

European Platform for Roma Inclusion 2017: "Transition from education to employment"

Report from the meeting in Brussels, 27-28 November 2017

The 2017 European Platform for Roma inclusion was dedicated to the challenges related to the transition of Roma from education to employment. The thematic focus was decided and the Platform was prepared in close cooperation with the European level umbrella Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations. Roma remain heavily underrepresented in the labour market, with high numbers of people being unemployed. A high share of young Roma (15-24) is neither in employment, nor following post-compulsory education or training. The combination of various factors, such as poverty and deprivation, low level of education and skills, discrimination in both education and employment constitute serious structural labour market barriers for Roma, also in the enlargement region.

The 2017 European Platform for Roma inclusion fostered participatory interaction among the more than 250 participants, including representatives of European and national Roma and pro-Roma civil society organisations, national and local authorities of the EU Member States and enlargement countries, European institutions, international organisations, trade unions and academia.

DAY 1 - STARTING TOGETHER



The meeting started with two parallel workshops in the afternoon of 27 November. Both workshops focused on aspects preventing young Roma to successfully manage transition from education to employment, with one workshop focusing on educational aspects and the second workshop focusing on employment aspects. Kick-off speakers and workshop participants discussed conditions for successful transition from education to employment and actions necessary to put them in place at European, national and regional/local level. These include:

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- Fighting antigypsyism and discrimination as key barriers for successful transitions;
- The need for benchmarks, indicators and effective monitoring of progress in Roma integration;
- The importance of promoting and managing diversity both in classrooms and at the workplace;
- Ending segregation and unequal access for Roma to quality inclusive mainstream education;
- The importance of empowerment and involvement of Roma, also in decision-making; the positive impact successful role models can have in this respect;
- The importance of educational curricula and skills development in line with labour market and local needs;
- Access to quality vocational education and training (VET) for Roma youth as a prerequisite for the development of vocational skills;
- The important role of entrepreneurial education and training for Roma youth;
- The need for better mainstreaming of the specific difficulties of Roma in youth employment, self-employment and social entrepreneurship initiatives at all levels;
- The importance of support measures, such as mentoring, mediation, training in writing CVs, acquiring soft skills;

The first day of the European Roma Platform culminated with a cultural music program performed by students of the [Snétberger Music Talent School](#). The Talent Center is an exemplary-school, where disadvantaged Roma students receive world-class quality musical training, vital for their successful musical career. The Centre, led by Ferenc Snétberger, world-famous guitarist of Romani origin helps 60 young gifted musicians each year he opportunity to expand their musical abilities. Given the topic of the 2017 Roma Platform, focused on the transition from education to employment, the outstanding performance of the talented Roma youngsters was an example in itself of what one is capable of achieving if the opportunity is provided.

