



**DTP**



## UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF IRELAND - 39TH SESSION OF UPR WORKING GROUP (1 - 12 NOVEMBER, 2021)

### FACTSHEET: IRISH TRAVELLERS AND ROMA

*Produced by Pavee Point Traveller & Roma Centre, National Traveller Women's Forum, Minceirs Whiden, Donegal Travellers Project & Galway Traveller Movement.*

### SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

Irish Travellers and Roma are one of the most marginalised and excluded groups in Ireland experiencing racism and discrimination. Irish Travellers were recognised as an ethnic group in 2017 and the State has made increased efforts to include Travellers and Roma in policy measures. While welcoming these efforts, the pace has been slow and under resourced. A number of treaty monitoring bodies have identified significant shortcomings in these efforts.

### NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

#### NATIONAL TRAVELLER & ROMA INCLUSION STRATEGY (NTRIS)

**CYCLE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS: 135.144-147 CHILE, INDIA, LEBANON, SPAIN**

**Impact:** The State developed a NTRIS (2017-2021) but its implementation has been slow due to lack of clear targets, indicators, outcomes and budget lines. A new Strategy is currently being developed.

**Question:** Can the State indicate when the new NTRIS will be published; describe the budget and implementation and monitoring framework for the Strategy; and identify meaningful mechanisms for Traveller and Roma participation in the design and implementation of the strategy?

**Recommendation:** In line with the new EU Roma Strategic Framework 2020-2030, ensure Ireland's next Traveller & Roma Inclusion Strategy is developed in a timely fashion and has a robust implementation and monitoring plan with clear targets, indicators, outcomes, timeframes and budget lines (See COBs of Ireland by UNCEDAW 2017, UNCRC 2016, CERD 2019).

### NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AGAINST RACISM

**CYCLE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS: 135.103-114 SPAIN, HOLY SEE, KYRGYZSTAN, IRAN, CUBA, ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, MOROCCO, LEBANON, ROMANIA, BAHRAIN**

**Impact:** An independent Anti-Racism Committee was established in June 2020 with the task of drafting a National Action Plan Against Racism within one year. The details of the Plan remain unclear, including how the Plan aims to address anti-Traveller & Roma racism. Its publication is now delayed.

- Among all surveyed groups, Irish Travellers (52%) have the third highest rate of hate-motivated harassment, *FRA 2019*
- 77.5% of Roma report being stopped by the police for an identity document

**Question:** Can the State describe how the National Action Plan Against Racism will address the specific forms of anti-Traveller and Roma racism; when the Plan will be published; and what resources and implementation and monitoring framework will the Plan be afforded?

**Recommendation:** Ensure the forthcoming National Action Plan Against Racism will address the specific forms of anti-Traveller and Roma racism; is published in a timely fashion; is afforded a sufficient budget and a clear implementation and monitoring framework; and is implemented in partnership with Traveller and Roma organisations (See COBs by UNCRC 2016, CCPR 2014, CERD 2019).

## ETHNIC EQUALITY MONITORING

**Impact:** The lack of disaggregated data by ethnicity and gender remains a key issue. While some progress and commitments have been made to progress ethnic data collection, the State is currently unable to ensure human rights compliant policies and programmes.

**Question:** Can the State indicate its intentions and timeline to ensure that all relevant statutory agencies collect data by ethnicity, gender and other equality grounds and that this takes place in line with human rights standards?

**Recommendation:** Collect, analyse and disseminate disaggregated data by ethnicity and gender across relevant administrative systems in line with human rights standards, and use this data to inform Ethnic Equality Monitoring and equality proof state policies, budgets and programming (See COBs by UNCESCR 2015, UNCEDAW 2017, UNCRC 2016, CERD, 2019).

## KEY HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES FOR TRAVELLERS AND ROMA IN IRELAND

### TRAVELLER & ROMA WOMEN

**Impact:** There have been no clear targets, indicators, outcomes or resources to address the intersectional discrimination and racism experienced by Traveller and Roma women. Gender-based violence impacting Traveller and Roma women also remains a significant concern.

**Question:** What targets, indicators and resources will be afforded to address the human rights situation of Traveller and Roma women, including protection of Traveller and Roma women from gender-based violence?

**Recommendation:** Undertake special measures to address the intersectional racism and discrimination experienced by Traveller and Roma women, including regarding gender-based violence, and ensure such measures have clearly defined resources, timeframes, targets, indicators and outcomes.

