need to design, develop, implement and assess Roma inclusion initiatives and policies in close co-operation with civil society actors such as non-governmental organisations, social partners, researchers and academics. The chairperson put forward the weaknesses of Roma civil society, its lack of empowerment and the difficulty faced by NGOs in obtaining resources. We need to strengthen and give a new boost to Roma organisations so that they can effectively play their role and involve and mobilise the community. To strengthen them, the administrations need to be open to co-operation, participation and working together (David Mark). When Roma organisations are organised and work well, they make themselves heard and can therefore have more influence in policies.

Some of the table participants (Orhan Galjus, Juan de Dios) stressed the need for the recognition of the Roma people by the Community institutions and for the necessary support to be given to the Roma movement. More prominence and recognition was claimed for Roma leaders, who must have at least two characteristics: independence and representativeness. On another front, we must be aware of the fact that political unity in the Roma community is a myth (Juan de Dios), since there are right-wing and



left-wing Roma and they are as plural as the rest of society. We also need to recognise new leadership realities, such as evangelical ministers.

The most important issue for the European Parliament is how civil society can make itself heard (Kinga Góncz), particularly after the Lisbon Treaty. The Parliament wants to be directly connected to civil society, not just to the lobbies in Brussels, but to the small grassroots organisations. The Lisbon Treaty not only strengthens the role of the Parliament but accepts the possibility of elevating citizen initiatives and fully implements the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Roma organisations were called to exercise more pressure on Community institutions so that the fundamental rights of the Roma are guaranteed, the Structural Funds reach the Roma and spaces are opened for Roma participation.

The European Foundations can be important partners in the promotion and defence of the Roma (Lisa Jordan). In fact, a large number of them are implementing programmes in the most diverse fields, such as infant education, the defence of rights, the promotion of micro-credits, etc. In the debates generated around the presentations of the table, the participants repeatedly stressed the need for more active support to the Roma community from the Community institutions, recognition of the role of the Roma and strengthening the role of Roma civil society, taking account its diversity.

6. HEALTH OF THE ROMA POPULATION AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES.

The roundtable was chaired by the **Spanish Secretary-General of Public Health, José Martínez Olmos**, and focused on the health of the Roma population and social inequalities. The objective of the roundtable was to examine the indicators of the determining factors of social inequalities in health and the way in which these inequalities affect the Roma. The presentations were given by **Isabel de la Mata**, Principal Advisor in Public Health of the DG of Health and Consumer Protection, **Erio Ziglio**, Director of the World Health Organisation's European Office for Investment in Health and Development, and **Kvetoslava Rimárová** of the University of Košice's MEHO Project on Roma Health.

As well as chairing the roundtable, the **Spanish Secretary-General of Public Health, José Martínez Olmos**, gave a presentation on the research work being conducted in Spain with the objective of obtaining information on the health situation of the groups at greater risk of social exclusion, particularly the Roma, and adopting measures to alleviate these situations. Despite the significant progress made in the social and healthcare situation of the Roma community in Spain, there continue to be inequalities founded on discrimination, social and economic conditions and bad use of healthcare services. Therefore, a specific strategy has been designed in co-operation with the Fundación Secretariado Gitano and the Roma community. Mr. Olmos also explained some of the advances which the Spanish Presidency wants to achieve in the area of health inequalities, based on the Communication from the European Commission.

Isabel de la Mata, Principal Advisor in Public Health of the DG of Health and Consumer Protection, presented the course of action of the European Commission in this area, particularly focusing on the European Public Health Programme 2008 – 2013, which pursues three main objectives: improve the health security of European citizens, reduce health inequalities with a particular focus on infant health, and generate and disseminate health information knowledge. These objectives are particularly relevant to improving the health of the most vulnerable collectives, including the Roma population. Isabel de la Mata also highlighted the progress which the recent Communication from the Commission entails and the steps being taken on the basis thereof.

Erio Ziglio, Director of the World Health Organisation's European Office for Investment in Health and Development, began by outlining some of the social determining factors of the state of health individuals, highlighting levels of income, living conditions and the contexts in which individuals live as key factors. He later focused on the role of the healthcare system and stressed the need to improve care and prevention, which requires guaranteed and sufficient resources adapted to the needs of the population. He highlighted that, in many countries, the health inequalities gap is widening and that social problems eventually turn into health problems.

