

Finland

FRANET National Focal Point

Social Thematic Study

The situation of Roma

2012

Finnish league for Human Rights

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Executive summary

EDUCATION

Compared to the majority population, the situation of Roma in education is poor. In the past ten years the participation rate of Roma children in pre-primary education has improved, but it is still lower than that of children from the majority population, whose participation rate is nearly 100%.

A disproportionately high rate of Roma pupils drop out of the school system during the year and do not complete basic education. In the school year 2010-2011, 41 Roma pupils dropped out of school, which is exactly the same as in the school year 2000-2001. The total number of pupils who dropped out from compulsory education in the spring term of the school year 2010-2011 was 95, making Roma pupils over-represented in the drop-out statistics.

Compared to the situation ten years ago, an increasing number of Roma pupils complete their basic education today. On average, 55 Roma pupils obtain a basic education certificate each year, while 13 are left without it. Vocational studies are a popular choice among Roma pupils after basic education and an increasing number start vocational training. Following the school year 2010-2011, an estimated 44 Roma pupils continued to vocational education. Ten years ago it was estimated that only about 18 Roma pupils continued to vocational education.

In the school year 2010-2011, 57 Roma pupils were in alternative type of schooling, 19 were in home schooling, 27 in other types of private schools and 11 were educated in hospital schools. A large number of Roma pupils also receive some form of special education in normal schools (i.e. remedial teaching, part-time special needs education, enhanced support or special needs support).

The most common type of discrimination or bullying experienced by Roma pupils is ethnic name-calling. One study found that "most of the 120 Roma pupils interviewed" said they had not been subjected to any bullying during the school year 2010-2011 or that bullying had occurred less frequently than once a month. Another study found that 42 % (n=36) of Roma pupils had never been bullied in school, while 39 % had experienced occasional name-calling and bullying, and 19 % had experienced serious bullying repeatedly at some point in their school career.

The availability of statistical data on Roma's situation in education is better than that of data on other socio-thematic areas, because the National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) has directed specific research resources for this purpose. Statistical data on Roma is not readily available, but always requires specific research on the topic, because the Data Protection Act (*henkilötietolaki / personuppgiftslag*) prohibits the processing of *inter alia* data relating to a person's ethnic origin.

EMPLOYMENT

Statistical data on participation in the labour market of Roma is very limited. The biggest obstacles to employment are a low level of general and vocational education and the lack of work experience, as well as skills and information on how to apply for jobs. In addition, deeply rooted prejudices and negative attitudes towards Roma hinder their employment. Participation in various forms of work subsidised by the government, such as on-the-job training, is the main way for Roma to gain work experience. The attitudes of employers in this respect are rather positive: 35 % of employers (n=306) would be willing to take a Roma jobseeker for training, while 40 % would possibly offer a traineeship to a Roma.

Typical fields of employment for Roma are catering and service trades, education, care and social welfare services, property management, transport and construction. Roma entrepreneurs are found in

fields such as car dealing, construction and janitorial services. A study conducted among unemployed Roma found that a third of them (n=154) were interested in entrepreneurship training.

Many elderly Roma have practiced professions that require an itinerant lifestyle, which has not increased the amount of earnings-related pension they are entitled to or the amount of the spouse's pension a widow is entitled to. Many elderly Roma are left with only the guarantee pension and housing allowance for pensioners. They also receive social assistance to cover costs of medications and electric bills.

Perceptions and negative assumptions associated with the Roma include uncertainty regarding trustworthiness and commitment to the job. One study found that 76 % of employers (n=306) consider uncertainty regarding Roma's ability to commit to the job at least somewhat of an obstacle to their employment. Nearly one third of employers consider trust issues a very big obstacle to the employment of Roma.

There is a shortage of up-to-date statistical data regarding Roma in employment, including paid employment, self-employment, communal work, unemployment and child labour, old age pension, as well as experiences of discrimination in employment. Statistical data on Roma in employment is not collected systematically, but all available data is from *ad hoc* researches. No data or information on child labour is available.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

The housing standard for most Roma is the same as for the majority population. Roma have problems securing housing in the private rental market because of their poor socio-economic status and the prejudices against them. Acquisition of an owner-occupied flat is often prevented by Roma's difficulties in securing the necessary funds. In addition, cultural factors play a role in problems regarding access to housing.

Roma are in general pleased with the location and services in their neighbourhood, but, at the same time, find it problematic that they are frequently allocated housing in the same suburbs as the underprivileged, drug users and immigrants. Regarding security of tenure, a survey found that members of the majority population are evicted more often than Roma as a result of neighbours' complaints.

Roma are the largest customer group in housing issues at the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*). In 2004-2011, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities handled 392 cases related to discrimination in housing. Altogether 234 of these concerned housing issues of Roma. A discrimination test in housing found that 16.4 % of Roma (n=61) face discrimination when applying for housing.

Apart from the customer data of the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*), no other statistical data on Roma's situation in housing is collected systematically. The problem with the office's data is that it is not presented in the same fashion annually and thereby requires specific research for trends analysis. Research in Roma's situation in housing has been carried out in recent years, which has to a certain extent filled the statistical data gaps. However, there are no statistical data available on residential segregation.

HEALTH

There are no systematically collected statistical data on the health and welfare of the Roma population - the whole topic is an ethnic statistical data gap. In addition, Roma's health and issues relating to access to health care is a very little researched topic in Finland. Roma have access to public services the same way as the majority population, but, in practice, Roma's equal treatment may be hindered by cultural differences and a lack of knowledge of issues concerning health and welfare. One study found

that few elderly Roma understand the importance of a healthy diet and exercise for health. In addition, elderly Roma need to be educated on how to properly take their medication and are in need of more information on oral health. Many elderly Roma often cut back on medication costs and postpone going to the doctor. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is concerned that Roma children in Finland do not receive health services, including mental health services, therapy or psychiatric care in the Romani language.

POVERTY / ECONOMIC SITUATION

There are no accurate and comprehensive data available on the socio-economic status of Roma in Finland. The situation is similar to that of health: the whole topic is an ethnic statistical data gap and there is very little research on the topic. In general, the Nordic policy of universal welfare has played a major role as a leveller of the socio-economic status of the Finnish Roma. However, the Roma population has still not managed to bridge the social and economic gap that exists between them and the majority population. In addition, the small number of Finnish Roma and their dispersion all over the country contribute to the fact that their conditions and needs are not prominent in any reports concerning the general well-being or living conditions of the population.

Elderly Roma belong to the part of the population with the lowest income and often live in poverty. A study found that 40 out of 58 elderly Roma respondents regarded their financial situation as bad. Nearly all of the 58 respondents said their money is spent on food, rent, medication and bills. Many of them have only the guarantee pension and housing allowance for pensioners.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP / RIGHTS AWARENESS

There are no statistical data available on Roma's awareness of their rights, since no research on the topic has been carried out. Furthermore, for the same reason, there are no statistical data on the participation of Roma in European, national, regional or local elections.

The active participation of Finnish Roma in society has developed slowly considering there have been Roma in Finland for over 500 years. The Finnish Roma are not politically organised to the same extent as the Swedish-speaking population in Finland or as Roma living in other countries. In its report on the 2011 parliamentary elections, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights notes that the Finnish Roma are still not fully included in mainstream society socially and politically, though the situation has improved over the years. Many elderly Roma are illiterate, making it difficult for them to vote. Furthermore, limited access to finances for campaigning may make it harder for Roma candidates to run for office.

In Finland, Roma in general are very religious and many of them belong to religious organisations. One reason why Roma frequently attend spiritual events is that they can be certain that the content of these events is in line with their faith. Another reason why the Roma frequent spiritual events is that they can be fairly certain there will be other Roma present and that they will feel welcome even when dressed in traditional Roma clothing.

In its resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma, the government expressed support for the setting up of local Roma working groups and development of their activities in municipalities. According to the resolution, the aim is to strengthen the cooperation structures at the local level as well as the inclusion of the Roma.

1 Roma population

There are no official national statistical data on the number of Roma living in Finland. This is because the Personal Data Act (523/1999) (*henkilötietolaki / personuppgiftslag*) prohibits the processing of sensitive data. Personal data are deemed to be sensitive, if they relate or are intended to relate to, for example, race or ethnic origin. The most recent official estimate on the number of Roma living in Finland is presented in the Finnish national policy on Roma (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*), estimating that there are 10,000 – 12,000 Roma living in Finland.¹ There are no discrepancies between the official estimate and other estimates. This is because the source for all estimates is as a rule the Advisory Board for Romani Affairs (*Romaniasaiain neuvottelukunta / Delegationen för romaska ärenden*).

The Personal Data Act (523/1999) (*henkilötietolaki / personuppgiftslag*) allows the processing of sensitive data for the purposes of historical, scientific or statistical research. However, both quantitative and qualitative research on Roma's situation in key areas of life is still relatively scarce, albeit in recent years there have been improvements in this regard. Nevertheless, statistical research of the number of Roma living in Finland has not been carried out. For this reason there are no data available on the age structure or sex ratio of Roma population in Finland.

The Finnish Roma population is as a rule sedentary. The gradual development towards sedentary life style began in the 1960s with the structural changes in the Finnish society – namely, the transition from an agrarian society to an industrial one. In turn, this led to a diminishing demand for horse dealing and breeding, craftsmanship, trade and other means of Roma's livelihood based on vagrant lifestyle and thereby contributed to a sedentary lifestyle.²

Some specific features of the Roma culture lead both individual Roma and Roma families to move more often than members of the majority population. In particular, one such feature is the 'duty to give way' (*väistämisevöllisuus*). If a member of one Roma family commits a violent crime against a member of another Roma family, all members of the perpetrator's family must avoid contact with the victim's family and immediately move to another area. Another feature of the Roma culture is that before moving to a new area, they must ask for a 'moving permission' (*muuttolupa*) from Roma already living in the area. Permission is declined, for example, if there has been a violent crime between one of the Roma families already living the area and the family intending to move to the area. In addition, in the Roma culture, it is considered inappropriate for an adolescent (meaning in this specific context: a teenager who has reached puberty) to live with a parent of the opposite sex. Accordingly, Roma adolescents move out of their parent's home at an early age.³

The Finnish Roma live all around Finland. There are Roma in over 100 of Finland's 336 municipalities, but the majority live in Southern Finland.⁴ In addition, there are also about 3,000 Finnish Roma living in Sweden. The 'duty to give way' (*väistämisevöllisuus*) and the duty to request a 'moving permission' (*muuttolupa*) contribute to the wide geographical dispersion of the Finnish Roma. A recent research found that Roma prefer to live at distance from other Roma. The reason for

¹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM) (2009) The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

² Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM) (2009) The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

³ Finland, Ministry of the Environment (2012).

⁴ Secretary General of the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, e-mail correspondence 25 April 2012.

this is that the presence of several Roma individuals or families in a given area is conducive to conflict between the Roma themselves and the majority population. Typically there are no significant levels of segregation of Roma in the cities.⁵

The Finnish Roma are an autochthonous minority group. They have lived in Finland since the 16th century and are a homogenous group, of north-western Calo origin.⁶ The Finnish Roma are a national minority and the constitution (731/1999) (*perustuslaki / grundlag*) guarantees the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture.

In addition to the Finnish Roma, there are about 300-500 migrants of Roma origin in Finland, mainly from Romania and Bulgaria. They typically come to Finland for short periods of time (up to three months) and most of them stay in the Helsinki region.⁷ No special measures to promote the integration of foreign Roma have been implemented in Finland.⁸

⁵ Finland, Ministry of the Environment (2012).

⁶ Secretary General of the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, e-mail correspondence 25 April 2012.

⁷ Secretary General of the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, e-mail correspondence 25 April 2012.

⁸ Finland, Ministry of the Interior (sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet) (2010) *Working group examining the prohibition of begging, final report* (Kerjäämisen kieltämistä selvittävä työryhmä, loppuraportti / Arbetsgrupp för utredning av ett förbud mot tiggeri, slutrapport), Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisuja 31/2010, Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/312010.

2 Education

Much of the data presented in this chapter are found in two reports published by the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*). The first report on basic education of Roma pupils concerned the school year 2001–2002. The report found a number of problems associated with the schooling of Roma pupils. Roma children attended pre-primary education less frequently than other children and had to repeat a school year more often than others. Moreover, Roma pupils had many absences, and the proportion of pupils included in or transferred to special needs education was high. Dropping out of school was also more common among Roma pupils than other pupils. The report was based on a survey of 380 schools that had Roma pupils enrolled in the school year 2001–2002. In addition, parents of 174 Roma families were asked for their views on the situation of Roma children in education.⁹

In 2011, a follow-up report was published. The data was collected by:

- An electronic questionnaire answered by 1,341 headmasters of basic education establishments;
- Interviews with 120 Roma pupils and 120 guardians of Roma pupils;
- Interviews with representatives of municipalities receiving government aid to improve basic education of Roma pupils.

