

**Presentation to the European Commission of Denmark's National Roma<sup>1</sup> Inclusion Strategy**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this presentation is to inform the European Commission of the Danish approach to Roma inclusion.

On 5 April 2011, the Commission adopted its communication an *EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020* and hereby encouraging the Member States to develop or revise national strategies for Roma inclusion. The Commission called for a priority of the four areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing.

On 19 May 2011, the EPSCO Council adopted a set of Conclusions on the Commission's Communication. The member States expressed their commitment to the EU Framework for Roma inclusion and agreed, by the end of 2011, to work out national strategies for Roma inclusion by developing new strategies or by updating or revising existing integrated sets of policy measures.

It was stressed that the Member States' national approaches should be in proportion to the size and specific situation of their respective Roma populations.

Against this background, the Danish approach to Roma inclusion is presented below.

**1) Description of the current situation for Roma in Denmark**

The Respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities are core values in Denmark, as they are in the European Union as a whole.

Furthermore, the Danish welfare system is founded on principles of universal and equal access to health, education, housing, employment, and social services for all persons legally residing in Denmark irrespective of their ethnic background.

These principles are the foundation of Denmark's strategy for Roma Inclusion.

*Roma population in Denmark*

Statistical data on Roma in Denmark is not available, as the ethnic origin of persons is not registered in Denmark.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "Roma" is used in line with the definition contained in the Commission's Communication (8727/11, footnote 1)

For instance The National Danish Civil Registration System (CRS) only contains basic, fundamental personal data i.e. name, address, marital status, nationality etc. about every person, who is legally residing in Denmark. The data content of the CRS does not include ethnicity. There are no future plans to include data concerning ethnicity in the CRS, since the registration of ethnicity is not considered in accordance with the purpose of the CRS.

The Council of Europe estimates that persons of Roma background number 1,500 to 10,000 persons in Denmark. One source (The NGO Danish Refugee Council) estimates that 2,000 Roma are living in Denmark. The proportion of Roma in Denmark is less than 0.1 percent of the total population according to the Commission's Communication on Roma Inclusion.

Most of the persons with Roma background in Denmark arrived in the 1960s and 1970s as migrant workers. As a result of the war in the Balkans in the 1990s, Denmark also received approximately 21,000 refugees from Ex-Yugoslavia, of which an unknown number have a Roma background. Denmark occasionally experiences seasonal influx of a small number of Roma with temporarily stay in the country from other EU Member States, but generally the number of persons with a Roma background in Denmark is estimated to have been relatively constant for the last ten years.

In Denmark, the Roma do not have status of a national minority. The main reason is the lack of continuous historical presence in Denmark of persons with a Roma background. Only temporary habitation can be evidenced in the historical records. Until the 1950s the Danish immigration legislation prohibited the Roma from settling in Denmark.

According to the Danish Roma website resource "www.romnet.dk", Roma in Denmark are concentrated in Elsinore (Helsingør) and Copenhagen, but small groups of Roma also reside in other towns across Denmark.

Since the 1960s, the municipality of Elsinore, North of Copenhagen, has accommodated a relatively large group of citizens with Roma background. The group is mostly identified based on municipal employees' professional knowledge of them. The Elsinore Municipality estimates that approximately 1,000 people with Roma background reside in the municipality. These persons have taken up permanent residence in Elsinore and have to a large extent been naturalised.

The Danish Government does recognise that the availability of more precise data on Roma (and other ethnic groups in Denmark) would possibly make it easier to target interventions aimed at improving the situation for particular ethnic groups and to evaluate the success rate of the interventions. But, on a balance, and given the fact that the Roma community in Denmark is considered to be relatively small and concentrated in a few locations, Denmark continues to hold that ethnic data should not be registered centrally. International law does not prohibit that ethnic data can be registered with the explicit consent of the persons involved. This means that ethnic data can be registered as a part of project-based activities at the local level allowing for appropriate explicit but not exclusive targeting of Roma issues<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Explicit but not exclusive targeting is one of the "The 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion" endorsed by the Council of Ministers in charge of Social Affairs on 8 June 2009

### Social situation of Roma in Denmark

The Roma in Denmark come from different backgrounds, where many are fully integrated, but others, including some who have experienced the traumas of war in Ex-Yugoslavia and arrived most recently, are experiencing more difficulties with achieving an education and entering the labour market. There is a number of Roma in Denmark who receives income subsidies or has unsteady menial jobs such as cleaning.