Kvetoslava Rimárová of the MEHO Project reminded those present that health problems are associated with levels of education, housing and life-style habits. Nutrition and physical exercise are other decisive factors. She highlighted four things learnt in the project: it is important to improve education, employment and housing through global policies; education for women is decisive and must take place before, during and after pregnancy; prevention policies need to be adopted and, more importantly, access to drinking water must be guaranteed; experiences with Roma mediators generate positive results.

To liven the debate, the video “*El arte de vivir sano*” (the art of healthy living) was projected. After the video, several issues were discussed, such as the need to obtain broken down data and the difficulty that this entails, the need for research in this area, cross-sector programmes, prevention and adaptation to the singularities and circumstances of the Roma. The health inequalities of the Roma essentially stem from the social factors which influence one's health. The measures aimed at reducing these inequalities must therefore be integrated into all policies on health and social care, employment, housing, education, etc. Health is a resource for life and a fundamental human right; the health of the entire population must be promoted throughout the life cycle, with special emphasis on infancy and maternity and explicitly catering to the needs of the most vulnerable groups; the involvement of the Roma is key to reducing health inequalities.

7. CONCLUSIONS OF THE PLENARY SESSION AND THE ROUNDTABLES

Provided below are the most relevant ideas put forward by the speakers and the participants during the Summit:

7.1 Substantial progress in the debates but scarce in practice

The Summit participants confirmed that the Roma issue is increasingly gaining more prominence on the Community agenda. The European Parliament has shown a clear commitment to the Roma issue; it has approved five resolutions in five years, has established key measures, and is stressing the need for a European strategy. The Council has adopted conclusions (three times in three years) and is likely to do so again during the Spanish Presidency. Different Directorates General of the Commission are getting more actively involved in the Roma issue, the report from the Commission presented on the occasion of this Summit clearly shows increased activity, and its Communication promises future commitments.

In the period between the First Summit (Brussels September 2008) and this Second Summit, substantial progress has been made:

- The Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion has been set up with the aim of exchanging good practices, promoting analytical support and stimulating co-operation.
- The Ten Common Basic Principles have been established and particular emphasis is placed on the second (explicit but not exclusive targeting) and the fourth (aiming for the mainstream).
- Article 7 of the Structural Funds Regulation has been modified with the aim of fostering an integral approach to housing interventions.
- The Roma issue is familiar in many European meetings.
- There is more recognition (studies conducted by the Fundamental Rights Agency, and reports published by the Commission and other players).

However, the living conditions of the Roma are not improving and, in many cases, are deteriorating

- The Roma population has not only failed to progress on a par with the economic development of countries, but in many cases the situation of the Roma has deteriorated and the effects of the financial crisis can aggravate the situation even more.
- The Roma population continues to be the most rejected in most European countries and prejudices and stereotypes are increasing.
- In some cases, attacks on the integrity of individuals and violations of fundamental rights continue to take place.
- Despite increased co-ordination, co-operation between the different institutions and international processes (European Union, Decade, OSCE, Council of Europe, etc) continues to be insufficient.
- Horizontal co-operation between countries has failed to make progress, expect in specific cases and initiatives like EURoma.

- The Roma are beginning to benefit from the Structural Funds, but there is no evidence of big impacts.
- Spaces for Roma participation at European level and participation mechanisms have not been developed.

The general feeling among the Summit participants is that we need to shift from declarations and resolutions to deeper and bolder commitments with stronger impact.

7.2 The commonly assumed principles

The Summit confirmed that, at European level, there are working principles, approaches and criteria which have been commonly assumed by most of the players and form part of the general consensus on how to address policies and projects with the Roma. The Ten Common Basic Principles are an important step forward in this respect. However, in many cases, these commonly assumed principles and criteria have not been put into practice. It is established that:

- Continuing and long-term measures (generational) are essential to achieving impacts.
- Measures cannot be developed from one perspective alone. Three complementary perspectives are needed: the perspective of guaranteed human rights and the promotion of equal treatment; the perspective of social and economic promotion and integration; and the perspective of full citizenship, including the promotion of the culture as a fundamental value.
- The Roma perspective must be central to the most relevant policies (*mainstreaming*).
- The mainstreaming approach must be supplemented with explicit targeting to compensate for disadvantages.
- There must be an integrated initiative, focused on the four basic pillars: education, employment, housing and health.
- Co-operation and association, the involvement of all the players and the role of civil society are essential.
- To break the vicious circle of exclusion, initiatives aimed at women, young people and children must be a priority.
- We must get the Roma actively involved in the projects (with the Roma) fostering their empowerment and increasing support to Roma organisations.
- The efforts must be multi-level: at European, national, regional and local level.
- Guaranteed rights are fundamental and a prerequisite, on the basis of which we must foster greater responsibility and commitment from the Roma.

