



International Roma Day: Statement by First Vice-President Timmermans, Commissioner Thyssen , Commissioner Jourová and Commissioner Crețu

Brussels, 07 April 2015

Statement of Vice-President Frans Timmermans, Commissioners Marianne Thyssen, Věra Jourová and Corina Crețu on the occasion of International Roma day, Wednesday 8 April :

"The European Union is founded on the principles of equality before the law and non-discrimination: values enshrined in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Yet, today, the Roma community, Europe's largest ethnic minority with around 6 million people living in the European Union, still face exclusion, inequality and discrimination. Access to jobs, education, housing and healthcare remains unequal for many; Roma children often cannot benefit from the same quality of education as other children.

The marginalisation and exclusion of Europe's Roma needs to be addressed head-on. Change will not happen overnight, but the European institutions and Member States are committed to fighting discrimination and improving integration.

Since 2011, the EU has successfully put Roma integration onto the political agenda across Europe. All Member States have Roma integration strategies, prioritising areas such as education, employment, health, housing and the fight against discrimination. The European Commission is also supporting Member States in their work to implement public policies and services for Roma inclusion; the new financial framework 2014-2020, for example, makes it easier to use EU funds for the socio-economic integration of the Roma population.

We now have to ensure that these plans are put into practice and produce results on the ground. We will work hand-in-hand with the EU's Member States to improve the lives of the EU's Roma citizens. We will work hard to ensure that their fundamental rights are respected and to advance their integration in Europe."

More information on the EU and Roma is available [online](#)

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