The follow-up report found that many improvements had taken place since the school year 2001–2002. For example, the number of Roma children in preschool has increased, and more and more Roma pupils complete their basic education. However, much work remains to be done: absences and dropping out of school are still too common, and too few Roma seek further education after completing their basic education.

a. Pre-school/kindergarten

Enhancing the participation of Roma children in early childhood education and care is one of the policy guidelines of the Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*). ROMPO notes that though more and more Roma children participate in early childhood education, their participation should be substantially increased.¹⁰

According to ROMPO, supporting the development of Roma children's command of Finnish or Swedish is particularly important, as is supporting the development of their mathematical and fine motor skills. In addition, ROMPO notes the importance of emphasising Roma children's own cultural

⁹ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2004). *A survey on the status of Roma children's basic education: School year 2001-2002* (Romanilasten perusopetuksen tila: selvitys lukuvuodelta 2001-2002 / Utbildningssituationen för romska barn inom den grundläggande utbildningen: en utredning från läsåret 2001-2002), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/48985_romanilasten_perusopetuksen_tila.pdf

¹⁰ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystyöministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystyöministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

background in their early childhood education. According to ROMPO, these factors also need to be considered in the training of early childhood education and care personnel.¹¹

Supporting the formation of Roma children's cultural identity is an important mission of early childhood education according to ROMPO. Support measures proposed by ROMPO include teaching the Romani language and employing pre-school teachers with a Romani background. In addition, ROMPO notes the important role of early childhood education in supporting the reconciliation of the Finnish and Romani cultures and to lower the threshold for starting school.¹²

According to the follow-up report published by the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) concerning the school year 2010-2011, three out of five Roma children (n=862) took part in pre-primary education.¹³ This is a considerable improvement compared to the findings of the previous report, which concerned the school year 2001-2002, when only two per cent of Roma children (n=859) took part in pre-primary education.¹⁴ However, the 2011 report finds that the participation of Roma children is still less frequent than that of the children of the majority population, whose participation rate is nearly 100 %. According to the 120 parents and carers of Roma children interviewed for the 2011 report, their children regularly participate in pre-primary education, though the exact level of the children's attendance remains unclear.¹⁵

According to the follow-up report, parents and carers of Roma children feel that participating in pre-primary education helps ease the start of primary education.¹⁶ A report published by the Office of the

¹¹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf

¹² Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf

¹³ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

¹⁴ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2004). *A survey on the status of Roma children's basic education: School year 2001-2002* (Romanilasten perusopetuksen tila: selvitys lukuvuodelta 2001-2002 / Utbildningssituationen för romska barn inom den grundläggande utbildningen: en utredning från läsåret 2001-2002), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/48985_romanilasten_perusopetuksen_tila.pdf

¹⁵ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

¹⁶ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at:

Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 reached a similar conclusion. The 2009 report found that starting school is an enormous change for Roma children who do not participate in pre-school.¹⁷

b. Compulsory school attendance

According to the Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*), strengthening the participation of Roma in education and raising their level of education in general are primary objectives. To this end, ROMPO proposes developing support measures to enable Roma children and youth to complete comprehensive school. According to ROMPO, part of the adult Roma population also needs to be provided with an opportunity to complete their comprehensive school studies. ROMPO emphasises the importance of counselling in promoting the Roma's participation in education.¹⁸

According to the follow-up report, Roma pupils' frequent absences have a negative impact on their school performance. The previous report, concerning the school year 2000-2001, reached a similar conclusion. According to the 2011 report, absences are most often due to sickness and travel or other family reasons. Unauthorised absences are also common. According to the 120 parents and carers of Roma pupils interviewed for the 2011 report, unauthorised absences are due to laziness or bullying. The 2011 report notes that Roma pupils' frequent absences have a negative effect on not only individual pupils' school performance, but also the entire school community. According to the 2011 report, frequent absences make allocation of school resources difficult.¹⁹

According to the 2007 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) one factor affecting Roma pupils' school attendance is their family's housing situation. If the family is having trouble finding housing or has to move often, this has an adverse effect on Roma children's education, sometimes even preventing the children from attending school altogether.²⁰ According to the 2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*), the studies of older Roma youth are also

www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

¹⁷ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

¹⁸ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁹ Finland, National Board of Education (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf.

²⁰ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2008). *2007 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2007 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2007), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/\\$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf).

adversely affected by their difficulties in finding a flat.²¹ Sometimes the family's housing situation is so bad that the Roma pupil's school attendance is discontinuous or interrupted for a period of several years.²² In 2008, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannen's byrå*) handled 22 cases in which Roma children's school attendance was discontinuous or interrupted. In six of the cases, the children had been bullied.²³

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that some teachers are indifferent to the reasons behind Roma pupils' absences. They may think the reason is somehow related to the Roma culture and do not pursue the matter further. The 2009 study notes that this is not a good way to demonstrate cultural understanding, as there may be family issues or other reasons behind the pupil's absences, just like in any other family. The school should therefore immediately contact the Roma pupil's home to find out the reason for the absences. According to the 2009 study, the teacher's hesitation to contact a Roma pupil's home may sometimes be due to existing stereotypes.²⁴

According to a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, it may sometimes be difficult for Roma pupils to find out how absences can be made up for. The study notes that in such situations, the possibility of turning to a school assistant of Roma background is important. This is because having assistants of Roma background at school makes Roma pupils feel more at ease, making these assistants a natural source to turn to for information. According to the 2009 study, sometimes what is required in absence cases is something as concrete as the assistant giving the pupil a ride to school.²⁵

According to the follow-up report, 22 Roma girls and 19 Roma boys dropped out of school during the school year 2010-2011. The total number of Roma pupils who dropped out, 41, is exactly the same as during the school year 2001-2002.²⁶ According to Statistics Finland (*Tilastokeskus / Statistikcentralen*), the total number of those who completely dropped out from compulsory education

²¹ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

²² Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2008). *2007 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2007 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2007), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/\\$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf)

²³ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf)

²⁴ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

²⁵ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

²⁶ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010-2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010-2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

in the spring term of the school year 2010-2011 was 95, making Roma pupils over-represented in the drop-out statistics.²⁷ In May 2007, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) expressed its concern about the high drop-out rate of Roma children, and in particular Roma girls.²⁸

The follow-up report notes that too few Roma pupils successfully complete their basic education, and too few seek further education, at least immediately upon leaving comprehensive school. According to the report, common reasons for this include Roma youth assuming adult status at a young age and quickly starting a family, as well as a lack of information and encouragement. The report notes that there are ways to improve the situation, such as support linked to further education targeted specifically at Roma pupils. According to the report, career guidance makes embarking on studies a more concrete option for Roma pupils; an opportunity relevant to their own lives and situations.²⁹

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that most Roma youth feel that they have enough information on different career options and seeking further education after completing their basic education. However, they wanted more advice and guidance on practical issues such as applying for student housing as well as on the financial and other support available to students. This is also the view of Roma adults.³⁰

When it comes to seeking further education, schools' student counsellors are in a position of great influence. Roma pupils need more information on fields which are not traditional for the Roma, and also encouragement to seek training in these fields. A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 proposes employing Roma school assistants to support student counsellors. These assistants could provide Roma pupils with additional encouragement and present different options.³¹

The “**Open the doors**” (*Ovet auki / Öppna dörrarna*) project was carried out in the Northern Ostrobothnia region. It ended on 31 December 2007. In the project, Roma participants raised their level of education and planned their future career. Events open to the general public were also organised during which participants were given information on Roma culture, history and traditions. The aim of these events was to promote cultural equality and dispel prejudices. The project was

²⁷ Finland, Statistics Finland (*Tilastokeskus / Statistikcentralen*) (2012). *Discontinuation of education 2010*, available at: www.stat.fi/til/kkesk/2010/kkesk_2010_2012-03-20_tie_001_en.html.

²⁸ United Nations (UN) Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) (2007), *Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Finland*, 18 May 2007, available at: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/docs/E.C.12.FIN.CO.5_final.pdf

²⁹ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

³⁰ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

³¹ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Ministry of Education and Culture (*opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö / undervisnings- och kulturministeriet*).³²

c. Educational attainment

According to the follow-up report, an increasing number of Roma pupils complete their basic education today. On average, 55 Roma pupils obtain their basic education certificate each year, while 13 are left without one.³³

ROMPO calls for the development of practices and operational procedures to support Roma pupils' learning at school. ROMPO notes that an impaired learning readiness may lead to learning difficulties which in turn have an adverse impact on Roma pupils' school performance. According to ROMPO, the key areas in the development of Roma children's education are enhancing their Finnish or Swedish skills and mathematical and fine motor skills. In addition, Roma youth need support in transitional stages in education, such as the one from lower into upper comprehensive school. Furthermore, the entry of Roma youth into upper secondary education should be supported.³⁴

In 2007, the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) recommended that Finland improves access to inclusive education for Roma children, for example, by:

- Taking immediate steps to eliminate negative prejudices and stereotypes regarding Roma and their contribution to society;
- Facilitating the recruitment of Roma teachers so as to ensure, to the widest extent possible, adequate opportunities for Roma children to receive instruction in their native language;
- Increasing the availability of schoolbooks in the Romani language;
- Organising special training for teachers to increase their knowledge of the culture and traditions of Roma and to raise their sensitivity to the needs of Roma children.³⁵

In 2009, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed continued concern about the limited enjoyment by members of the Roma community of the right to education enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Committee recommended that Finland strengthen its efforts to increase the level of education of members of Roma communities for example by raising awareness about the possibility for Roma children to receive instruction in their mother tongue, and by further promoting the recruitment of Roma

³² Finland, *Ovet auki -hanke*. available at: www2.luovi.fi/ovet_auki/toiminta/index.html.

³³ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

³⁴ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

³⁵ UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) (2007), United Nations (UN) Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) (2007), *Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Finland*, 18 May 2007, available at: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/docs/E.C.12.FIN.CO.5_final.pdf.

teachers.³⁶ In 2007, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe recommended that Finland step up efforts to address various problems faced by Roma in the educational system.³⁷

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that the presence of Roma adults working at schools as assistants and Roma language teachers has a positive effect on the education of Roma children and youth. Their presence encourages Roma children and youth to study and plan their schooling after primary level. According to the study, an assistant of Roma background is a natural way for Roma pupils to ask for and receive help on school-related issues. Roma children and youth find it easy to approach an assistant of Roma background in all matters and feel their voice is heard. The study notes that the assistants of Roma background can assist other pupils as well. At the same time, they can help to dispel prejudices between Roma pupils and pupils belonging to the majority population. In addition, the study found that the presence of Roma staff members improves cooperation between Roma homes and the school.³⁸

Current legislation gives Roma children the right to receive education in their own mother tongue. According to Section 17 of the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki / Finlands grundlag*), the Roma have the right to maintain and develop their own language and culture. Section 10 of the Basic Education Act (*perusopetuslaki / lag om grundläggande utbildning*) provides that in addition to Finnish and Swedish, the language of instruction may also be Saami, Romani or sign language. Section 12 of the Basic Education Act (*perusopetuslaki / lag om grundläggande utbildning*) provides that Romani may also be taught as mother tongue at the request of the pupil's guardian. Section 8 of the Upper Secondary School Act (*lukiolaki / gymnasielag*) provides that the pupil may choose to be taught Romani as mother tongue. If the school does not offer this kind of mother tongue teaching, Section 3 of the Ministry of Education Decree on the grounds for granting state aid for the supplementary education of foreign language as well as Saami and Romani language pupils in basic education and upper secondary education (*Opetusministeriön asetus vieraskielisten sekä saamenkielisten ja romanikielisten oppilaiden täydentävään opetukseen perusopetuksessa ja lukiokoulutuksessa myönnettävän valtionavustuksen perusteista / Undervisningsministeriets förordning om grunderna för statsunderstöd som beviljas för kompletterande undervisning i den grundläggande utbildningen och gymnasieutbildningen för elever med främmande språk, samiska och romani som modersmål*) provides that state aid will be granted for two lessons per week for every group of four pupils. This calculation takes into account the pupils participating in teaching at the beginning of the term or course. If there are fewer than four Saami or Romani language pupils, the minimum size of the group can be two.

According to a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, the right of Roma pupils to learn the Romani language in basic education establishments is not realised in practice. The study attributes this to the fact that municipalities are not under an obligation to offer teaching in the Romani language. The study found that the right is best realised in schools with a paid Romani teacher. However, the study notes that competent and willing Romani teachers are hard to find, and the need for teaching is greater than the number of teachers available. Often one Romani teacher teaches at several schools, and learning groups consist of pupils of different ages and levels of knowledge. The study found that on average,

³⁶ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (2009), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on Finland*, 5 March 2009, available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/410/58/PDF/G0941058.pdf?OpenElement>.

³⁷ Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2007). Resolution ResCMN(2007)1 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Finland, 31 January 2007.

³⁸ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

pupils study the Romani language from one to two hours a week.³⁹ The Committee of Ministers of Council of Europe notes in resolutions from 2007 and 2012 that minority language teaching to the Roma should be increased in Finland.⁴⁰ In 2011, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) expressed its concern over the insufficient level of educational services available in the Romani language in Finland.⁴¹

Regarding homework, a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that some teachers are indifferent to Roma pupils not completing their homework. According to the study, if a Roma pupil does not do the homework that has been given, it is easy to leave the matter at that. This teaches Roma pupils that they can be excused from doing their homework simply by saying that they do not know how, which in turn leads to poor performance in school.⁴²

d. Vocational training/qualifications

Vocational studies are a popular choice among Roma pupils seeking further education, and the number of those starting vocational courses has more than doubled in ten years. It is estimated that about 18 Roma pupils continued to vocational education and training after graduation in 2000-2001. In 2010-2011, the corresponding figure is about 44.⁴³

According to ROMPO, it is essential to enhance the vocational education and training of adult Roma, as many Roma only seek access to education later in life. Enhancing adult Roma's basic and further vocational training is especially important as insufficient education is one of the main obstacles preventing the employment of Roma.⁴⁴

According to ROMPO, the lack of vocational role models in the Roma community and the lack of awareness of various professions and the education or training required for them prevent the integration of Roma into the educational system and the labour market. ROMPO notes that the

³⁹ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

⁴⁰ Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2012).

⁴¹ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (2011), (2011), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Finland*, 17 June 2011, available at: <http://tb.ohchr.org/default.aspx?country=fi>.