Migrant workers from Eastern Europe are frequently working in the green sector (agriculture and gardening) and the construction sector. There might be Roma within these groups.

The Roma live in different ways in Denmark. Some live several generations under one roof, but many also live alone or in nuclear families. Traditionally, people with a Roma background marry early, but in Denmark many have abandoned this tradition, perhaps because of the adverse effects on especially the girls' possibilities for getting an education<sup>3</sup>.

The municipality of Elsinore has identified a variety of social problems in the Roma group residing in the municipality, although no statistical data is available. For instance, the municipality assesses that Roma adults typically have lower education levels than the municipality's other citizens. Another example is the Roma children's comparatively higher absence from school, worse dental health and absence from school facilitated dental care. Furthermore, the municipality notes that the group has a weak connection to the municipalities' elderly care, and information on the group in the areas of psychiatry and disability is deficient.

Over the years, the municipality has attempted to address these issues from various approaches, some of which through exclusive targeting of interventions towards the Roma group (i.e. specific Roma classes in primary school and a Roma office in the Job Centre). These types of exclusive interventions have since been abandoned, because - despite the intention to help the Roma towards better inclusion - the schemes were deemed to contribute to further stigmatisation and lower levels of inclusion.

A Council of Europe Report from 2010 describes the situation for Roma in Denmark in the following way: "In Denmark, the practice of Roma-only classes in the city of Elsinore (where there is the biggest Roma community in the country - approximately 200 Roma families) was considered in 2004 unlawful under the Act for Public Schools. Although these classes have been closed down since 2005, NGO representatives report that in reality the segregation remains. In Elsinore, local authorities have decided to reduce financial allowances in cases where the children do not attend school. Following a decision of the city council, finding this practice unlawful, the law was amended to legalise the practice provided certain very narrow criteria are fulfilled. The teachers now receive training to be able to teach Danish as a second language. With the help of "morning-ladies" (consultants from the city council whose responsibility it is to pick up at home the children who do not appear at school), the local authorities hope to improve school

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<sup>3</sup> According to [www.romnet.dk](http://www.romnet.dk).

attendance of Roma children. The local authorities have indicated to the rapporteur that there are so far no initiatives to preserve the Romani language”<sup>4</sup>.

The report goes on to quote ECRI regarding employment opportunities for Roma in Denmark: “ECRI noted widespread discrimination against Roma in Denmark in the employment sector, finding that many of them were relegated to menial jobs. In Elsinore, two social workers had been assigned by the labour market department to work specifically with Roma. Roma were always directed to them, notwithstanding the purpose of their enquiry. This measure – ostensibly aimed at providing better responses to the needs of the Roma – was not optional: it was compulsory for Roma to address themselves only to those two persons. This measure was therefore considered as discriminatory.”

As mentioned above, the concerns regarding discrimination through exclusive targeting have been addressed, as the municipality has moved away from exclusive targeting of Roma in its educational and social services delivery.

#### *Human Trafficking in Roma*

The Danish Centre against Human Trafficking does not collect data on victims of human trafficking based on ethnicity, but only on nationality. But based on measuring in the period 2007-2010, the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking *estimates* that half of the prostitutes in the streets of Copenhagen from Romania are Roma. Prostitutes with a Roma background are also present at massage parlors outside Copenhagen. 19 women from Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic are identified as victims of trafficking. The Danish Centre against human trafficking is aware, that some of these women are Roma. In 10 cases with minors from Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia with a Roma background, social workers found varying degrees of indicators of human trafficking.

## **2) National goals**

The Roma population in Denmark is estimated to constitute less than 0.1 per cent of the total population, and therefore the Danish Government considers it relevant to pursue Roma inclusion through the set of integrated policy measures that characterise the Danish welfare society. Goals for active inclusion, education level, employment rate and health in Denmark apply to Roma as well as to other groups with a minority ethnic background in Denmark.