7.3 The need for a stronger effort and commitment

Most of the Summit participants called for a more ambitious political commitment from the Member States and the European Commission, in the shape of more effective measures and resources. In this respect, the proposals included:

1. The Roma should be an essential part of the European Union's key policies:
 - The Strategy 2020 and its key measures.
 - The Roma perspective must be central to key policies (*mainstreaming*).
 - A large group of the participants stressed the need for a strategy and a specific policy.
2. All the Community instruments should be fully employed to guarantee the rights of the Roma population.
 - The possibilities provided by the New European Union Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.
 - Effective compliance with the anti-discrimination directives.
3. All the possibilities of the financial instruments should be used, in particular the Structural Funds:
 - Empowerment of entities to access and manage the funds.
 - More transparency, information and data (broken down by ethnic group and gender.)
 - More integrated measures.
 - Long-term measures.
 - Effective use of Article 7
 - Subject access to the funds to desegregating policies
 - The future Structural Funds regulations should reflect the needs of the Roma.
4. New approaches and working methods are required, taking into account:
 - That more data, more transparency and more reporting are required.
 - That the results must be quantified and there must more emphasis on impacts.
 - That desegregation is a key issue.
 - That explicit but not exclusive targeting is essential (principle two.)
 - That the perspective of the costs of exclusion should be taken into account.
 - That new issues of political concern must be taken into account: begging, exploitation, human trafficking, etc.
5. The existing instruments must be more effective and need to be fully implemented.
 - Advance in the development of the Platform's road map and explore all of its potentials.
 - Increased effort, support, co-ordination and promotion are asked of the Commission in co-operation with the Member States.
6. The policies must be more specific and the objectives more precise.



- All the actors must get involved.
 - The main responsibility lies with the Member States.
 - The Commission must play an active promotion, support and co-ordination role.
 - Local involvement is essential.
7. Education is the priority in breaking the inter-generational exclusion gap.
- Desegregation at school is fundamental.
 - Special attention must be paid to the transition between primary and secondary education.
8. The Roma must have more prominence.
- More spaces for participation are needed.
 - More public and political presence is required of the Roma.
 - Better self-organisation.
 - Give priority to women, children and young people.
9. The Common Basic Principles must be operative.
- Translating them into methods of action.
 - Developing specific models for putting the principles into practice.

Following the conclusions presentation, the representatives of the TRIO commented on the conclusions and talked about their plans and future commitments for the period of their respective presidencies. The Table was chaired by the **Spanish Secretary-General for Social Policy and Consumer Protection, Francisco Moza Zapatero**, who emphasised the importance of this Summit and the progress achieved, given that it has been an opportunity for taking stock of the current situation and establishing future objectives. He highlighted that, for Spain, the Roma issue is very important at both national level, where a new Roma Development Action Plan is about to be introduced, and European level, where Spain wishes to continue to make progress right to the end of its Presidency.

The Belgian Secretary of State for Social Integration, Philippe Courard, stressed the message of the Summit participants - that concrete measures are required. Consequently, Belgium will continue to work within the framework of the joint declaration by the Trio. He stressed the importance of working from the perspective of Human Rights, and the priority that must be given to child poverty in order to break the reproduction of the generational circle of poverty. He also highlighted the need for Roma mediators in social programmes as a means of getting the Roma community more actively involved.

The Hungarian representative, Judit Szentirmai, spoke on behalf of the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, **László Herczog**, and explained that, for her country, the Roma issue is very important not only because of the demographic weight of this population, particularly in certain regions of the country, but because of the measures



they are introducing. She confirmed her country's commitment and will to continue to advance at European level within the framework of the advances and the conclusions of the Council and the joint declaration by the Trio.

Lastly, **the Spanish Secretary-General for Social Policy and Consumer Protection, Francisco Moza Zapatero**, presented the **Córdoba Declaration**, adopted by the TRIO and stressed the importance of the fact that, for the first time, three countries are making a joint commitment within the framework of a Summit, which guarantees continuity. He highlighted the most important aspects of the Declaration, which focus on three main objectives: Ensuring that the Roma issue is central to all relevant policies (*mainstreaming*); the importance of guaranteeing increased access to financial instruments, particularly the Structural Funds; and the need to advance in the efforts of the Platform, drawing up a road map for the Platform. The Secretary-General also explained that Spain is making satisfactory progress in the presentation of Conclusions, expected to be approved by the ESPCO Council in the month of June, in line with the declaration by the Trio. Lastly, he manifested the will of the Spanish Presidency to arrange a meeting of the Platform in the month of June in order to advance in the recommendations of this Summit and the Conclusions of the Council.