⁴² Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

⁴³ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

⁴⁴ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf

importance of vocational and study counselling for the Roma population has been emphasised in surveys on educational projects aimed at adult Roma in particular.⁴⁵

ROMPO notes that there is a need for workers of Roma background for example in social welfare, health and educational services. They have been shown to play a key role in enhancing the social inclusion and interaction of the Roma population. According to ROMPO, the number of Roma working in these areas should be supported through various forms of education and training. Furthermore, the participation of Roma, according to their individual skills, in various vocational fields and educational levels should be supported through educational guidance and vocational counselling.⁴⁶

The “**ROM-EQUAL**” project was implemented between 2004 and 2007 with financing from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Ministry of Education and Culture (*opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö / undervisnings- och kulturministeriet*). It developed a model for supporting Roma adults training to become school assistants. The model comprises student recruitment, an orientation period for preparing the students for vocational training, and extended practical training at schools during the course. Students are mentored both during their studies and practical training. The model can also be used to support the planning and implementation of adult education in other fields and for other ethnic groups. A total of 20 school assistants completed their studies during the project, and some of them found work in their place of residence immediately after completing their studies. The school assistants support Roma pupils in their studies and strengthen the pupils’ Roma identity.⁴⁷

The “**Roti 2**” project was implemented between 1 April 2008 and 31 December 2010. The project aimed at improving the situation of Roma youth in the labour market. The project involved encouraging young Roma to complete their basic education, seek vocational training afterwards and to actively promote themselves in the labour market. Each youth received an individual study plan to support the completion of their degree and help with the transition into working life. Assistants, some of whom were of Roma background, were trained to support the youth and their families in issues related to education. In addition, representatives of the Roma population were involved in carrying out the project. The Roti 2 project was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*).⁴⁸

e. Different types of schooling (home education, special schools, etc.)

According to a follow-up report, the number of Roma children in home-schooling was 19 in the school year 2010-2011, and 27 Roma pupils were in other types of private education. In addition, 11

⁴⁵ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf

⁴⁶ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

⁴⁷ Laaksonen, P. Laiti, M. Markkanen, A. Rikala, H. Valentin, H. and Vollar, K. (2007). *Forward with a vivid mind* (Eteenpäin elävän mieli / Framåt med levande sinne), Etelä-Suomen lääninhallituksen julkaisuja, Tampere, Etelä-Suomen lääninhallitus, available at: [www.laanhallitus.fi/lh/biblio.nsf/76245392C9E974C2C225739B003A49EA/\\$file/eslh_120.pdf](http://www.laanhallitus.fi/lh/biblio.nsf/76245392C9E974C2C225739B003A49EA/$file/eslh_120.pdf).

⁴⁸ Finland, Keski-Uudenmaan koulutus kunta (Keuda) Group. *Roti 2 –hanke*, available at: www.keuda.fi/attachments/projektit_roti_2.pdf.

Roma pupils were being educated in hospitals. This adds up to a total of 57 Roma pupils in an alternative type of schooling in the school year 2010-2011. The figure is higher than in the previous report, which concerned the school year 2001-2002, when 22 Roma pupils were in alternative types of schooling.⁴⁹

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that Roma children who had been in remedial teaching felt this was sufficient support. Some of the 36 pupils interviewed for the study followed an adapted learning plan or studied in small groups. In the Roma pupils' view, the greatest reason for them needing remedial teaching is the inability to concentrate in class.⁵⁰

f. Issues of segregation and integration

The Basic Education Act (*perusopetuslaki / lag om grundläggande utbildning*) lists different types of support measures available to pupils with difficulties in learning or attending school. These include remedial teaching, part-time special-needs education, enhanced support and special needs support. According to a report published by the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) concerning the school year 2010-2011, Roma pupils are strongly represented within all the support forms. Headmasters of basic education establishments also perceive a great need for various forms of support among Roma pupils.⁵¹

The large number of Roma pupils in special education (i.e. remedial teaching, part-time special needs education, enhanced support and special needs support) has been noted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). In 2007, the CESCR expressed deep concern over the fact that teachers perceive Roma children to be difficult and in need of special attention and that as a result, the number of Roma children in special education is disproportionate compared to the majority population.⁵² The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has also taken notice of the matter.⁵³

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) found that Roma adults are also concerned about how easily Roma pupils are put into special education. The study found that some Roma pupils are simply lazy and lack

⁴⁹ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010-2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010-2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

⁵⁰ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁵¹ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010-2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010-2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf

⁵² UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) (2007), *Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Finland*, 18 May 2007, available at: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/docs/E.C.12.FIN.CO.5_final.pdf

⁵³ Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2007). Resolution ResCMN(2007)1 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Finland, 31 January 2007.

motivation, which does not mean they are incapable of completing the given exercises. In addition, the study found that Roma parents do not always understand the significance of their child being moved into a special class with regard to their future. The parents may simply be happy that their child's school days become shorter and the homework becomes easier or is no longer given. The study notes that some teachers' and Roma parents' attitudes towards placing Roma pupils in special education lead to the pupils concerned becoming underachievers at school. The study also recognises the fact that there are Roma pupils for whom special education is the best option due to, for example, an attention deficit disorder. However, all other options should be exhausted before a pupil is moved into special education.⁵⁴

In several basic education establishments teachers are given training on the Roma culture and they receive leaflets and other materials. According to a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, Roma pupils feel that their teachers' knowledge of the Roma culture is fairly good, though they could do with some more training on basic issues. Roma adults also feel that teachers need more training and knowledge of the Roma culture. In addition, the study found that Roma pupils do not want special treatment because of their culture. They want to be a natural part of the school community like other students.⁵⁵

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that Roma culture is visible in schools on theme days and other special events, but not in everyday school life. Schools with a Roma staff member are an exception, as the staff member represents Roma culture in the school and is prepared to speak of it in the school community. Roma are not mentioned in the context of the various subjects taught at schools. According to the study, this is a major flaw, as it leads to pupils belonging to the majority population not receiving accurate information on Roma and the Roma culture. They are left to base their views on prejudices and hearsay.⁵⁶

ROMPO notes that there is a need in pedagogic training for the provision of accurate information on Roma culture and history as well as on the conditions of the Roma minority. According to ROMPO, it is also necessary to include accurate information on the Roma population in the education programme and in basic education teaching materials.⁵⁷

In its 2011 concluding observations on Finland, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) expressed concerns regarding the difficulties faced by Roma children in the education system, including the high rate of non-attendance, poor achievement, high number of children in special education classes, and the high dropout rate. The Committee recommended that teachers' knowledge of different cultures and the difficulties children face be enhanced. According to the Committee,

⁵⁴ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁵⁵ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁵⁶ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁵⁷ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

schools should also employ more Roma professionals, for example as special needs assistants, in order to provide better support to children and their families.⁵⁸

g. Experiences and perceptions of discrimination

According to report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, Roma children and youth experience more bullying and name-calling in primary school than in secondary school. In addition, Roma boys are subjected to bullying more often than Roma girls. The study also found that Roma children about to start school are nervous about how others at school will respond to them being Roma. They hear stories of bullying from other Roma children, and many are apprehensive about starting school. According to the study it would therefore be good to have more than one Roma pupil in each class during the first few years of primary education. This way, the Roma pupils could support each other. If a Roma child is subjected to bullying right after starting primary school, this may have a negative impact on their school motivation.⁵⁹

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that Roma children and youth have a relatively high threshold for defining something as bullying. For example, name-calling related to the target's Roma background is not always considered bullying, because it is not directed at the target as a person but at the ethnic group they represent.⁶⁰ According to a report published by the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) concerning the school year 2010-2011, the most common form of discrimination or bullying experienced by Roma pupils is ethnic name-calling. Others are gossiping, exclusion from the group and other inappropriate behaviour. In contrast, stealing, hiding or breaking the pupil's things is not very common, nor is physical violence.⁶¹ A study published by the Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) in 2010 notes that being accepted often requires Roma children to prove to the other children that they are normal. This also applies to other children differing in some way from the majority. According to the 2010 study, acceptance is more easily gained if one has a special skill, such as the ability to play a musical instrument well.⁶²

For a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, 36 Roma children and youth were asked about their experiences of school bullying. Of the interviewees, 42 % had never been bullied at school, while 39 % had

⁵⁸ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (2011), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Finland*, 17 June 2011, available at: <http://tb.ohchr.org/default.aspx?country=fi>.

⁵⁹ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁶⁰ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁶¹ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf.

⁶² Kankkunen, P. Harinen, P. Nivala, E. and Tapio, M. (2010). *Who doesn't belong? The discrimination experienced by children and youth in Finland* (Kuka ei kuulu joukkoon? Lasten ja nuorten kokema syrjintä Suomessa), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: <http://www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/362010?docID=24923>

experienced occasional name-calling and bullying. Worryingly, 19 % of the interviewees had experienced serious bullying repeatedly at some point in their school career. In the study, the term “occasional bullying” refers to occasional name-calling incidents and short-term bullying, and it has ended when the pupil or the school has taken action. The term “repeated bullying” is used in the study to refer to constant, daily or weekly bullying, name-calling and even physical violence, and it has not necessarily ended entirely despite the efforts of teachers and parents. According to the study, Roma pupils experience twice the amount of repeated bullying as secondary school pupils in general. However, it should be noted that the 2009 study included pupils from both primary and secondary school, while the study it is compared to included only secondary school pupils.⁶³ In addition, most of the 120 Roma pupils interviewed for a report published by the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) in 2011 said they had not been subjected to any bullying during the school year 2010-2011 or that bullying had occurred less frequently than once a month.⁶⁴

The follow-up report concerning the school year 2010-2011 reveals that headmasters estimate the frequency of bullying experienced by Roma pupils to be lower than the pupils’ parents and carers. According to the study, this shows that schools are still not aware of all cases of bullying experienced by Roma pupils. However, the study also notes that Roma parents and carers feel that the attitudes of school staff and other pupils towards Roma pupils are, in general, positive.⁶⁵

According to the follow-up report concerning the school year 2010-2011, intervention in bullying or discrimination usually involves discussing the matter with the bully or bullies and sometimes their families as well. The report found that Roma parents and carers feel that they are often the ones who need to make the first move and contact the school about their child being bullied, that otherwise the school would not take the matter further. However, the report also found that parents are, for the most part, satisfied with the way schools handle bullying and feel that the intervention works. Roma pupils also feel that intervention usually works, but according to the report, there are also cases where teachers are unhelpful or the intervention is unsuccessful.⁶⁶

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that it takes Roma children and youth a long time to gather the courage to tell their parents or teacher about their experiences of bullying. They are apprehensive

⁶³ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

⁶⁴ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf.

⁶⁵ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf.

⁶⁶ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf.

about how the matter will be handled and do not want to worry their parents. However, when they do tell about bullying, teachers listen and take the matter seriously. According to the study, almost all the cases of bullying the interviewees (n=36) spoke of had been properly handled at school and the bullying had ended. However, there were cases in which teacher intervention did not put an end to the bullying. A notable finding of the study was that incidents of bullying of Roma pupils were extremely rare in schools with staff of Roma background.⁶⁷

A study published by the Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) in 2010 notes that sometimes even teachers' behaviour is perceived as discrimination. For example, Roma pupils cannot participate in physical education classes where the class goes swimming as this is against the Finnish Roma's modesty customs. When the pupil or the pupil's parents try to explain this to the teacher, the teacher does not always believe the explanation.⁶⁸

The Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) handled very few cases concerning Roma in education. In 2007, there were four cases and in 2008, five cases. In 2009, there was only one case.⁶⁹ The more recent annual reports do not provide data on this.

⁶⁷ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Meriä kuin olikin), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf

⁶⁸ Kankkunen, P. Harinen, P. Nivala, E. and Tapio, M. (2010). *Who doesn't belong? The discrimination experienced by children and youth in Finland* (Kuka ei kuulu joukkoon? Lasten ja nuorten kokema syrjintä Suomessa), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: <http://www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/362010?docID=24923>.

⁶⁹ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2008) *2007 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2007 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2007), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/\\$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf).

Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009) *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2010) *2009 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2009 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2009), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/\\$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf).