The Danish Government holds that equal opportunities are fundamental for the Danish society. The Danish integration policy is based on the idea that everyone residing legally in Denmark should enjoy equal rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination within the areas concerning education, employment, housing and healthcare.

The Danish Integration Act specifically states that the goal of the law is to ensure support to immigrants in being fully able to make use of their talents and resources in order to become participating and economically independent citizens on an equal footing with other citizens in Danish society.

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<sup>4</sup> Report on The situation of Roma in Europe and relevant activities of the Council of Europe, Doc. 12174  
26 February 2010, Rapporteur: Mr József BERÉNYI, Slovak Republic, Group of the European People’s Party

The responsibility for services design and delivery lies at the municipal level. Past experiences have shown some difficulties in designing appropriate responses that explicitly, but not exclusively target Roma issues. The Danish Government will therefore set as a goal to contribute to sharing lessons learned from other EU member states and inform all municipalities of the 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion and of the Commission's Roma inclusion strategy.

### **3) Action plan**

The Danish Action Plan for Roma Inclusion has the following three components:

- Fully realising the integration tools available for the benefit of Roma inclusion
- Continuing and strengthening the efforts towards combating poverty and social exclusion in general
- Disseminating knowledge on best practices and agreed principles for Roma inclusion to the municipal level

#### *Fully realising the integration tools available for active inclusion*

Denmark has an extensive integration policy, which also includes Roma.

Under the Integration Act, an integration programme planned by the responsible local authority must be offered to newly arrived refugees and newly arrived immigrants reunited with a family member who are 18 years of age or more and covered by the Integration Act. The expected length of the integration programme is three years. The scope and contents of the integration programme for the individual immigrant are fixed in an integration contract. The integration contract lasts until the immigrant obtains a permanent residence permit.

The integration contract is to be prepared by the local authority in cooperation with the immigrant or refugee in question within a month from the date when the local authority takes over the integration responsibility for the person in question. The contract must be elaborated on the basis of an assessment of the individual's abilities and background and should aim towards introduction into the labour market or relevant education.

The local authority is obliged to offer Danish language courses within a month from taking over the integration responsibility for the person in question. Adult foreigners have a right of up to three years of Danish language education. The language courses are divided into modules with specific targets.

In May 2010, the Parliament adopted an amendment to the Integration Act inter alia implying the following elements:

- Widening the target group of the Integration Act and the public integration efforts. From 1 August 2010 the Integration Act covers all immigrants with a residence permit as well as nationals of the other Nordic countries and nationals of EU and EEA countries benefiting from the rules on free movement of persons in the EU.
- Establishment of a new basic course in Danish society and Danish culture and history
- Establishment of an introduction course (a lighter version of the introduction programme) aimed at immigrant workers, EU nationals etc.

As part of the integration policy, a number of initiatives have been launched aimed at ensuring inclusion and participation of all people living in Denmark. An example of this is the Awareness-campaign “We need all youngsters” (co-financed by the European Social Fond), which has supported the establishment of groups of both young and parental role-models from ethnic minority backgrounds in order to further the encouragement of young people to start and complete education. Local groups of role-models in several municipalities in Denmark have been established. This includes groups of role-models based in Elsinore and Copenhagen – the two cities where the main part of the Roma population in Denmark reside.

Furthermore, it is stated in the new Government platform “A Denmark which stands united” from October 2011, that the Government will initiate a comprehensive effort to further the inclusion of all immigrants into Danish society. This includes a revised strategy to combat discrimination. The Government will carry out awareness-campaigns and support municipalities and private companies in the effort to combat all forms of discrimination. From 2012 – 2016 a total of 20 million Danish Kroner (approximately 2.7 million Euro) has been allocated to provide financial support for initiatives concerning promotion of active citizenship and combating of discrimination.

The Government considers that this approach to integration in general, is the relevant approach also for integration of people with a Roma background in Denmark.