## HEALTH, EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT & POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**CYCLE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS: 136.62 HAITI, 135.146 LEBANON, 135.147 SPAIN, 135.141 PHILIPPINES, 135.142 TURKEY**

**Impact:** The State is at the last stages of developing Ireland's first ever 'National Traveller Health Action Plan' – details of the Plan remain unclear and its publication is delayed. The State has committed to developing the first ever 'National Traveller Education Strategy' and 'Traveller and Roma Training and Employment Plan' – there is no timeline or details for developing the plans. The representation of Travellers in political institutions and decision making needs further efforts.

- 134 excess Traveller deaths per year
- 20% of Travellers complete second level education in comparison to 90% non-Travellers
- 80.2% of Travellers and 83% of Roma are unemployed

**Question:** Can the State confirm when the 'National Traveller Health Action Plan', 'National Traveller Education Strategy' and 'Traveller and Roma Training and Employment Plan' will be published, and can the State describe what kind of resources and monitoring/implementation frameworks will these strategies have?

**Recommendation:** Urgently publish the 'National Traveller Health Action Plan' and develop the 'National Traveller Education Strategy' and 'Traveller and Roma Training and Employment Plan'. Ensure the strategies have robust implementation and monitoring plans with clear targets, indicators, outcomes, timeframes and budget lines and consultative structures to drive their implementation (See COBs by UNCERD 2019, UNCRC 2016, CDESCR 2015, CEDAW 2017).

## ACCOMMODATION

**CYCLE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS: 136.86 TURKEY, 135.144 CHILE, 135.146 LEBANON, 135.147 SPAIN**

**Impact:** Underspent Traveller accommodation budgets, failure to deliver Traveller accommodation, and lack of actions to address Roma housing crisis are key issues to be addressed. The State has prioritised four out of 32 recommendations arising from a review by an Independent Expert Group on Traveller Accommodation, but no update is available on this. Between 2008–2018 €168.8 million was allocated for Traveller accommodation, just two thirds (€110.6 million) was drawn down by Local Authorities.

- 15% of Travellers are homeless; overcrowding among Travellers is 7 times the national rate
- 45.7% of Roma respondents have been homeless at some stage; almost half did not have enough beds in their accommodation

**Question:** Can the State describe the progress with implementing recommendations related to Traveller accommodation and what measures it intends to put in place to ensure Local Authorities fully spend Traveller accommodation budgets? What commitment will the State make to addressing the housing crisis among Roma?

### Recommendations:

- Ensure full implementation of recommendations by an Independent Expert Group on Traveller accommodation, including overhauling legislation and policies which impact on accommodation provision for Travellers (See COBs by UNCRC 2016, CESCR 2015, CEDAW 2017).
- Address the housing crisis among Roma by introducing clear actions and associated implementation plan and resources in the next National Traveller Roma Inclusion Strategy.

## ROMA CHILD POVERTY

**CYCLE 2 RECOMMENDATIONS: 135.128 SRI LANKA, 135.129 BELARUS, 136.84 IRAN**

**Impact:** The application of the European Directive 2004/38 and the subsequent state's own policy – Habitual Residence Condition– have a discriminatory impact on the ability of many Roma to access Child Benefit payments and medical cards, even after having lived in the country for several years.

- Nearly 1 in 2 Roma households with children were not successful in their application for social protection payments

**Question:** What steps has the State taken to ensure that all children, including Roma, have access to Child Benefit payments, medical cards and other crucial social supports?

**Recommendation:** To ensure Roma children have access to basic income, make Child Benefit a truly universal payment that is not contingent on the fulfilment of the Habitual Residence Condition (See COBs by UNCRC 2015, CESCR 2015).

## TRAVELLERS IN PRISON AND CHILDREN'S DETENTION

**Impact:** The State has not responded with measures to reduce the over-representation of Travellers in the criminal justice system.

- Travellers account for 22% of the female prison population and 15% of the male prison population
- A fifth of young people in custody in Oberstown Children Detention Campus are Travellers

**Question:** What measures are being taken to reduce the risk of Travellers being imprisoned and Traveller children being detained?

**Recommendation:** Identify and address the contributing factors to the overrepresentation of Travellers in prison, and develop special measures for early intervention and pre and post prison release support within Traveller and Roma communities (See COB by UNCEDAW 2017).