3 Employment

a. Paid employment

Very few studies have been carried out on the employment and placement on the labour market situation of the Roma in Finland. The main problem in carrying out such studies is the lack of statistical material. In Finland people cannot be registered on the basis of ethnic origin, and for this reason data on the Roma population are based on estimates. For the same reason, there is no accurate information on the extent to which the Roma population participates in the labour market or on their rate of employment.⁷⁰

The Roma are in a particularly weak position in terms of access to the labour market. To achieve their integration into the labour market, the Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma*, ROMPO / *Finland's politiska program avseende romer*, ROMPO) calls for the enhancement of Roma's employability. This must include enhancing their skills and providing vocational education and training specifically aimed at them.⁷¹

According to a study published by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (*työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö / arbets- och näringsministeriet*) in 2008, many Roma typically have an employment history consisting of short-term employment contracts, often principally with local authorities. This applies both to those Roma who are employed with a background of only basic education and those who have acquired a vocational training. Short and fixed-term employment contracts are common among Roma and other persons in a difficult position on the labour market.⁷²

A study published by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (*työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö / arbets- och näringsministeriet*) in 2008 found that catering and service trades, education, care and social welfare services are typical fields of employment for Roma, as are property management, transport and construction. In addition, traditional occupations such as working with horses and training race horses for trotting in the case of men and sewing in the case of women are still typical. Furthermore, the Roma themselves consider their typical fields of employment desirable. According to the study, both men and women typically want to work with and care for other people, especially children and youth, the elderly and disabled people.⁷³

The “**Roma into working life**” (*Romanit työelämään / Romerna in i arbetslivet*) project was implemented in the Jyväskylä region between 1 November 2004 and 31 December 2007. The aim was to improve the chances of Roma to find training and employment opportunities and improve their entrepreneurship skills. Project workers of Roma background helped participants in finding

⁷⁰ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

⁷¹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

⁷² Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁷³ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

employment, training and traineeships. Efforts were also made to change the attitudes of the Roma and the mainstream population towards each other. The project resulted in the development of the successful two-way integration model TuRom, the aim of which is to help individuals to find their own resources with the help of a trusting atmosphere built in group interaction. The project received most of its funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (*työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö / arbets- och näringsministeriet*). It was part of the Community Initiative Programme (CIP) EQUAL.⁷⁴

The “**Vaaksa**” project began in the Mikkeli region in Eastern Finland on 1 January 2008. It will run until 31 December 2013. Vaaksa aims at improving the intermediate labour market in the region by making it more accessible and effective. The intermediate labour market offers job opportunities to those who are, for various reasons, difficult to place in the open labour market. One goal is to find employment for long-term unemployed people, people with disabilities and people who typically have difficulties in finding employment. Another goal is to increase the number of options in the labour market for jobseekers for whom obtaining a degree does not necessarily enhance their chances of finding employment. Roma and immigrants are included in the Vaaksa project as special target groups. The project is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Etelä-Savo Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY-centre) (*elinkeino-, liikenne- ja ympäristökeskus, ELY-keskus / närings-, trafik- och miljöcentralen, ELY-centralen*).⁷⁵

b. Self-employment

Historically, different forms of trade and self-employment have been common ways for the Finnish Roma to earn their living. Today, entrepreneurship is considered challenging in Finnish society and plans to become an entrepreneur are uncommon among the majority population. In contrast, entrepreneurship has become a way for immigrants to integrate into Finnish society. Entrepreneurship has also been seen as an option by Roma, as they are used to flexible forms of employment. For Roma men, working with horses, and for women, sewing, are traditional Roma fields of work in which Roma entrepreneurs can still be found today. There are also Roma entrepreneurs in fields such as car dealing and construction, and some offer janitorial services.⁷⁶

Considering the low educational level of many Roma, the road to becoming an entrepreneur is challenging. According to a study published by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (*työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö / arbets- och näringsministeriet*) in 2008, Roma need various kinds of financial support and expert advice to start a company.⁷⁷ The Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*) calls for the Roma population's need for support in working out business ideas and the planning of business activities to be taken into account in entrepreneurship guidance and training.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Finland, City of Jyväskylä. *Romanit työelämään –hanke*, available at: www.jyvaskyla.fi/sote/hallinto/romanit_tyolamaan.

⁷⁵ Finland, City of Mikkeli. *Vaaksa-hanke*, available at: www.tyollisyysmikkeli.fi/vaaksa-hanke.

⁷⁶ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁷⁷ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁷⁸ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i

For a study published by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (*työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö / arbets- och näringsministeriet*) in 2008, 154 Roma jobseekers were asked about their willingness to become an entrepreneur. About one quarter of the respondents were interested, though their business idea was often very much in the drafting stage. About 40 % were not interested, and roughly a third were unsure of how they felt. A third of the respondents were interested in entrepreneurship training.⁷⁹

In 2007, Roma from other EU countries began appearing on the streets of Finland's biggest cities. Their numbers vary, and they move around frequently, making it impossible to give an accurate estimate of how many there are in Finland. In the 2008 summer, estimates ranged between 40 and 50 Roma, and in the 2009 summer they ranged between 150 and 200. Most of these Roma have turned out to be Romanian Roma exercising the right of EU citizens to move and reside freely within the union.⁸⁰

Roma from other EU countries can be divided into three main groups based on how they earn their livelihood in Finland.

- The first group consists of Roma who beg, peddle or busk. These activities can be clearly observed on the streets of major cities in Finland.
- The second group consists of Roma who do "business" in which they take advantage of others. These Roma may for example organise trips or lend money at a high interest rate.
- The third group consists of Roma who commit crimes such as petty theft or theft or who break into houses.⁸¹

According to Section 18 of the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki / Finlands grundlag*), everyone has the right, to earn their livelihood through the employment, occupation or commercial activity of their choice. Finnish law does not prohibit begging, so it can be considered a means of earning one's livelihood. However, attempts have been made to criminalise begging in Finland. In 2010, a working group set up by the Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) proposed an amendment to the Public Order Act (*järjestyslaki / ordningslag*) prohibiting begging in a public place to support oneself. The working group also proposed a prohibition on organised begging to Chapter 17 of the Criminal Code (*rikoslaki/ strafflag*). According to the working group, current Finnish legislation does not give the police sufficient powers to intervene in aggressive begging. The proposals of the working group were criticised by both the Ministry of Justice (*oikeusministeriö / justitieministeriet*) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet*) for being discriminatory against Roma, and begging remains permissible in Finland as long as it is not aggressive and does not endanger public order.⁸²

Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

⁷⁹ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

⁸⁰ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

⁸¹ Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

⁸² Finland, Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) (2010). *Working group examining the prohibition of begging, final report* (Kerjäämisen kieltämistä selvittävä työryhmä, loppuraportti / Arbetsgrupp för utredning av ett förbud mot tiggeri, slutrapport), Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisuja 31/2010, Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/312010

c. Communal work and other forms of payment schemes

Participation in various forms of work subsidised by the government, such as on-the-job training, is the most common form of employment measure offered by the labour administration and also the main way for Roma to gain work experience. The attitudes of employers in this respect are rather positive: a study from 2008 found that about 35 % of employers (n=306) would be willing to take on a Roma jobseeker for training, while 40 % would possibly offer a traineeship to a Roma. Some 20 % would not be willing to take on a Roma jobseeker as a trainee. Here a difference can be observed: the attitude of companies that have previously had Roma trainees is distinctly more positive.⁸³

According to a study from 2008, only a small minority of unemployed Roma have access to special employment services. Of the 1,471 Roma jobseekers studied, only 12 % had been placed in various employment projects, and a small number are clients of the Labour Service Centres (*työvoiman palvelukeskus / servicecentret för arbetskraft*). Labour Service Centres specialise in helping jobseekers in a disadvantaged labour market position.⁸⁴

d. Unemployment

In Finland people cannot be registered on the basis of ethnic origin. Due to the lack of statistical data, no accurate information can be presented on unemployment among the Roma.

For a study published in 2008, researchers selected Roma jobseekers from the labour administration's client data system on the basis of their surname, as the Roma population in Finland have typical surnames. On the basis of this selection, researchers found 1,471 Roma jobseekers in the labour administration's client data system in spring 2008. Of the jobseekers, 51 % were men and 49 % were women. Of the Roma population living in Finland the figure is about 22 %, if it is assumed that the age distribution in the Roma population corresponds to that in the mainstream population. However, it must be noted that the selection on the basis of surname does not cover the whole Roma population.⁸⁵

Roma jobseekers are fairly evenly split into different age groups, with most unemployed Roma falling into the category of 25-34 year-olds. There are more male jobseekers in the age groups under 25 year-olds and 25-34 year-olds. The opposite is true of the age groups 35-44 year-olds and over 45 year-olds.⁸⁶

It must be noted that not everyone registered in the labour administration's client data system is unemployed: some have, for example, been placed on the labour market through various measures of labour administration. The same is true of Roma. In addition, there are various reasons for Roma of working age to be outside the labour force. Being on sick leave or parental leave, waiting for a

⁸³ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

⁸⁴ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

⁸⁵ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁸⁶ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

decision concerning pension, and participating in training or rehabilitation work are all possible reasons for being outside the labour force.⁸⁷

In February 2008, 873 Roma were registered as unemployed in the labour administration's client data system. The average duration of their latest period of unemployment was 47 weeks. However, there was a significant difference between over 25 year-olds and under 25 year-olds. For the latter, the average was only 13 weeks. They are entitled to a social guarantee, meaning they are actively offered services from early on in their unemployment to improve their position on the labour market.⁸⁸

Since 2004, officials of employment offices have been appointed as contact persons for Roma affairs in order to develop services aimed at promoting the employment of the Roma population. Contact persons have been appointed at Employment and Economic Development Offices (*työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto / arbets- och näringsbyrå*) around Finland. These activities are not yet very well established, and there is uncertainty about the tasks of the contact persons.⁸⁹

Roma jobseekers can be divided into three main groups according to their background and needs.

- The first group consists of those, mainly young people, whose basic education is incomplete and for whom the completion of their basic education is the primary objective.
- The second group is made up of Roma who have no vocational training after basic education and for whom career counselling is the primary method of promoting employment. Here, the main challenges are career development and study counselling as well as forms of support for vocational training.
- The third group consists of Roma who have work experience, possibly a vocational qualification as well, and who need support especially in finding employment.⁹⁰

Roma face diverse obstacles when seeking employment. The low level of general and vocational education and lack of work experience are the main obstacles. Roma are in the same position as other unemployed people in Finland with a low educational level, and they have to compete for the same jobs and employment measures. The study also notes that Roma women in particular often discontinue their studies and leave working life behind upon starting a family. Some Roma mothers even encourage their daughters to skip school and stay at home to help with household work.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

⁸⁸ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁸⁹ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

⁹⁰ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁹¹ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

In its 2008 concluding observations on Finland, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) expressed its concern over the multiple forms of discrimination faced by Roma women in Finland based on both their sex and their ethnic background, including a high rate of unemployment.⁹²

As regards their level of education, 70 % of Roma jobseekers (n= 1,471) have a primary school or lower secondary school education.⁹³ In the past, education was not valued particularly highly among the Finnish Roma, and this attitude is still reflected in their educational level, which is lower than that of the majority population. Although attitudes have changed and an increasing number of Roma pupils complete their basic education, they are still too few according to a report published by the Finnish National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) in 2011. Additionally, too few seek further education, at least immediately upon leaving comprehensive school. On a more positive note, the 2011 report notes that vocational studies are an increasingly popular choice among Roma seeking further education: the number of Roma starting vocational courses has more than doubled in ten years. According to the 2011 report, many Roma only apply for training and work when they reach adulthood. Consequently, adult education in particular offers Roma the opportunity to acquire a vocation and to integrate into working life.⁹⁴

Lack of work experience is another major obstacle to employment for Roma jobseekers. The majority (73 %) of the 1,471 Roma who were registered as jobseekers in the labour administration's client data system in February 2008, had less than one year of work experience or none at all, 17% had 1-5 years' experience and only 10% had more than 5 years of work experience.⁹⁵ ROMPO notes that because of their lack of work experience, the Roma population of working age are not familiar with working life practices or issues related to employment relationships and the promotion of their interests.⁹⁶

Another potential obstacle to employment is a lack of information on how to apply for jobs: nearly half of surveyed Roma jobseekers (n=152) would like at least some guidance when applying for jobs.⁹⁷ According to ROMPO, more often than not, a Roma jobseeker does not possess the necessary

⁹² UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (2008), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on Finland*, 9 July 2008, available at: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/CEDAW.C.FIN.CO.6.pdf

⁹³ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁹⁴ Finland, National Board of Education (*Opetushallitus / Utbildningsstyrelsen*) (2011). *Basic education of Roma pupils: Review 2010–2011 and proposals* (Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset / Översikt över läget inom den grundläggande utbildningen för romska elever 2010–2011 och åtgärdsförslag), Helsinki, Opetushallitus, available at: www.oph.fi/download/140023_Romanioppilaiden_perusopetuksen_tilannekatsaus_2010-2011_ja_toimenpide-ehdotukset.pdf.

⁹⁵ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

⁹⁶ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

⁹⁷ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

skills for independent information retrieval on education and training, employment opportunities or working life issues. In addition, Roma jobseekers' awareness of different occupations, the necessary qualifications or other education or training options is often insufficient. According to ROMPO, many Roma also need motivation, encouragement and support in the employment process. Accordingly, successfully supporting Roma jobseekers requires individual service and larger-than-usual temporal resources in service situations.⁹⁸

Other obstacles to Roma employment include the lack of suitable jobs and the deeply rooted prejudices and negative attitudes towards Roma. ROMPO notes that due to existing prejudices, it is difficult for even educated Roma to find work.⁹⁹

Roma children and youth are also aware of the Roma's difficulties in finding employment. According to a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, they doubt whether even appropriate training can guarantee Roma's employment.¹⁰⁰

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) has expressed concern about the high rate of unemployment among the Roma in Finland, which it attributes to the Roma's lack of basic education. CERD encouraged Finland to increase employment opportunities for Roma, including by training unemployed Roma for the labour market, as well as increase its efforts to combat negative attitudes and prevailing stereotypes among employers.¹⁰¹

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe noted in a 2012 resolution the continued efforts made in Finland to address shortcomings in the participation of Roma in social and economic life. However, it found no notable improvements in the area of formal employment, where the Roma are still greatly under-represented.¹⁰²

e. Child labour

No data or information on child labour is available.