#### *Continuing and strengthening the efforts towards combating poverty and social exclusion in general*

In Denmark, the primary instrument to combat social exclusion is the fully tax-financed welfare system. Consequently, the Danish approach already includes a wide range of initiatives and schemes that are regularly adapted and adjusted to minimize the citizens' risk of social exclusion.

All citizens residing legally in Denmark are entitled to receive social security benefits as well as social, health and educational services, regardless of their different social and ethnic backgrounds. It is set out below, in section 4) Horizontal Aspects, how the general social inclusion policies of Denmark contribute to promoting Roma inclusion.

In addition to national funding for social inclusion, European funding is available. The European Union aims to promote an overall harmonious development by strengthening economic and social cohesion by reducing development disparities between the regions (Art. 158-162 EC Treaty). In this context, the European Commission has created two financial instruments: the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund. These funds part-finance regional and horizontal operations in the Member States via sector specific funds. The 2007-2013 EU Structural Fund Programmes supports increased growth and jobs for all regions and cities of the European Union with the three priority objectives:

- Convergence
- Regional competitiveness and employment
- European territorial cooperation

The objectives are supported by cohesion instruments worth €308 billion. As expenditure eligibility rules are now national rather than Community based, the Member States have markedly larger room for manoeuvre in implementing operational programmes supporting regional growth agendas and job stimulation.

Denmark utilizes this increased autonomy in the Danish Structural Fund Programmes 2007-2013. Herein, the Danish effort aims to meet the EU objectives by supporting the four central areas for growth:

- Development of human resources
- Utilization of new technology
- Establishment and development of new enterprises and innovation
- Knowledge sharing and knowledge building

Any project encompassing these areas for growth can apply for financial support<sup>5</sup>. Funds have not been earmarked for Roma inclusion projects, but projects with this scope could be eligible for support.

#### **4) Horizontal aspects**

In Denmark, there is no differentiation in the social programmes or in the social services in relation to ethnic background. As the Danish approach is to promote Roma inclusion through the general inclusion policies, this section highlights how the integrated sets of policy measures can benefit the Roma community in Denmark. The areas highlighted are education, employment, healthcare and housing in line with the priority areas mentioned in the Commission's Communication.

##### Education policy

According to the policy of the Danish Government, the majority of children should be included in ordinary school classes. The teaching should be organized in a way that considers the needs and qualifications of the individual pupils. This can be done by different types of graded teaching. Hence the objective of inclusion at the primary level includes pupils with Roma background.

The challenges related to the integration of Roma in the education system is managed on the basis of existing initiatives targeted at vulnerable groups, i.e. initiatives targeted at bilingual pupils. Studies show that bilingual pupils are performing comparably worse than ethnic Danish pupils (Source: PISA Ethnic 2009 shows that the qualifications of bilingual pupils are still not as good as those of ethnic Danish pupils. The difference between immigrant pupils and ethnic Danish pupils are approximately 70 PISA points in reading.). A special effort is required for the bilingual primary school pupils to motivate them for further education in secondary school. Therefore, the Government has used several new initiatives to boost the measures targeted at bilingual pupils.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Programme for the European Social Fund in Denmark 2007–2013, Regional Competitiveness and Employment “More and Better Jobs”, 27 March 2007

### *Objectives of the public primary and lower secondary school*

The public primary and lower secondary school (folkeskolen) has a democratic basis. This appears from the objects clause of the public primary school and is emphasized by the wording: "*The activities of the school should therefore be characterized by intellectual liberty, equality and democracy*". The public primary school teaches pupils to take part in society and take responsibility for society through rights and obligations.

The wording is reflected in the school subjects. This is especially the case in social studies, which are compulsory for pupils at the graduating level. This appears from the curriculum of the subject: It is a central part of the teaching to focus on the citizen in a democratic political system, including the rights and obligations of Danish citizens and the significance of the legal rights of the citizen in a democracy. Thus, the teaching covers the citizens' various economic, social, cultural and educational qualifications for being an active citizen.

### *The Elsinore case*

Elsinore municipality has had special graduating classes for Roma pupils at primary level. However, the classes are now abandoned, and the Roma pupils in Elsinore municipality now attend ordinary classes at primary level. This is in line with the Danish Government's policy.