8. CLOSING SESSION

The closing session was chaired by the **Spanish Minister for Equality, Bibiana Aido Almagro**, who began by stressing that the time for turning words into action has come. She reminded those present that precisely on that day, in Spain, the Spanish Government had approved an Action Plan for Roma Development 2010-2012. She stressed the need to condemn outbreaks of racism against the Roma and to educate in mutual respect. She emphasised the values of the Roma language and culture and stressed that the participation of the Roma, who are the real leading players, is vital and went on to reaffirm the values and potentials of Roma women. She confirmed the commitment of her Ministry to combat all forms of discrimination and announced that the Ministry is preparing an Equality bill against all forms of discrimination, convinced that a discriminating society is unjust and inefficient.

Valentin Mocanu, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection of Romania, began by affirming that the situation of the Roma in Romania and Europe is a social and a moral problem, and measures therefore need to be taken both at national and European level.

Nicolae Gheorge, Expert on Roma issues, stressed that the language we use in conferences and summits cannot be understood and that we need to make an effort to translate it in a way that can be understood by everyone, with clearer messages. In his opinion, the fundamental crisis of the Roma today is lack of prominence. We must concentrate on adapting the Roma to the European market, connecting education to employment, their culture to the economy. He stressed that the priority should be children, that emphasis should be placed on the rights of children, and that it is risky to associate the Roma with human trafficking, given that the problems should not only



be addressed from the point of view of law and order but also by involving human rights' activists.

Beatriz Carrillo, Representative of the Spanish State Council of the Roma People, emphasised the symbiosis between the Roma and the Andalusian culture, reminding those present that the Roma community has nomadic roots and has never believed in political borders. She spoke about the rich culture of the Roma and stressed that the European Union must answer to the needs of the most disadvantaged; therefore, she said, Córdoba must mark a turning point.

The Minister without portfolio of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Nezdet Mustafa, highlighted the importance of the ethnic minorities in his country, specifically the Roma; which is why his country has an ethnic minorities plan in place, in which education is a prime issue and specific needs are met. He manifested his hope that Córdoba will represent a step towards concrete policies at European level.

Safet Halilovic, Minister for Human Rights of Bosnia Herzegovina, reminded those present that after the Balkan wars more than 2,200,000 persons were displaced in his country, and still today half a million persons are homeless. That means that, for his country, the housing issue is vitally important. He explained that since the year 2005, his country has a national strategy and an action plan in place, and that his country wishes to co-operate more with the European Union.

The Serbian Deputy Prime Minister for EU Integration, Božidar Djelic, began by reminding those present that many Roma have done a lot for society as a result of their personal situations and demands. In his country, they have set up an integral plan and hope that the conclusions of the Summit will give rise to concrete policies and financial instruments at European level. He placed emphasis on the need to simplify the mechanisms and systems of access to European funds, as there are many bureaucratic difficulties and obstacles, and also stressed the need for the Summit to contribute to specific progress.

The Finnish Minister for Social Affairs and Health, Liisa Hyssälä, began by reminding those present that the Roma issue concerns everyone. She explained that, in this area, her country follows a *mainstreaming* policy and a specific targeting policy in parallel, both from the national and the local perspective. Finland has an action plan in place which includes 150 measures based on defending rights but also meeting civic obligations, combining anti-discrimination measures with fostering social protection. She stressed her country's readiness to share experiences and emphasised the need to activate the Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion with the involvement of the Member States, the Commission and other stakeholders. The Platform, she stressed, must have a clear mandate, and the Córdoba Summit therefore needs a follow-up.

At the end, the interventions of the closing session were concluded by the **European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor,** who began by highlighting that this Summit has been important and needs a follow-up. He reminded those present that the situation of the Roma has deteriorated in recent Report on the II European Roma Summit.

Córdoba 8 & 9 April 2010



years as a result of the financial crisis, increasing intolerance and violence and social expenditure cuts. Many Roma people are trapped in the vicious circle of poverty. He stressed that in the area of planning, much progress has been made but little impact achieved. The Commission is firmly committed to putting the recent Communication into practice. He presented the 2020 Strategy as an opportunity for Roma inclusion, not only because of the emblematic initiative for combating poverty, but the anticipated measures in the area of education, etc. The policies with the Roma, he emphasised, must be included in the framework of Fundamental Rights and need the effective support of the Structural Funds. The Commission must lend support to countries and provide working models, with an adequate combination of instruments; **it is time to take action**, he concluded.