⁹⁸ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

⁹⁹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁰⁰ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Merlika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

¹⁰¹ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (2009), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on Finland*, 5 March 2009, available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/410/58/PDF/G0941058.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹⁰² Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers (2012). Resolution ResCMN(2012)3 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by Finland, 1 February 2012.

f. Old age pension

Many elderly Roma have provided for their large families by practising professions that require an itinerant lifestyle. This has been hard work but has not increased the amount of earnings-related pension they are entitled to, nor the amount of the spouse's pension a widow is entitled to. A 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma notes that many elderly Roma are left with only the guarantee pension and housing allowance for pensioners. They also receive social assistance to cover the costs of medications and electric bills. In addition, women receive social assistance to help cover the costs of the traditional Roma skirt. For this study, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 58 Roma, of whom 42 were female and 16 male.¹⁰³

g. Experiences and perceptions of discrimination

In Finland, the Roma are strongly stigmatised, and prejudices and negative stereotypes associated with the Roma are deeply rooted. Because of this, experiences of discrimination in employment are common among Finnish Roma. The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) has remarked upon this, highlighting the discrimination of Roma in employment in its concluding observations on Finland in 2007.¹⁰⁴

Perceptions and negative assumptions associated with the Roma include uncertainty regarding trustworthiness and commitment to the job. According to a study from 2008, 76 % of employers (n=306) consider uncertainty regarding Roma's ability to commit to the job at least somewhat of an obstacle to their employment. Nearly one third of employers consider trust issues a very big obstacle to the employment of Roma. The study found that in general, employability tends to depend on similarity to the mainstream population rather than on a positive attitude to ethnic diversity.¹⁰⁵

Some employers even consider prejudices of the mainstream population an obstacle to the employment of Roma.¹⁰⁶ In 2009, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritettsombudsmannens byrå*) assisted a person of Roma background in a case involving discrimination in vocational training. The Roma in question had attended a training course in 2006, which involved a two-week practice period. The two-week period was terminated after a successful first day. The reason for this was negative feedback from customers saying they did not want their goods to be delivered by someone of Roma background. The company refused to settle the matter, so the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities assisted the Roma in bringing the matter before a district court. The Roma claimed a breach of Section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki / lag om likabehandling*), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin and demanded compensation pursuant to Section 9 of the Act. The matter

¹⁰³ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁰⁴ United Nations (UN) Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) (2007), *Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on Finland*, 18 May 2007, available at: www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/docs/E.C.12.FIN.CO.5_final.pdf.

¹⁰⁵ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

¹⁰⁶ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

was eventually settled in a preparatory session, with the company agreeing to pay 2000 euro in compensation. The district court confirmed the settlement.¹⁰⁷

The dress culture associated with the Roma identity and culture in Finland is distinctive even by European standards. It influences not only the Roma's employment chances but also the attitudes of Roma themselves concerning choice of workplace or job. Roma women in particular are affected. About one quarter of surveyed Roma jobseekers (n=152) would not be willing to give up their Roma dress if the job required special work clothes, while more than half said they would be willing or they might possibly be willing to do so. Willingness to wear work clothes depends very much on whether there are other Roma at the workplace, either as employees or as customers. As regards employers' attitudes, almost three out of four (n=306) consider Roma customs and the traditional way of dressing at least somewhat of an obstacle to employment. In the service sector and customer service in particular, employers consider traditional Roma clothing an obstacle to employment. Traditional Roma clothing is considered too obtrusive and employers fear customers' reactions.¹⁰⁸

Roma jobseekers consider employers' prejudices to be the greatest obstacles to their employment. Many Roma have experiences of failing to even get a job interview when their Roma background becomes known. Sometimes employers claim that the vacancy has been filled when a Roma applicant arrives for an interview. Roma's experiences of discrimination often have to do with being a Roma or dressing in traditional Roma clothing. Employer's perceptions of the untrustworthiness of Roma also come up often. However, the 2008 study notes that because many Roma applicants lack the necessary vocational training or work experience required for the position they seek, the decision not to employ a Roma applicant is often based on lack of such training or experience, meaning that employers' negative attitudes towards Roma as an ethnic group are not necessarily revealed.¹⁰⁹

57 % of companies (n=306) would be willing to employ a Roma applicant with suitable training and work experience to fill a vacancy, while 12 % would not. One third of the respondents said they might be willing to employ a Roma who fulfilled the necessary requirements. The study found that the attitudes towards hiring a Roma are the most hesitant in the commercial sector and the most positive in the service and construction sectors. In addition, employers' attitudes are affected by how much experience they have in recruiting Roma: the more experience, the more positive the attitude. Attitudes also vary according to the location and size of the company: employers in the metropolitan area and Eastern Finland as well as big companies are more willing than others to recruit a Roma with suitable training and work experience.¹¹⁰

306 employers were asked how they thought employing a Roma would affect the work community and the company's image. Over one fifth of the employers thought that employing a Roma would have a negative effect on both the work community and the company's image. Two thirds estimated

¹⁰⁷ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2010). *2009 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2009 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2009), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/\\$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf).

¹⁰⁸ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

¹¹⁰ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

that employing a Roma would have neither a positive nor a negative effect. About 6 % estimated that recruiting a Roma would have a positive effect, and another 6 % were unsure of the effect. The employers' views were similar irrespective of the size or sector of the company.¹¹¹

As regards conditions under which employers would be willing to recruit a Roma include personal characteristics such as reliability, motivation, commitment, willingness to work, diligence, and the ability to adapt to the rules at the workplace. Employers also emphasise the importance of knowing the Roma applicant's background and many require references. Most employers are content with the Roma applicant being on the same level as other applicants, but some require the Roma applicant to have something extra—to be the best—in order to be considered.¹¹²

Roma face prejudices also after being recruited. Many of these prejudices stem from negative attributes attached to the Roma population in general. Suspicions of dishonesty are extremely common, as is general amazement over the fact that a Roma works. In addition, the study found that Roma are often the target of unfounded suspicions of theft. Knowing they will be the primary suspects, Roma fear situations where such suspicions might arise. Thus for example Roma working in retirement homes or health centres fear situations where a patient's valuables disappear. This fear adds to the emotional burden of the job and affects self-esteem. In addition, prejudices encountered in working life are well-known within the Roma community, which increases fears and raises the threshold to apply for jobs. On a more positive note, the study notes that some Roma have managed to dispel prejudices at the workplace by demonstrating their skill.¹¹³

In May 2010, the District Court of Tuusula (*Tuusulan käräjäoikeus / Tusby tingsrätt*) issued a judgement in a criminal case involving the discrimination of a Roma in the work place. At the time the alleged discrimination occurred, the defendant was on the board of an organisation for the unemployed, where the Roma worked as the executive manager. The defendant was found guilty of work discrimination because she had put the Roma employee in an inferior position on the basis of ethnic origin and there was no important and justifiable reason for this. The defendant had, during a phone conversation with a third person, criticised the Roma's actions as executive manager and brought up the Roma's ethnicity in connection with the financial troubles of the organisation. As there was no credible evidence to support the truthfulness of the statement made during the phone conversation, the District Court of Tuusula found the defendant guilty of the de facto infringement of the dignity and integrity of the Roma pursuant to Section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki / lag om likabehandling*). Because this infringement had occurred in the work place through the actions of a representative of the employer, it constituted work discrimination, the punishment for which is set in Chapter 47, Section 3 of the Criminal Code (*rikoslaki / strafflag*). However, because the defendant's offence was only slight, the punishment was waived and she was only sentenced to pay 636,61 euro in legal expenses.¹¹⁴ The defendant appealed to the Court of Appeal of Helsinki (*Helsingin hovioikeus / Helsingfors hovrätt*), which reversed the judgement of the

¹¹¹ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

¹¹² Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf

¹¹³ Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

¹¹⁴ Finland, District Court of Tuusula (*Tuusulan käräjäoikeus / Tusby tingsrätt*), R 10/293, 26 May 2010.

District Court of Tuusula as regards the conviction of work discrimination.¹¹⁵ The judgement of the Court of Appeal of Helsinki is final.

According to a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, the difficulties Roma adults face in the working life affect the entire family. Many Roma parents have negative experiences of the working life. Discrimination and prejudiced views of Roma are common, and it is challenging for a Roma to be accepted as an equal in the work place. Parents' positive and negative experiences affect their children's school motivation. According to the 2009 report, Roma youth may begin to doubt the usefulness of studying if their parents cannot find work despite constant efforts. It is thus extremely important that Roma youth get positive experiences of the working life along with a chance to earn their own money. The 2009 report found that Roma youth often have difficulties finding summer jobs and work experience places because of their Roma background.¹¹⁶

The elimination of prejudices and negative attitudes are essential in promoting the employment of Roma. According to ROMPO, this requires providing employers, labour market organisations, authorities, and education providers with accurate information on Roma culture and the discrimination that Roma face. Enhancing the development of non-discriminatory recruitment and working life practices is important, as negative experiences raise the threshold of applying for jobs and make the prospect of job seeking less appealing. Many Roma, even those with the requisite educational qualifications become frustrated and give up job seeking altogether.¹¹⁷

To promote diversity in the workplace, the current government proposes creating a permanent operating model to promote diversity management in Finnish companies and other organisations as a part of "YES5" project. The operating model would encourage companies and other organisations to commit, on a voluntary basis, to operating methods that support the diversity of personnel and customers and the principles of non-discrimination, including diverse recruitment.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Finland, Court of Appeal of Helsinki (Helsingin hovioikeus / Helsingfors hovrätt), R 10/1942, 31 August 2011.

¹¹⁶ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Merlika än olika), Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiainvaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

¹¹⁷ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009) *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

Syrjä, H. and Valtakari, M. (2008). *Roma's long road to employment* (Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille), Helsinki, työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, available at: www.tem.fi/files/20264/TEMJul_22_2008_tyo_ja_yrittajyys_summary.pdf.

¹¹⁸ Finland, Government (2012). *National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2012-2013* (Kansallinen perus- ja ihmisoikeustoimintaohjelma 2012-2013 / Nationell handlingsplan för grundläggande och mänskliga rättigheter 2012-2013), available at: www.om.fi/Satellite?blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobcol=urldata&SSURIdapptype=BlobServer&SSURIdcontainer=Default&SSURIdsession=false&blobkey=id&blobheadervalue1=inline;%20filename=OMSO_20_2012_88p.pdf&SSURIdcontext=Satellite%20Server&blobwhere=1335335807027&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&ssbinary=true&blobheader=application/pdf.

4 Housing and neighbourhood

a. Quality and affordability of housing

Thanks to special action taken earlier by the state, the housing conditions of the Finnish Roma have improved considerably, and today the housing standard for most of them is the same as for the majority population. However, as the Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma*, ROMPO / *Finland's politiska program avseende romer*, ROMPO) notes, Roma still have difficulties in securing housing in the private rental market because of their poor socio-economic status and the prejudices against them. According to ROMPO, the acquisition of an owner-occupied flat is often prevented by difficulties in securing the necessary funding.¹¹⁹

According to a 2008 report on ethnic equality in housing, Roma are, for the most part, satisfied with the size of their flat. However, only half of the 12 Roma interviewed for the report were satisfied with the application process, the condition of their flat and the quality of the service they received. According to the 10 authorities interviewed, the flats in the Helsinki region are in reasonably good condition, especially when compared with the situation in other major cities in Europe.¹²⁰

In 2007, Roma from other EU countries began appearing on the streets of Finland's biggest cities. Their numbers vary, and they move around frequently, making it impossible to give an accurate estimate of how many there are in Finland. In the summer of 2008, estimates ranged between 40 and 50 Roma, and in the summer of 2009 between 150 and 200. Most of these Roma have turned out to be Romanian Roma exercising the right of EU citizens to move and reside freely within the union.¹²¹

One of the most critical issues concerning Romanian Roma is their housing situation. According to a report published by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) in 2010, they currently reside primarily in hastily built camps. This results in serious safety and health problems.¹²²

b. Access to social or private housing

For the majority population, most problems related to access to housing have to do with the individual's underprivileged status. According to a report published by the Ministry of the Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) in 2012, the reasons behind the problems Roma

¹¹⁹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö*, STM / *social- och hälsovårdsministeriet*, SHM) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹²⁰ Beqiri, N. (2008). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹²¹ Puumalainen, M. (2009) 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

¹²² Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

face in access to housing are more varied. Cultural factors in particular play a major role. For example, according to the cleanliness norms of the Roma, one Roma household cannot live below another Roma household. Additionally, young Roma cannot dwell above older Roma and women cannot dwell above men. In practice this means that in multiple-story buildings all Roma must live on the same floor.¹²³

Roma perceptions of cleanliness and morals also lead to special requirements concerning the structure of the flat itself. The kitchen, for example, must be a separate room. The flat must also have at least two bathrooms, as young and old Roma cannot use the same bathroom. In addition, adolescents cannot live in the same flat with a parent of the opposite sex.¹²⁴

According to a report published by the Ministry of the Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) in 2012, Roma rarely succeed in getting accommodation in the open market because of their poor economic status and the prejudices against them. Thus they are heavily dependent on municipalities and non-profit rental accommodation providers. Young Roma in particular often struggle with a poor credit history. Additionally, in an already difficult housing situation with thousands of applicants queuing for state-subsidised housing, the Roma's strict requirements make finding acceptable dwellings for them especially difficult and lead to longer than average waiting times. According to the 2012 report, municipalities simply do not have sufficient rental accommodation capacities to fully meet the needs of all Roma. Furthermore, Roma have difficulties dealing with authorities in general, and filling out written applications is often challenging for them. Roma often have a narrower vocabulary than the majority population and some have a low level of education. Some Roma are illiterate. According to the 2012 report, these Roma-specific issues cause further problems in accessing housing.¹²⁵

In some municipalities, the tenant selection procedure for state-subsidised rental dwellings has been handed over to real estate companies. According to some, this has led to a deteriorated housing situation for Roma despite the fact that municipalities still supervise the tenant selection procedure. A report published by the Ministry of the Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) in 2012 found that Roma feel that their special needs are not taken into account in the selection procedure. In contrast, authorities interviewed for a report published in 2008 by the Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) said that there are no problems in allocating housing to the Roma. According to them, Roma are offered flats, and their culturally related demands are taken into account where possible. In addition, cultural reasons are acceptable grounds for Roma to refuse the offered flat.¹²⁶

¹²³ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹²⁴ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹²⁵ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹²⁶ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

Beqiri, N. (2008). *Hoping for a diverse habitat structure: A survey on the realisation of ethnic equality in housing in the Helsinki region* (Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/302008.