In Elsinore municipality, the main challenges regarding the Roma pupils relate to the graduating classes at primary level. These pupils are often absent, despite the fact that the municipality has carried out a special programme with the aim of getting the pupils to attend classes. For instance, each pupil has an individual action plan.

However, the schools still find it difficult to integrate the pupils into the ordinary classes. When relevant, the Roma pupils are offered additional classes 10 hours a week, but very few actually attend this form of teaching. The absence of the Roma pupils is reported to the local administrative authorities, if it serves the pupil's needs.

However, the Roma pupils in the introductory classes are doing better. Their absence is limited and their qualification levels are better. Furthermore, the co-operation between the school and the parents has been improved.

### *Employment policies for all*

The Danish employment strategy for Danish citizens and ethnic minorities focus on active employment policies with the goal of helping people to obtain a job.

The Job Centres use the following measures:

- Job counselling
- Different types of wage-subsidies where the unemployed is obtaining new qualifications in enterprises
- Guidance and upgrading of skills and qualifications (for example Danish lessons for Roma and other non-ethnic Danes)



Apart from these general measures, the Danish Government has initiated a number of targeted initiatives to help disadvantaged groups, for instance ethnic minorities (including Roma), into the labour market:

#### *A new chance for everyone*

A national campaign – “A new chance for everyone” – was launched in 2006 for a period of two years with national targets for all 98 municipalities. The campaign encouraged municipalities to offer enrolment in employment-generating schemes for unemployed having received social benefits and who have not taken part in employment-generation schemes for more than 12 months. The government provided approximately 78 million Euro for the campaign.

#### *The national unit for Ethnic Employment Measures*

The national unit for Ethnic Employment Measures supports Job Centres with knowledge about how to help ethnic minorities, including Roma, to get a job. The Unit distributes good practices regarding labour market inclusion of ethnic minorities, including Roma, and helps the Job Centres develop tools and methods to enhance labour market integration.

#### *200 new job consultants*

With the 2006 political agreement on welfare, the municipalities were assigned 200 new job consultants and economic support of 40 million Euro over a period of four years. These job consultants work in the 15 municipalities with the highest number of ethnic minorities on social benefits. The job consultants help ethnic minorities, including Roma, into the labour market using a “hands on” approach.

#### *Community Job Centre*

Municipalities with housing estates classified as ghettos receive economic support to establish a Community Job Centre within the estates. The aim is to establish a close connection with the disadvantaged residents, including when relevant Roma, many of whom are unemployed and help them take up formal education, improve their qualifications or get a job.

#### *Diversity recruitment in the national institutions*

In order to ensure diversity in the recruitment to the national institutions, it is obligatory for the institutions to encourage all qualified candidates to apply for vacancies without prejudice to their gender, age, religious beliefs or ethnic background.

#### *Adult vocational training*

The adult vocational training programme provides short vocational training programmes for low skilled and skilled workers. The programmes primarily provide skills and competences directed towards specific sectors and job functions. The programmes are publicly financed and employed participants are entitled to receive a grant. The programmes are mainly provided for employed persons but unemployed can participate if the employment service agrees to pay.

Immigrants, including Roma, who reside legally in Denmark and refugees may follow courses specifically developed for this group or they may combine and supplement normal adult vocational training programmes with introductory short training courses and work placement or courses in Danish. However, many immigrants and refugees with adequate Danish language skills participate in normal adult training programmes. About 10% of the participants in these programmes are immigrants or descendants.

### Healthcare

Individuals with residence in Denmark – defined as those registered with Danish social security – receive full access upon registration to health care services in accordance with the Danish Health Act. This includes - but is not limited to - hospital treatment, services in the primary health care sector, i.e. treatment by GP's and specialist practitioners, and municipal health services such as home nursing and dental care to children and youths under the age of 18.

Individuals staying in Denmark without residence have limited rights to hospital treatment.

EU/EEA citizens and citizens of Switzerland, who have public/legal health insurance in an-other EU/EEA country or Switzerland, are in accordance with EU law entitled to public health care deemed medically necessary during a stay in Denmark on a similar basis as Danish citizens. Their co-ensured family members have similar rights regardless of their citizenship or nationality.