**JOINT DECLARATION BY THE TRIO
(SPAIN, BELGIUM & HUNGARY)
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SECOND ROMA SUMMIT
HELD IN CÓRDOBA (8 & 9 APRIL 2010)**

The Roma population, currently numbering between ten and twelve million people, has been living in Europe for centuries. Many of its members find themselves in a situation of exclusion, affecting such basic areas of daily life as access to education, unemployment and job insecurity, poor housing conditions and health inequalities. These situations are often aggravated by discrimination, social rejection and lack of guaranteed access to basic rights. Women and children are particularly affected by these problems. This segregation hinders equal access to housing and to such basic needs as social and health services and the education system, and relegates them to low-quality services.

In recent years, the Roma issue has gained prominence on the agendas of EC Institutions and many Member States. This is evidenced by the successive Resolutions of the European Parliament in 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009 and the one recently approved on 25 March 2010 on the occasion of this Summit. The European Commission not only has intensified efforts to include the Roma in its programmes and activities, but has also improved co-ordination between its different programmes and units. The Trio welcomes the Progress Report presented by the Commission in this Summit and the accompanying Communication outlining priorities and challenges for the future.

Since 2007, the Council has adopted Conclusions on four occasions, with the aim of intensifying European and national policies on Roma inclusion; further conclusions are expected to be adopted during the Spanish Presidency, which will mean another step in the right direction. The First European Roma Summit held in Brussels in 2008 and the establishment of the Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion in order to *organise and exchange good practices and experiences between the Member States in the area of Roma inclusion, provide analytical support and encourage co-operation between all the stakeholders concerned by Roma issues, including the organisations representing the Roma*, are good examples of the significant progress achieved.

The current Trio, comprised of Spain, Belgium and Hungary, believes that the time has come to give a boost to the Roma dossier and achieve substantial improvement in the social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe, within the framework of the Decisions and Recommendations adopted by the European institutions in recent years. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the current policies and instruments are fully implemented and operate effectively from a medium-term perspective.

Therefore, the Trio commits itself to:

- Advance in ensuring that Roma issues are central to European and national policies (*mainstreaming Roma issues*) by introducing specific actions in favour of the social and economic inclusion of the Roma into European strategies and instruments. This cross-cutting approach must be guaranteed in such areas as fundamental rights, the gender perspective, personal security, protection against discrimination, poverty and social exclusion, regional cohesion, economic development, access to education, housing, health, employment, social services, justice, sports and culture. This cross-cutting approach should also be considered in relationships with third countries with a large Roma population.
- Improve in designing a road map for the Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion, so that it establishes a framework for medium-term action, defines objectives and goals to met, prioritises key issues to be addressed and strengthens horizontal co-operation between the Member States and civil society, backed by the fundamental support and motivation of the Commission in organising meetings and activities. In the framework of the Platform, there are plans to offer guidance and support to facilitate the implementation and practical application of the Ten Common Basic Principles.
- Ensure that the existing financial instruments of European Union, in particular the Structural Funds, are accessible to the Roma, address their needs and have a positive impact on improving their living conditions. In this respect, the recent modification of Article 7 of the Regulations on the Structural Funds is particularly relevant, as well as the opportunities it offers for launching integrated initiatives aimed at improving their living conditions and eliminating segregation in rural and urban areas.
- Propose the introduction of minimum requirements in the granting of EU funds so that the Roma are ensured equal access to the funds, which is essential step to strengthening social inclusion. Moreover, the procedures for granting these funds should be simplified in order to ensure equal opportunities of access to the resources. Therefore, in the modification of the regulations on the European Social Fund and the Regional Development Funds, the three following three principles will be put into practice: 1. Promoting equal access to the resources; 2. Eradicating segregation; and 3. Ensuring integral development.

The Trio intends to turn back to the conclusions and the messages of the Second Roma Summit in the political process and activities developed in this and the next two Presidencies. The Trio Presidency will organise a conference on child poverty and *homelessness*, with special emphasis on the Roma. Likewise, it will pay particular



attention to the problems of the Roma in the labour market and will organise a meeting of the Integrated Platform for Roma Inclusion in the first half of 2011.

The Trio Presidency will stand up firmly against stigmatisation and will seek to improve co-ordination and co-operation with the Commission and the Parliament, as well as co-operating with other political processes, such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015 and the OSCE Action Plan, within the framework of the Recommendations of the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

Córdoba, 9 April 2010