Two customs unique to the Finnish Roma population further complicate their housing situation: the ‘duty to give way’ (*väistämisvelvollisuus*) and the obligation to request a ‘moving permit’ (*muuttolupa*). According to the former, if a member of one Roma family commits a violent crime against a member of another Roma family, all members of the perpetrator's family must avoid contact with the victim's family and immediately move to another area. The latter involves asking Roma already settled in the area for permission to move in. Problems arise when a Roma family must move because of the duty to give way and are unable to immediately find a new flat in a new area: they do not have access to basic services such as healthcare, and the children's education is disrupted. Roma in need of special services may also find themselves in a difficult situation.¹²⁷

Though Roma in their internal relations adhere to the practices of duty to give way and asking for a moving permit, authorities are not allowed to take these practices into account when allocating housing to the Roma. According to the guidelines of the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) (*Asumisen rahoitus- ja kehittämiskeskus*, ARA / *Finansierings- och utvecklingscentralen för boendet*, ARA), selecting tenants on the basis of a moving permit or the duty to give way is against the law.¹²⁸ This is also the position adopted by the National Advisory Board for Romani Affairs (*Romaniasain neuvottelukunta / Delegationen för romaska ärenden*)¹²⁹ and the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) who, in 2009, handled several cases involving a moving permit.¹³⁰

During the years 2004-2011, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) handled 392 cases related to housing which were made by persons belonging to ethnic minorities. Of these, 64 % concerned access to housing. Of the cases concerning access to housing, 76 % concerned Roma's access to housing. Reasons (or perceived reasons) for not giving the Roma a flat often included a history of being behind in paying rent and disturbances that had occurred in previous flats. Roma are often asked to place a rental deposit covering several months, when this is an otherwise rare practice.¹³¹

¹²⁷ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹²⁸ Finland, Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) (*Asumisen rahoitus- ja kehittämiskeskus*, ARA / *Finansierings- och utvecklingscentralen för boendet*, ARA) (2008). *Tenant selection guide for state-subsidised rental flats* (Valtion tukemien vuokra-asuntojen Asukasvalintaopas / Den statligt stödda guiden Val av invånare i hyreshus), Helsinki, Asumisen rahoitus- ja kehittämiskeskus, available at: www.ara.fi/download.asp?contentid=22219&lan=fi.

¹²⁹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹³⁰ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2010). *2009 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2009 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2009), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/\\$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf).

¹³¹ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

The problems Roma families encounter in accessing housing naturally affect the children in the family. The cases handled by the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) in 2008 involved altogether 84 children who lived in families having housing issues, such as problems in access to housing or difficulties changing flats. Some of these children were practically homeless, living in trailers or being moved from a relative to a relative.¹³² ROMPO notes that housing-related problems may affect Roma children's school attendance or even prevent them from attending school altogether, which is why solving them is crucial.¹³³

c. Location and access to public utilities and infrastructure

A 2008 study on ethnic equality in housing found that 66 % of immigrants and Roma (n=57) feel the services in their residential area are sufficient. They were asked whether they were satisfied with the following services: property managers, commercial services, health centres, social service offices, child welfare clinics and Employment and Economic Development Offices (*työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto / arbets- och näringsbyrå*). Most of the interviewees were satisfied with these services, with proximity of the service to the interviewee's home being a key factor. The 34 % who felt the services in their area were insufficient wanted their area to have more grocery shops. In addition, they complained about the lack of a nearby post office, bank or branch office of the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA) (*Kansaneläkelaitos, KELA / Folkpensionsanstalten, FPA*). They also had to go to other areas to receive health services.¹³⁴

The 57 immigrants and Roma interviewed for a 2008 report on ethnic equality in housing wanted more common areas in their residential areas. According to them, these areas could be used to offer activities to women and youth in particular. The report also found a need for more places to exercise, such as public swimming pools with "women only" swimming hours as well as clubs for children and youth. The report notes that there are not enough well-equipped and safe playgrounds for children in all suburbs.¹³⁵

A report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009 found that Roma children and youth are, for the most part, satisfied with their area of residence. Those with experiences of big cities say the downsides of big cities include easy access to drugs, the risk of being drawn into a gang and ending up outside the control of parents and other family. On the other hand, the children and youth who live in smaller

¹³² Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

¹³³ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹³⁴ Beqiri, N. (2008). *Hoping for a diverse habitat structure: A survey on the realisation of ethnic equality in housing in the Helsinki region* (Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/302008.

¹³⁵ Beqiri, N. (2008). *Hoping for a diverse habitat structure: A survey on the realisation of ethnic equality in housing in the Helsinki region* (Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/302008.

areas long for the events and various leisure activities available in big cities. However, they also value the calmness of small areas and the social control existing in these areas.¹³⁶

For a 2008 study on the service needs of the elderly Roma, researchers examined the proximity of elderly Roma's flats to stores, health centres, social service offices as well as banks and/or cash machines. The 56 elderly Roma interviewed were asked to estimate which services were within a walking distance, in other words under 800 metres from the flat. A store was within walking distance for 48 interviewees. About half of the interviewees lived within walking distance of the other services. Public transportation stops were close by for 54 of the interviewees. The study notes that many Roma prefer to travel even small distances by car or public transportation. For example, only 28 of the interviewees said they went to the corner store by foot. If they had to go somewhere else, they would use a car or public transportation.¹³⁷

According to a 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, most elderly Roma are satisfied with the condition of their flat. Those living in sheltered homes were not entirely satisfied. Problems included high living costs and cleanliness of the flat. Of the 58 elderly Roma interviewed for the study, everyone's flat had the basic amenities, including running water, indoor shower or bath and electricity. The only exception was one room in a sheltered home which only had a toilet in the room, while showers were located in the hallway. Of the interviewees, 55 owned a washing machine, while staff took care of the laundry and cleaning for two of the interviewees living in a sheltered home.¹³⁸

Rental accommodation is the most common form of housing of elderly Roma. Of the 58 elderly Roma interviewed for the study, nine owned their flat and seven lived in a sheltered home. Most of the interviewees lived in a rented flat. The average size of the interviewees' flats was 42 square metres per person living there, and some had been given a flat meant for two even though they lived alone. This was considered a positive sign of cultural factors being taken into account. Of the interviewees, eight lived with their partner, 36 lived alone, and 13 lived with their children or grandchildren.¹³⁹

The location of elderly Roma's flats in relation to various services is, on average, good. Of the 56 elderly Roma interviewed, 15 were unsatisfied with the location of their flat in relation to services. However, it should be noted that the 2008 study was carried out in the Uusimaa region in Southern Finland, where both Finland's capital Helsinki and its second largest city Espoo are situated. The results of a 1995 study covering the whole country showed greater variation both in respect of quality of housing and location of housing in relation to services.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Merlika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-

¹³⁷ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹³⁸ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹³⁹ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁴⁰ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

d. Security of tenure (including forced evictions and expulsions)

A recent survey found that in the view of those involved in housing allocation (i.e. municipal housing authorities and non-profit housing agencies), members of the majority population are evicted more often than Roma as a result of neighbours' complaints. Of those who took part in the survey (n=95), 55 % said that members of the majority population had been evicted due to neighbours' complaints, while only 28 % said the same of Roma.¹⁴¹

For a Roma family struggling with many internal issues, such as drug abuse and financial problems, the situation may culminate in the loss of their flat.¹⁴²

In 2007, Roma from other EU countries began appearing on the streets of Finland's biggest cities. Most of these Roma have turned out to be Romanian Roma exercising the right of EU citizens to move and reside freely within the union.¹⁴³ A report published by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) in 2010 found that they reside primarily in hastily built camps.¹⁴⁴ In 2010, a working group set up by the Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) proposed including a prohibition on unauthorized camping in the Public Order Act (*järjestyslaki/ordningslag*). According to the final report of the working group, the police currently lack the necessary means to intervene in the setting up of unauthorized camps. However, the proposed amendment did not receive the necessary support and the Public Order Act remains unchanged in this respect.¹⁴⁵

e. Residential segregation

In 2009, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed concern about the de facto segregation Finnish Roma encounter in housing.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴¹ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁴² Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

¹⁴³ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170. Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

¹⁴⁴ Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ Finland, Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) (2010). *Working group examining the prohibition of begging, final report* (Kerjäämisen kieltämistä selvittävä työryhmä, loppuraportti / Arbetsgrupp för utredning av ett förbud mot tiggeri, slutrapport), Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisuja 31/2010, Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/312010.

¹⁴⁶ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (2009), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on Finland*, 5 March 2009, available at: <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/410/58/PDF/G0941058.pdf?OpenElement>.

Roma find it problematic that they are frequently allocated housing in the same suburbs as the underprivileged, drug users and immigrants. According to a report published by the Ministry of the Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) in 2012, this is a problem especially for Roma families with children. Young Roma families with no problems feel that they are automatically allocated housing in places with drug addicts simply because they are Roma. The children of these families are then adversely affected by their surroundings. Sometimes Roma parents are afraid to let their children go outside and play with so many drug users and people with mental health problems nearby. In addition, the Finnish Roma consider themselves Finnish and feel that it is wrong to equate Roma with immigrants and to automatically allocate Roma and immigrants housing in the same buildings.¹⁴⁷

In contrast, the 10 authorities interviewed for a 2008 report on ethnic equality in housing said that no centralisation occurs, and it will not occur in the future if authorities continue the present practice of taking Roma culture into account when allocating housing.¹⁴⁸ The findings of a report published in 2012 by the Ministry of the Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) are similar. The findings of the 2012 report are based on a questionnaire sent to 95 persons involved in housing allocation. Of the respondents, 57 % said that Roma are not systematically allocated housing in particular areas, while 40 % said this occurred sometimes. Only 4 % said that Roma are systematically allocated housing in certain areas.¹⁴⁹ However, as the 2008 report notes, the fact remains that at least in the Helsinki region there are multi-ethnic suburbs with no members of the majority population where most of the residents are immigrants and Roma. According to the 2008 report, this is a situation that Roma and immigrants themselves are not happy with.¹⁵⁰

According to a doctoral thesis published in 2011, one major reason behind the centralisation of certain ethnic groups in certain areas is that the majority population is moving out. Authorities have noted that when the proportion of immigrants in a block of flats nears one fifth, members of the majority population begin to move out. Flats cannot be left empty, and thus centralisation occurs against the wishes of both the authorities and the immigrants. In addition, members of the majority population do not want to move into areas with large numbers of immigrants.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁷ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁴⁸ Beqiri, N. (2008). *Hoping for a diverse habitat structure: A survey on the realisation of ethnic equality in housing in the Helsinki region* (Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/302008.

¹⁴⁹ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁵⁰ Beqiri, N. (2008). *Hoping for a diverse habitat structure: A survey on the realisation of ethnic equality in housing in the Helsinki region* (Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/302008.

¹⁵¹ Vilka, K. (2011). *A common city, diverging areas? : The areal segregation and migration of the native and immigrant populations in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area* (Yhteinen kaupunki, eriytyvät kaupunginosat? : Kantaväestön ja maahanmuuttajataustaisten asukkaiden alueellinen eriytyminen ja muuttoliike pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, Helsingin yliopisto, matemaattis-luonnontieteellinen tiedekunta, geotieteiden ja maantieteen laitos.

f. Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

Discrimination is a major cause underlying the housing-related problems of the Roma, as evidenced by the numerous reports on discrimination submitted to the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*). Between 2004 and 2011, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities handled 392 cases related to housing. Of the total number of housing-related cases, 36 % concerned problems during residence. Of these cases, about a third (31 %) concerned Roma (in 2011, the proportion was 48 %). The problems experienced by the Roma during residency include discriminatory treatment in housing offices, problems with neighbours, evictions and terminations of rental contracts.¹⁵²

According to a report published by the Ministry of Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) in 2012, Roma do not always have a clear picture of the process for applying for state-subsidised housing. They are also often unaware of the broader context, including the overall availability of rental accommodation in their municipality. In addition, Roma often feel they are not listened to and that their questions concerning unclear issues frequently go unanswered. These factors and situations often lead to misunderstandings and feelings of being discriminated against. During the years 2004-2011, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) handled 392 cases relating to housing which were made by persons belonging to ethnic minorities. Of these, 64 % concerned access to housing. Of the cases concerning access to housing, 76 % concerned Roma's access to housing. Roma are often asked to place a rental deposit covering several months, when this is otherwise a rare practice. Another form of discrimination experienced by Roma is being allocated housing in areas with drug addicts.¹⁵³

For a 2008 report on ethnic equality in housing, researchers interviewed 12 Roma in the Helsinki region. Half of them felt that they had not been treated in the same way as members of the majority population when applying for housing. The perceived reason for this was the applicant's Roma background. According to the report, discrimination takes the form of overly long waiting times for city-owned rental flats as well as being allocated flats that are in poor condition. However, the report notes that Roma's experiences of and views on ethnic discrimination vary according to how well they are doing in life generally. Successful Roma do not encounter housing-related problems. According to them, everything depends on one's own attitude. In contrast, those who struggle each day say they constantly have to make an effort in order to be treated equally.¹⁵⁴

A study on the service needs of elderly Roma found only two victims of housing-related discrimination out of a total of 58 interviewees. The two elderly Roma in question felt that they had not received the same services from the municipality as others had. In the first case, water damage to

¹⁵² Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁵³ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi

¹⁵⁴ Beqiri, N. (2008). *Hoping for a diverse habitat structure: A survey on the realisation of ethnic equality in housing in the Helsinki region* (Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/302008.

the floor had been repaired in other tenants' flats but not in the Roma's. The second case concerned material compensation for renovation expenses, which all but the Roma interviewee had received.¹⁵⁵

Discrimination tests were carried out in November - December 2011.

The applicants used Somali/Kurdish and Roma surnames.