Individuals staying in Denmark without residence and without public/legal health insurance in another EU/EEA country or Switzerland (third party countries) are in accordance with the Health Act entitled to free emergency hospital care if they are involved in accidents, experience sudden illness or deterioration of chronic illnesses, need to give birth outside of term etc., on the same basis as individuals with residence in Denmark. These provisions also apply to individuals from third party countries that are temporarily staying in Denmark, including those having a Roma background.

When the emergency need has subsided – subject to medical assessment in the individual case – the hospital will however continue treatment if it is deemed unreasonable to refer the patient to treatment in his/her home country under the specific circumstances, or if the patient cannot endure relocation to a hospital in the home country. Such medical assessments of emergency/non-emergency needs are made everyday at Danish hospitals in many different contexts. The hospital charges fees for non-emergency treatment, but may choose to waive these fees if it is deemed reasonable to do so under the specific circumstances. The region in which the patient is staying makes the final decision in this case.

The access to healthcare in Denmark is defined not by ethnicity but by a medical assessment of the patient's current need for treatment. Assistance to persons with a Roma background is thus deemed to be fully feasible within the current framework for health care provision to individuals with permanent or temporary residence in Denmark.

### Housing

In Denmark, all citizens regardless of income or special needs have access to good quality housing in the non-profit social housing sector. People with a Roma background who reside legally in Denmark are able to put themselves on a

waiting list for social housing on the same terms as all other residents of Denmark or – if the person in need of housing has any special social needs – to be allocated a social dwelling pursuant to the rules on social housing allocation.

There are approx. 575,000 social dwellings in Denmark, which adds up to about 20 per cent of the total housing stock. Of these, approx. 500,000 dwellings are family dwellings. The remainder are dwellings for young people or dwellings for elderly or disabled people. The primary target group for social housing is people who do not have access to the private housing market, typically due to low incomes.

To prevent the social and ethnic segregation of residents in publicly subsidized housing, social housing is available to anyone who has put his or her name on the waiting list. As a general rule, the waiting list is administered by seniority; however, the local councils of the Danish municipalities have the right to nominate tenants for at least 25 per cent of a housing organisation's available dwellings for the purpose of solving social problems, and they are thus able to secure access to available dwellings for people with special needs.

The social sector is regulated and subsidized in such a way that rents are generally kept to a relatively low level. Additionally, people with particularly low incomes are eligible to receive individual housing benefits. In 2008, around 60 per cent of households in the social housing sector received housing benefits in the form of either "boligyldelse" (for old age pensioners or persons on early retirement) or "boligsikring" (for others, including nearly 51,000 households with children). On average, housing benefits cover 50 per cent of the recipient's rent, equivalent to approx. 1/3 of the total rent amount in the social sector.

As described, Denmark has a large social housing sector, which gives people in search of housing with any special needs the chance to find a place to live. Furthermore, financial support towards rent is available.

Finally, Danish legislation includes a provision on homelessness, and special-purpose dwellings are established for the most socially vulnerable citizens in the country. The right to make use of these offers likewise applies to all persons who reside legally in Denmark.

#### General social measures within Danish social policies

All general social measures are available to all persons residing legally in Denmark.

#### *Elderly people*

According to The Consolidation act on Social Services, all decisions concerning help to elderly people have to be taken as individual and concrete decisions by the municipality. Likewise, the fundamental principles of Danish home care are that it should be offered on the basis of individual needs and that it is free of charge – except temporary help which has an income dependent user charge. The goal of the help offered is to allow elderly people to stay in their own homes as long as possible and to prevent the individual from further loss of physical and mental health. Citizens who have reached the age of 75 have the right to receive a preventive house call at least once a year, unless they receive both personal and practical help. The aim of the house call service is to create a sense of security and well-being and also to

give advice and guidance about activities and support services (both private and public). Today there are many different types of housing in Denmark: the family home, close-care accommodation and public and private nursing homes. As with home care services, it is the municipalities who determine whether a citizen is eligible to receive help which cannot be provided for in the private home and consequently should be offered to be referred to a type of dwelling more suitable for their needs.

