



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

Human Rights Council

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Statement by the delegation of Finland 30  
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Madam Chairperson,

Finland attaches great importance to the subject of this forum and would like to address this draft recommendations on effective participation in economic and social life. Full implementation of human rights and democracy requires that both women and men have equal opportunities to take part in political and social decision-making and leadership at all levels.

Roma women frequently face multiple discrimination based on their gender and ethnic background. This manifests itself in high unemployment and difficulties in accessing services. Roma women wearing traditional Roma costume are particularly vulnerable to discrimination in such matters. The Government views discrimination based on multiple grounds with concern.

Traditionally Roma women in Finland have participated in earning a livelihood outside the home, but they are often faced with negative attitudes when trying to find work. Due to the existing prejudices, it is difficult for even educated Roma women to find work. Apart from negative attitudes and discrimination, however, the major obstacle preventing the employment of Roma women is their lack of education and work experience

Finland adopted its first National Policy on Roma in December 2009. It aims, among other things, at strengthening the education of Roma adult, (including vocational training) and promoting their employment, equal treatment, access to services and opportunities of participation. The implementation of the Policy will be evaluated periodically.

According to the Government's decision in principle, adopted in December 2010, each Ministry must promote the inclusion and equality of Roma by implementing the measures under its responsibility.

The National Policy on Roma highlights the best practices developed for strengthening the inclusion of Roma people, such as

- the activities of Roma contact persons in the employment and economy administration,
- the positive results of projects on adult education and employment of Roma and
- recruitment of employees with Romani background for projects supporting the employment and education of Roma.

Many Roma women need motivation, encouragement and support in the employment process. This entails investment in individual service and intensive customer service in particular, as most Roma jobseekers are not familiar with the education and vocational options available, have little or any work experience, and possess inadequate information retrieval skills. Having counsellors with a Romani background act as interpreters and mediators has proved extremely useful in these situations.

Roma women should be encouraged (for example), to start their own businesses through cooperative entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship guidance and training in particular should take into account the Roma's women's need for support in working out business ideas and the planning of business activities, where the models developed in entrepreneurship training for immigrants could be utilised.

Thank you.