The first ever discrimination test for discrimination in housing was carried out in Finland in November-December 2011. It found that 16,4 % of Roma (n=61) face discrimination in applying for housing. The figure for immigrants (n=67) is 14,9 %. The test applicants, one a member of majority population and the other a Roma or an immigrant (of Somali or Kurdish background) using Somali, Kurdis or Roma surnames, applied for housing in one of three ways: by filling out an electronic application form, by e-mail or by telephone. Roma experienced most discrimination (22,2 %) when contacting lessors by e-mail and least (12,9 %) when the contact was made by phone. The figure was 16,7 % when the application for housing was made with an electronic application form.¹⁵⁶

According to a report published by the Office of the Ombudsman for Children (*lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto / barnombudsmannens byrå*) in 2009, Roma children and youth are, for the most part, satisfied with the area they live in. Most of the 36 interviewees planned on staying in their current area of residence in the future. According to the interviewees, a good place to live is a calm place, indicating that the Roma children and youth interviewed for the study had not encountered discrimination in their area of residence. At the very least, they encounter less discrimination in their area of residence than in other areas.¹⁵⁷ In the cases it handled in 2008, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) encountered five children living in families whose biggest housing-related issue was the harassment they were subjected to by the majority population.¹⁵⁸

According to a report published by the Ministry of the Environment (*ympäristöministeriö / miljöministeriet*) in 2012, neighbours make more unfounded complaints about members of the majority population than of Roma. However, the report found that Roma feel they are an easy scapegoat whenever something happens in the building. In the Roma's view, they are placed under special scrutiny because they are visibly different. Roma are frequently treated unfairly and falsely accused of something by neighbours. Complaints often begin as a "precaution" as soon as the Roma moves in and are subsequently found to be without merit. The report also found that Roma rarely participate in common events organised by their housing company, because other tenants make them feel unwelcome. To gain their trust would, according to the 12 Roma interviewed for the report, take an enormous amount of time and effort. A Roma must always be more and try harder than others to be

¹⁵⁵ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ Joronen, M. (2012). *Discrimination of Roma and immigrants in applying for housing* (Romanien ja maahanmuuttajien syrjintä asunnon haussa. Ihmisoikeusliitto. (pdf-publication forthcoming)

¹⁵⁷ Junkala, P. and Tawah, S (2009). (2009) *More Similar than Different* (Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia / Mer lika än olika), Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimiston julkaisuja, Jyväskylä, Lapsiasiavaltuutetun toimisto, available at: www.lapsiasia.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=101063&name=DLFE-9934.pdf.

¹⁵⁸ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

accepted. Furthermore, there are still many stereotypes about Roma: for example, if a Roma family sits down in the yard to play games, they automatically form a disturbing “Gypsy camp”.¹⁵⁹

A 2012 report on the equality of Roma in housing, based partly on a questionnaire sent to municipal authorities, found that 7 % of municipal authorities (n=83) had not observed any unfounded complaints against members of the majority population, while 18 % had not observed unfounded complaints against Roma. Of the respondents, 91 % were of the opinion that unfounded complaints were made about members of the majority population at least sometimes, and 77 % were of the opinion that unfounded complaints were made about the Roma at least sometimes. By contrast, those of Roma background and those who work with Roma issues in different organisations reported more incidents of unfounded complaints about Roma.¹⁶⁰

Between 2005 and 2010, the National Discrimination Tribunal (*syrjintälautakunta / diskrimineringsnämnden*) handled five housing cases, three of which concerned Roma. In the first case, handled in 2007, two Roma had applied for a rental flat from a property company, which had agreed to a rental contract on the condition that the social services provider of city X acts as an intermediary. City X would be the one to rent the flat to the two Roma in question. According to a statement by the social services provider of city X, members of the majority population in a situation comparable to that of the two Roma would not be subjected to such a procedure. The property company refused to offer the two Roma a flat because they had no income or assets. It justified this by saying that a tenant’s ability to pay the rent must be proven. The National Discrimination Tribunal held that this was not acceptable grounds for placing applicants in a less favourable position. The complainants in the case had been subjected to requirements that members of the majority population would not have been. The case went all the way to the Supreme Administrative Court (*korkein hallinto-oikeus / högsta förvaltningsdomstolen*), which ruled that the property company had breached the laws guiding the tenant selection procedure.¹⁶¹

In another case, also from 2007, two homeless Roma had applied for a rental flat from municipality X. The municipality had repeatedly disregarded their application when choosing tenants and in 2006 it had made a negative decision on the matter. According to the municipality, it could not offer the Roma the chance to interact with the Roma community and Romani culture. At the time of the decision, there had been several rental flats available, but they were not offered to the complainants. The National Discrimination Tribunal (*syrjintälautakunta / diskrimineringsnämnden*) stated that housing was a basic necessity and that discrimination related to housing was therefore particularly harmful. It held the actions of the municipality to be discriminatory and prohibited the municipality from continuing to act in a manner inconsistent with Section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki / lag om likabehandling*), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. The National Discrimination Tribunal reinforced its decision with a threat of a fine.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁶⁰ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁶¹ Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

¹⁶² Törmä, S. Huotari, K. and Tuokkola, K. (2012). *Roma housing and equality* (Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus), Helsinki, ympäristöministeriö, available at: www.ymparisto.fi/download.asp?contentid=135793&lan=fi.

In the third case, from 2010, the city of Järvenpää and a rental house company operating there, Järvenpään Mestariasunnot Oy, had consulted a local Roma contact person when selecting tenants to find out whether the local Roma community approved of the Roma applying for housing moving into the area and whether they could be offered a certain flat. The National Discrimination Tribunal (*syrjintälautakunta / diskrimineringsnämnden*) found the procedure discriminatory, as members of the majority population are not subjected to a similar procedure. The National Discrimination Tribunal prohibited the city of Järvenpää and Järvenpään Mestariasunnot Oy from continuing to act in a manner inconsistent with Section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki / lag om likabehandling*), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin. As the city of Järvenpää and Järvenpään Mestariasunnot Oy were unwilling to pay compensation to the complainants, the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) decided to initiate judicial proceedings.¹⁶³ In July 2011, the District Court of Tuusula (*Tuusulan käräjäoikeus / Tusby tingsrätt*) ruled that the city of Järvenpää and Järvenpään Mestariasunnot Oy had to pay 4000 euros each to the two complainants. According to the judgement, the defendants had failed to show that the complainants' housing matter had been handled in the same way as a housing matter involving members of the majority population would have been handled. There were no legitimate grounds for treating the complainants differently and thus they had been discriminated against.¹⁶⁴ The case is currently pending before the Court of Appeal of Helsinki (*Helsingin hovioikeus / Helsingfors hovrätt*).

In November 2009, the Court of Appeal of Turku (*Turun hovioikeus / Åbo hovrätt*) gave a judgement in a case where an independent building contractor (A) refused to sell a house he had built to a Roma (C). A had put a property and the house he built on it up for sale. C expressed an interest in buying the house and property, but A told his real estate agent (B) not to sell the property to C because C is a Roma. B did not sell the house and property to C. The District Court of Tampere (*Tampereen käräjäoikeus / Tampere tingsrätt*) had previously found A, but not B, guilty of breaching the prohibition of discrimination of the Criminal Code (*rikoslaki / strafflag*). By refusing to sell the property and the house on it to C despite having given a real estate agent the task of selling them A had, without a justified reason, placed C in an essentially inferior position. A confessed and was found guilty. However, there was not enough evidence to show that B had intentionally discriminated against C. The Court of Appeal of Turku upheld the judgement of the District Court of Tampere. The judgment of the Court of Appeal of Turku is final.¹⁶⁵

In December 2009, the District Court of Turku (*Turun käräjäoikeus / Åbo tingsrätt*) gave a judgement in a case where a rental housing company had not offered two Roma complainants a flat. According to the company, this was due to the disturbing conduct of the complainants and their guests in flats the company had previously rented to the complainants. The complainants filed a complaint with the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) (*Asumisen rahoitus- ja kehittämiskeskus, ARA / Finansierings- och utvecklingscentralen för boendet, ARA*), which suggested arranging a meeting between the complainants, the rental housing company and social service workers. Such a meeting was never arranged, which the complainants alleged was due to their ethnicity. The District Court of Turku dismissed the action, stating that no discrimination had occurred. The rental housing company had been able to prove that the applicants had previously led a disturbing lifestyle, while the complainants had not been able to show that their lifestyle had changed.

¹⁶³ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2011). *2010 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2010 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2010), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV%20vuosikertomus%202010/\\$file/VV%20vuosi%20kertomus%202010.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV%20vuosikertomus%202010/$file/VV%20vuosi%20kertomus%202010.pdf).

¹⁶⁴ Finland, District Court of Tuusula (*Tuusulan käräjäoikeus / Tusby tingsrätt*), L 10/8124, 27 July 2011.

¹⁶⁵ Finland, Court of Appeal of Turku (*Turun hovioikeus / Åbo hovrätt*), R 09/17, 24 November 2009 and Finland, District Court of Tampere (*Tampereen käräjäoikeus / Tampere tingsrätt*), R 08/3858, 6 November 2008.

In addition, nothing indicated that the failure to arrange the meeting suggested by ARA was due to the complainants' ethnicity.¹⁶⁶ The complainants appealed to the Court of Appeal of Turku (*Turun hovioikeus / Åbo hovrätt*), but later withdrew their appeal, making the judgement of the District Court of Turku final.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Finland, District Court of Turku (*Turun käräjäoikeus / Åbo tingsrätt*), L 09/5657, 8 December 2009.

¹⁶⁷ Finland, Court of Appeal of Turku (*Turun hovioikeus / Åbo hovrätt*), S 10/429, 30 September 2010.

5 Health

a. Health status/limitations in daily activities/disability

There are no accurate research data on the health and welfare of the Finnish Roma population. One of the reasons for this is Section 11 of the Personal Data Act (*henkilötietolaki / personuppgiftslag*), which prohibits the processing of sensitive data. Personal data are deemed to be sensitive for example if they relate or are intended to relate to:

- A person's ethnic origin;
- The state of health, illness or handicap of a person or the treatment or other comparable measures directed at the person.

In many countries, it has been found that the morbidity of Roma is higher than for the majority population and that their life expectancy is lower. The Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*) notes that similar estimates have been made in Finland as well.¹⁶⁸

As Finnish citizens, Roma are entitled to equal opportunities with the majority population when it comes to the use of the public service system. However, as ROMPO notes, their equal treatment may in practice be hindered by cultural differences as well as a lack of knowledge of issues concerning social welfare.¹⁶⁹

A 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma notes that the Finnish Roma have traditionally been apprehensive, even scared of going to see a doctor. This is partly due to the fact that in the old days, Roma sought medical help only in times of extreme distress, when there were no other options left. Often the illness was so severe or had spread to such a degree that nothing could be done. For these reasons and also due to existing prejudices, doctors in some areas refused to see Roma patients. These days Roma fear doctors because some illnesses require awkward or embarrassing treatment such as taking fluid removal medication. According to the 2008 study, Roma will often refuse to admit to being sick until the illness adversely affects daily life and makes keeping in touch with relatives difficult. It is a feature of Romani culture not to complain about little things. In addition, the Roma rules on modesty and the taboos associated with illnesses lead to unwillingness to speak of any illnesses. Furthermore, according to the Roma perception of cleanliness, hospitals are extremely dirty, unhygienic places.¹⁷⁰

Roma may feel awkward taking medication regularly with fluids and food, especially in the presence of other Roma. According to a 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, elderly Roma are careless when it comes to taking their medication. They do not understand the importance of taking medication regularly, finishing the whole course of medication and taking their medication with food.

¹⁶⁸ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁶⁹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁷⁰ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf

Likewise, elderly Roma are unaware of the combined effects of their medication and other medication or health supplements. They also do not understand that medication is always personal and cannot be borrowed or shared with others. Elderly Roma often borrow each other's medications.¹⁷¹

It is characteristic of Romani culture to treat the illness instead of regularly taking care of one's health. According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, many Roma still do not fully understand how their body functions. This lack of understanding is due to lack of knowledge, the Roma rules on modesty, and existing taboos. According to the 2008 study, Roma's unawareness of their bodily functions, metabolism and hormonal functions as well as the connections between these leads to Roma not knowing how to take care of their health and stay fit. This in turn makes it difficult to lead a lifestyle that prevents illness.¹⁷²

A typical Roma diet is often high in salt and fat, something which requires urgent attention. Although there is information available, it does not show at the practical level. The 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma found that elderly Roma have a careless attitude when it comes to following a healthy diet. They even prefer to treat allergies with medication, as food is not considered a form of treatment or something that might make an illness worse.¹⁷³

Traditionally, exercise has been part of the Roma lifestyle. The Roma used to walk and trade, take care of horses, load and unload vehicles, and carry and transport goods as part of their daily lives. Today, with cars, flats and social assistance, Roma no longer need to move around. According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, few elderly Roma understand the importance of exercise for the health of both body and mind. Many do not exercise at all due to health problems caused by aging. For the study, 58 elderly Roma were asked about their exercise habits. Of the interviewees, 15 said they exercised regularly, 20 said they exercised sometimes, and 23 said they never exercised.¹⁷⁴

Roma youth also need to be encouraged to take up regular exercise. According to a 2012 report on the equality of minority youth in exercise and sports, many Roma children give up hobbies involving sports as they approach their teenage years. This is also common among the majority population. However, many Roma boys get exercise by participating in the youth work of parishes and municipalities. According to the 2012 report, Roma girls do not exercise as much as boys and their hobbies are often confined to the home and the private circle of family and friends.¹⁷⁵ Following the government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipolitiikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer*), the Ministry of Education and Culture (*opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö / undervisnings- och*

¹⁷¹ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf

¹⁷² Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf

¹⁷³ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁷⁴ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf