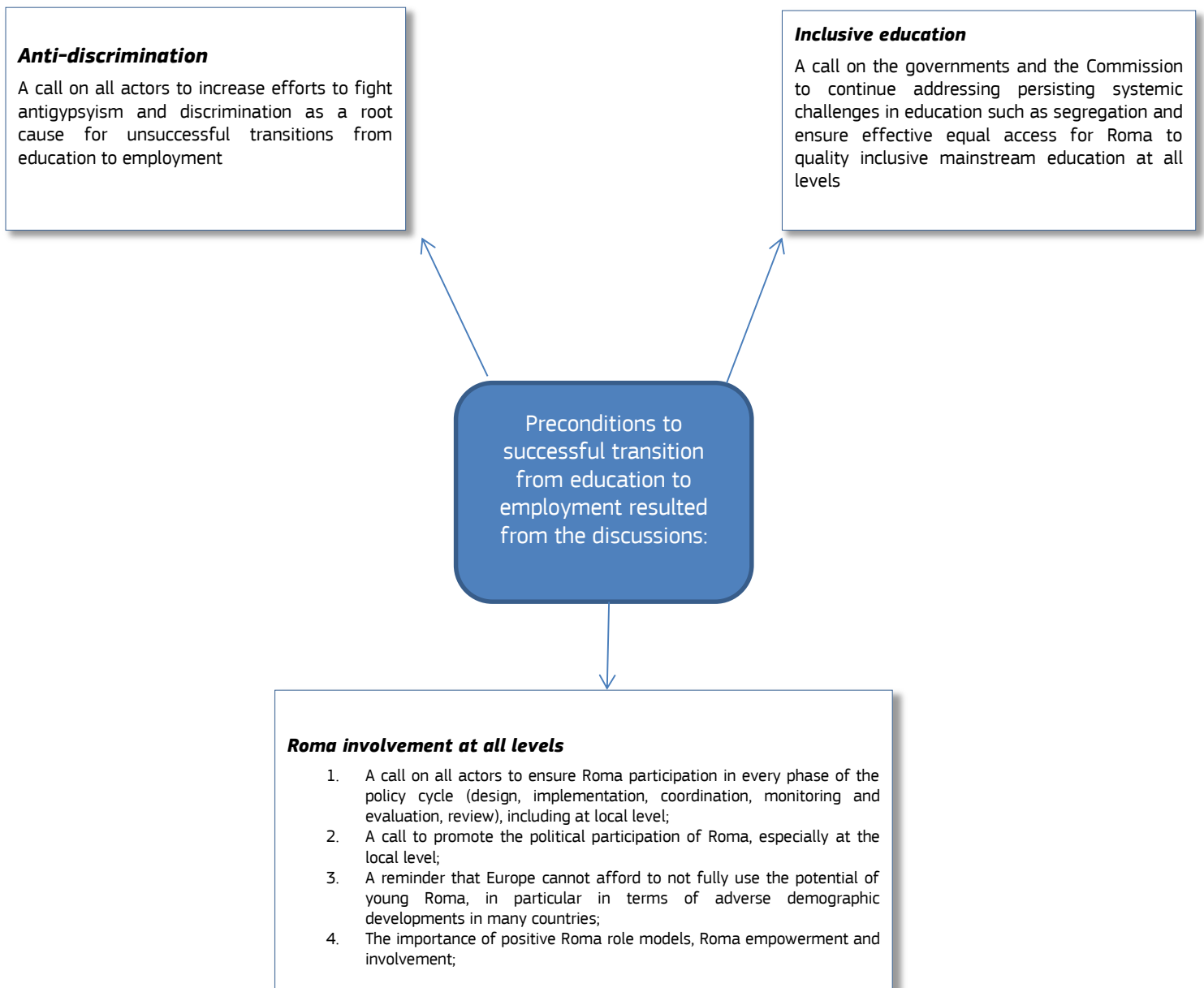
DAY 2 – POLITICAL PANELS

On 28 November, workshop rapporteurs presented these messages emerging from the workshops to two high-level political panels. The messages were then further discussed and summarised in a final wrap-up session.

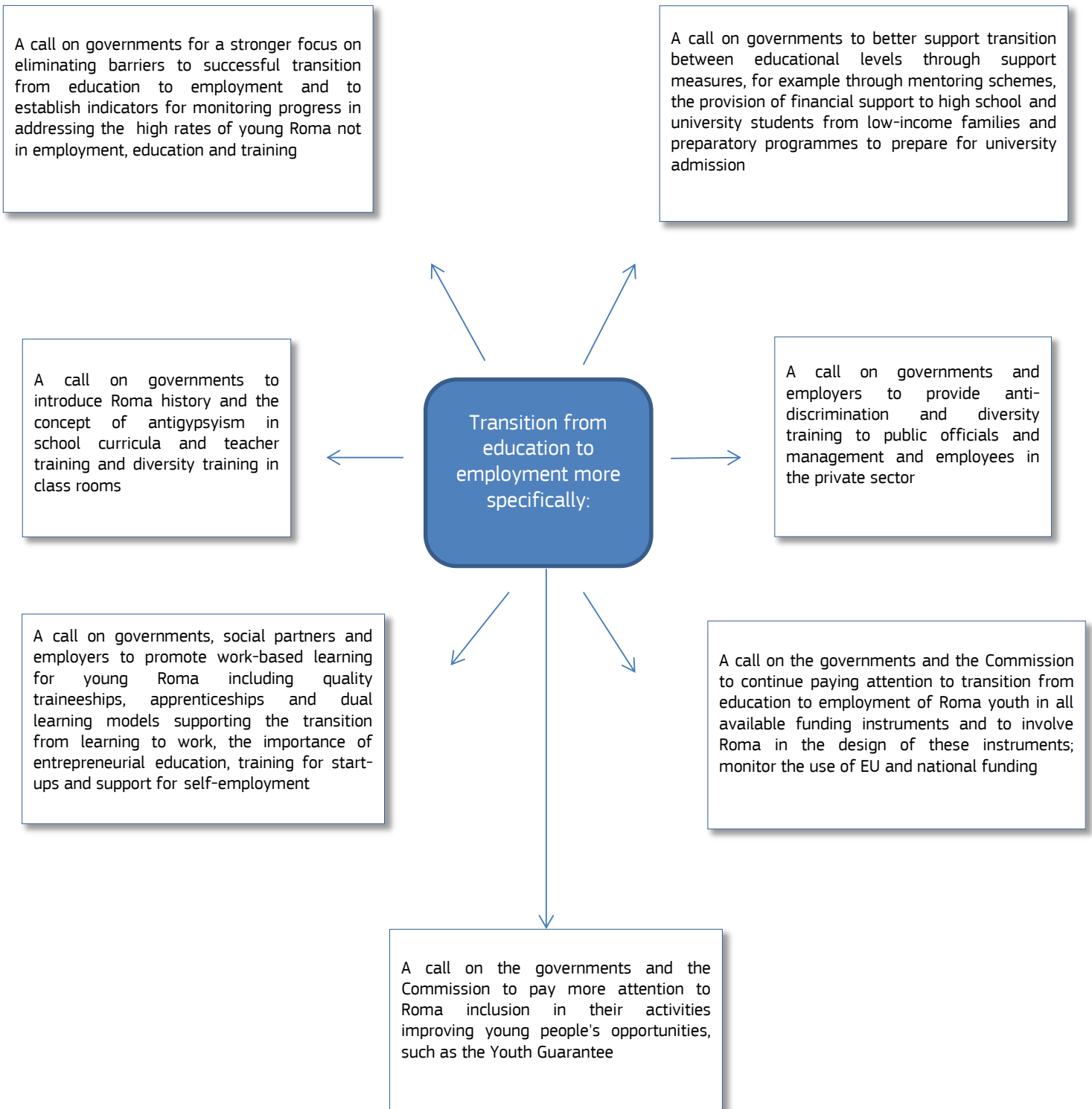


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The following main outcomes of the 11th meeting of the European Platform for Roma inclusion can be identified:



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Overall, once again, the European Platform for Roma inclusion has proven to be an important forum for exchange and sharing experience, calling for further action for the inclusion of Roma people in the EU and the enlargement region.