#### *People with disabilities*

Many different services are available for people with disabilities. Disabled people may either be offered specific services or be compensated for significant additional expenses incurred as a consequence of their reduced functional capabilities (e.g. homecare, aids and consumer goods, day-care facilities, socio-educational services and permanent or temporary housing). The common aim is to ensure that disabled people achieve full participation in the community and are enabled to avoid isolation and social exclusion. The disability policy is based on the principles of equal treatment, compensation and sector responsibility.

#### *Homeless citizens*

All homeless citizens lawfully residing in Denmark has the right to temporary accommodation in shelters. The Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration has issued calls for proposals to establish emergency shelters in 2010, 2010/11 and will do so again in 2011/2012. The overall objective is to secure everyone – regardless of legal residence – a temporary stay in emergency shelters in the period November 2011– March 2012. In 2010/2011 some 340 places were established.

#### *Social benefits*

Roma with legal residence in Denmark or with a Danish citizenship has the same access to social benefits as others in the same situation.

According to the EU-legislation, people with a citizenship in an EU country have the right to receive social assistance in Denmark if they have been actively employment to an extent that implies that they are legally residing (as employee, self-employed etc.). Additionally, it is a precondition that they are in situation unable to provide for themselves.

Receiving social assistance requires that a person has resided within the area of EU/EEA throughout the last 7 out of 8 years. A person has no right to receive social assistance throughout periods where he/she stays in the country as a tourist (up to 3 months for EU citizens) or if he/she arrives in the country in search of work. When a person receives social assistance he can apply for financial support from the municipality to elements like single expenses, health care, medication and accommodation subsidies. Additionally, legal residents in Denmark are covered by the legislation on earning the right to Danish social pension etc.

#### *Gender equality*

Gender equality between women and men is an overall objective of Danish policy. Consecutive Danish governments have continuously worked to review and improve the quality of legislation and other legally binding rules to achieve gender equality between women and men.

Gender equality is regarded as a prerequisite for economic growth, democracy and welfare, and also as the basis for the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in political, economic, social, cultural and civil spheres of life.

Today, women and men in Denmark share the same formal rights, obligations and opportunities in society. However, Denmark aims at securing de facto gender equality as well de jure. This is clearly stated in section 1 of the Danish Act on Gender Equality, which states that “*The purpose of this Act is to promote gender equality, including equal integration, equal influence and equal opportunities in all functions in society on the basis of women's and men's equal status.*”

#### *Human Trafficking*

Persons of Roma background identified as victims of human trafficking are entitled to the same offers and support under the Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking as every other victim of trafficking. The Danish Centre against human trafficking does not collect data on victims of human trafficking based on ethnicity, but only on nationality. Based on its findings, the Danish Centre against Human Trafficking recommends a continuous focus and establishment of measures in this area.

#### *Refused entry and expulsion*

An alien may be expelled or refused on the grounds of the individual's personal conduct, e.g. criminal behaviour or illegal residence. The ethnic origin of the individuals involved is not a criterion in the assessment of whether there are grounds for expulsion or refusal.

It follows from the travaux préparatoires for the Danish Aliens Act that any decision concerning expulsion of an alien must be in accordance with Denmark's international obligations, including the European Convention of Human Rights.

As a clear starting point it is prohibited under the European Convention of Human Rights to base a decision on a person's ethnic origin.

Thus, in deciding on expulsion or refusal of an alien, the Danish authorities pay no attention to the individual's ethnic origin

## **5) Governance mechanisms**

Civil society, social partners and other relevant stakeholders will be consulted in accordance with normal procedures regarding EU-issues. Any questions or remarks regarding the strategy will be duly considered (Annex 1).

## **6) Monitoring the implementation of the strategies/policy measures and adjusting them in time**

As Denmark has chosen to promote Roma inclusion through the integrated set of policy measures that characterise the Danish welfare society, no special monitoring mechanisms will be initiated.

Generally, the Danish integration policy is monitored and legislation is continuously modified and adjusted to meet the demands of the present society.

The responsibility for integration of the individual citizen rests with the local levels of society, and thus it is a municipal matter to provide the necessary services and benefits in each municipality.