¹⁷⁵ Junkala, P. and Lallukka, K. (2012). *Common fields? Discourse and actions to promote the equality of minority youth in exercise and sports* (Yhteiset kentät? Puheita ja tekoja vähemmistöihin kuuluvien nuorten yhdenvertaisen liikunnan ja urheilun edistämiseksi), Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö.

kulturministeriet) and the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs (*Romaniasiaian neuvottelukunta / Delegationen för romska ärenden*) are to begin preparing measures to promote Roma children's and adolescents' opportunities for pursuing hobbies.¹⁷⁶

The traditional velvet skirt worn by Roma women is heavy, weighing between six and eight kilos. It is cinched at the waist, meaning its entire weight rests on the waistband. The 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma notes that this is a health risk to the respiratory and internal organs as well as the back. The extra weight of the skirt also puts a strain on the joints in the hips and legs and hinders Roma women's movement.¹⁷⁷

According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, most elderly Roma manage well with living and small household chores, even taking care of their illnesses by themselves. Those who require assistance are often assisted by relatives. Most elderly Roma also know where to turn to when in need of medical assistance or aids such as walking sticks or hearing aids. Of the 58 elderly Roma interviewed for the study, 48 said they knew where to turn to, and half lived within walking distance (under 800 metres) of a health centre and/or social service office. Public transportation stops were close by for 54 of the interviewees.¹⁷⁸

As regards Roma children and youth, some are doing well. They go to school and continue their studies after completing their compulsory education. However, as the 2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) notes, there are also Roma children who are doing poorly. These children's situation is often a result of the problems their parents struggle – low educational level, poor socio-economic situation, drugs, mental health problems and broken families. Some Roma families live in a vicious circle of marginalisation and structural discrimination. In 2008, the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) handled 23 cases involving Roma children who were victims of violence or threats of violence. Some children were affected by domestic violence or lived in the middle of some other conflict.¹⁷⁹

According to Section 3 of the Act on the Status and Rights of Patients (785/1992) (*laki potilaan asemasta ja oikeuksista / lagen om patientens ställning och rättigheter*), every person who is permanently resident in Finland is, without discrimination, entitled to the health and medical care his state of health requires. Care is provided within the resources available at the time in question. In Finland, municipalities are responsible for providing their residents with health services. Consequently, in order to fully benefit from the health care system, one must be registered as a resident in the municipality in which one seeks a certain health care service. In urgent cases, help will be provided irrespective of whether a person is registered in that municipality or not. Thus, for

¹⁷⁶ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2010). *Government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma* (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipolitiikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=1087414&name=DLFE-14641.pdf.

¹⁷⁷ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁷⁸ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁷⁹ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

example, Roma from other EU member state requiring urgent medical attention will not be denied treatment simply because they are not a resident of the municipality in question.¹⁸⁰

The National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2012-2013 (*Kansallinen perus- ja ihmisoikeustoimintaohjelma 2012-2013 / Nationell handlingsplan för grundläggande och mänskliga rättigheter 2012-2013*) recognises the lack of data on the health status of the Roma in Finland and proposes developing indicators for the state of welfare and equality among Roma. The key aspects of welfare will be determined, the development of which will then be monitored and compared to that of the rest of the population. The goal is to map the current information base and establish the possibilities for expanding the information base on the Roma population. According to the action plan, a study on intimate partner violence against Roma women will be conducted. The aim of this will be to produce information and develop efficient means for recognising and preventing intimate partner violence and supporting victims.¹⁸¹

The Government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipolitiikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer*) states that the Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) is committed to developing support measures and practices aimed at Roma to complement social and healthcare services in municipalities. This will enhance the inclusion of the Roma in society.¹⁸²

b. Unmet needs in the area of health

A large proportion of the Roma's unmet needs in the area of health are related to a lack of knowledge. ROMPO notes that various studies show that the Roma population's awareness of the factors involved in the maintenance of health and welfare is insufficient.¹⁸³ A 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma notes that few Roma understand the importance of exercise for the health of both the body and mind. They need education targeted specifically at them as well as guidance on how to exercise. They also need to be taught the importance of a healthy diet. According to the 2008 study,

¹⁸⁰ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (a). *The status and rights of clients and patients*, available at: www.stm.fi/en/social_and_health_services/client_rights.

¹⁸¹ Finland, Government (2012). *National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2012-2013* (*Kansallinen perus- ja ihmisoikeustoimintaohjelma 2012-2013 / Nationell handlingsplan för grundläggande och mänskliga rättigheter 2012-2013*), available at: www.om.fi/Satellite?blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobcol=urldata&SSURIdapptype=BlobServer&SSURIdcontainer=Default&SSURIdsession=false&blobkey=id&blobheadervalue1=inline;%20filename=OMSO_20_2012_88p.pdf&SSURIdcontext=Satellite%20Server&blobwhere=1335335807027&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&ssbinary=true&blobheader=application/pdf.

¹⁸² Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2010). *Government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma* (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipolitiikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer*), Helsinki, *sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö*, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=1087414&name=DLFE-14641.pdf.

¹⁸³ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria*), Helsinki, *sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö*, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

elderly Roma in particular need to be educated on how to properly take their medication. Elderly Roma also need more information on oral health: some have never been to see a dentist.¹⁸⁴

According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, the Roma also need to be educated on the health risks related to the traditional velvet skirt worn by Finnish Roma women. The skirt is heavy, weighing between six and eight kilos, and cinched at the waist, meaning its entire weight rests on the waistband. This is a health risk to the respiratory and internal organs as well as the back. The extra weight of the skirt also puts a strain on the joints in the hips and legs and hinders Roma women's movement.¹⁸⁵

Though they know where to turn to when in need of assistance, elderly Roma have problems understanding the advice given to them by social and healthcare professionals. This is partly due to a low educational level. Poor reading skills make written instructions especially difficult to understand. For the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, 36 social and healthcare professionals were asked whether they felt that Roma clients/patients had problems understanding instructions. Over a third of the interviewees answered 'yes'. Besides the lack of reading and writing skills, perceived reasons for the problems included poor hearing, dementia and negative attitudes.¹⁸⁶

The 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma revealed deficiencies in elderly Roma's rehabilitation. According to the study, these may be partly due to cost-cutting measures within the healthcare sector, but also a lack of understanding. As understanding oral and written advice is difficult for many elderly Roma, the study proposes referring them to rehabilitation programmes where they are personally taken and shown how things should be done.¹⁸⁷

According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, elderly Roma would benefit from better access to recreational activities. Roma have traditionally lived in well-knit communities and, in contrast to the majority population, lack the tradition of belonging to various organisations. They have been able to rely on their families and other Roma for assistance and socialising. However, as the 2008 study notes, society has changed, and so has the Roma community. This has left many elderly Roma alone and with no idea what to do all day. Having nothing to do may lead to insomnia and depression. According to the 2008 study, elderly Roma should be actively encouraged to take up different hobbies.¹⁸⁸

In its 2011 concluding observations on Finland, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) expressed its concern that Roma children in Finland do not receive health services, including mental

¹⁸⁴ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁸⁵ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁸⁶ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁸⁷ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

¹⁸⁸ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

health services, therapy or psychiatric care in the Romani language. The CRC was also concerned about the insufficient level of recreational activities available in the Romani language.¹⁸⁹

Under EU law, Finland must provide medical treatment to persons staying in Finland temporarily or permanently and who are insured in another Member State. In order to receive treatment on equal terms (including fees) with persons permanently resident in Finland, they must be in possession of a European Health Insurance Card, which proves that the holder of the card belongs to healthcare system of the issuing state. If an EU citizen staying in Finland does not have a European Health Insurance Card, they must cover the full cost of their treatment. Romanians who seek medical treatment in Finland usually fall into this category. Problems may arise when a person lacks the European Health Insurance Card and is unable to cover the costs of their treatment or the costs for returning to their home country in cases where further treatment is required. However, in Finland a person is always entitled to medical treatment in urgent cases regardless of whether they are in possession of a European Health Insurance Card or not.¹⁹⁰

In practice, Roma beggars are unable to rely on public services in Finland if they cannot provide proof of their identity. Knowing that reliance on authorities would reveal their possible lack of valid identity card or passport is a powerful incentive not to rely on public services. Sometimes the only way to avoid incurring medical costs and becoming a burden on the social security system is to avoid treatment even if the need exists. Roma from other EU member states arriving in Finland are willing to risk their health and well-being to save a few euros a day.¹⁹¹

According to a report published in by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) in 2010, Romanian Roma currently reside primarily in hastily built camps. This results in serious safety and health problems. For example, the risk of a fire breaking out during the cold season is great. The lack of sanitary facilities in the camps leads to cleanliness and health issues.¹⁹²

c. Medical insurance coverage

No data available.

d. Circumstances around giving birth

Roma from the Teleorman region in Romania began arriving in Helsinki at the end of 2008. According to a report published by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) in

¹⁸⁹ UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (2011), *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Finland*, 17 June 2011, available at: <http://tb.ohchr.org/default.aspx?country=fi>.

¹⁹⁰ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

See also Finland, Social Insurance Institution of Finland (KELA) (*Kansaneläkelaitos, KELA / Folkpensionsanstalten, FPA*). *Medical treatment in Finland*, available at: <http://kela.fi/in/internet/english.nsf/NET/090508160025HS?OpenDocument>. *Medical treatment in Finland*, available at: <http://kela.fi/in/internet/english.nsf/NET/090508160025HS?OpenDocument>.

¹⁹¹ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

¹⁹² Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). See also Finland, Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) (2010). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

2010, begging Teleormani women are very young with several children. Pregnant women only take a few days' break to give birth before returning to begging.¹⁹³

e. Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

For the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, 43 social and healthcare professionals were asked about their experiences with Roma clients or patients. Of the interviewees, 41 had positive experiences, but nearly half also had negative experiences. Some spoke of Roma patients' unreasonable demands concerning their treatment or the service in question. Sometimes these cases also involved aggressive behaviour or threats. Upon receiving a negative reply, Roma sometimes resorted to allegations of racism or discrimination.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

¹⁹⁴ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

6 Poverty/Economic situation

a. Households at risk-of-poverty

The Nordic policy of universal welfare has played a major role as a leveller of the socioeconomic status of the Finnish Roma. However, the Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma*, ROMPO / *Finland's politiska program avseende romer*, ROMPO) notes that the Roma population has still not managed to bridge the social, economic and educational gap that exists between them and the majority population. In addition, the small number of Finnish Roma, only some 10 000 to 12 000, and their dispersion all over the country both contribute to the fact that their conditions and needs are not prominent in any reports concerning the general well-being or living conditions of the population.¹⁹⁵

There are no accurate and comprehensive data available on the socioeconomic status of Roma in Finland. One of the reasons for this is Section 11 of the Personal Data Act (*henkilötietolaki / personuppgiftslag*), which prohibits the processing of sensitive data. Personal data are deemed to be sensitive for example if they relate or are intended to relate to:

- A person's ethnic origin;
- The social welfare needs of a person or the benefits, support or other social welfare assistance received by the person.

In addition to a lack of statistical data, there have been very few ad hoc reports or surveys of the Roma population.¹⁹⁶

According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, elderly Roma belong to the part of the population with the lowest income and often live in poverty. Many of them have provided for their large families by practising professions that require an itinerant lifestyle. This has been hard work but has not increased the amount of earnings-related pension they are entitled to, or the amount of the spouse's pension widows are entitled to. Consequently, many elderly Roma are left with only the guarantee pension and housing allowance for pensioners. According to the 2008 study, elderly Roma receive social assistance to cover the costs of medications and electric bills. Women receive social assistance to help cover the costs of the traditional Roma skirt. In the Roma community, it is common to assist family members financially. However, the study notes that with such low income, this is not possible without giving up some basic needs.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁹⁶ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁹⁷ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

b. Income/expenditure

There are no accurate and comprehensive data available on the socioeconomic status of Roma in Finland. One of the reasons for this is the prohibition on processing sensitive data. Despite the lack of statistical data, there have been very few ad hoc reports or surveys of the Roma population.¹⁹⁸

For the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, 58 elderly Roma were asked how they were managing financially. The majority of the interviewees, 40, said their situation was bad. Of the interviewees, 16 earned additional income by trading. However, those who traded said it was more of a habit and hobby; not enough to put bread on the table.¹⁹⁹

The 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma found that nearly all of the elderly Roma's money is spent on food, rent, medication and bills. According to the study, elderly Roma often cut back on medication costs and put off going to the doctor. In addition, they are unable to cover the costs of the rehabilitation that they need. In the Roma community, it is common for family members to assist each other financially. However, the study notes that with such low income, this is not possible without giving up some basic needs.²⁰⁰

In 2007, Roma from other EU countries began appearing on the streets of Finland's biggest cities. Their numbers vary, and they move around frequently, making it impossible to give an accurate estimate of how many there are in Finland. In the summer of 2008, estimates ranged between 40 and 50 Roma, and in the summer of 2009 between 150 and 200. Most of these Roma have turned out to be Romanian Roma exercising the right of EU citizens to move and reside freely within the union.²⁰¹

According to a report published by the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) in 2010, Roma from other EU countries can be divided into three main groups based on how they earn their livelihood in Finland.

- The first group consists of Roma who beg, peddle or busk. These activities can be clearly observed on the streets of major cities in Finland.

¹⁹⁸ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

¹⁹⁹ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

²⁰⁰ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

²⁰¹ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

See also Finland, Ministry of the Interior (*sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet*) (2010). *Working group examining the prohibition of begging, final report* (Kerjäämisen kieltämistä selvittävä työryhmä, loppuraportti / Arbetsgrupp för utredning av ett förbud mot tiggeri, slutrapport), Sisäasiainministeriön julkaisuja 31/2010, Helsinki, sisäasiainministeriö, available at: www.intermin.fi/julkaisu/312010.

- The second group consists of Roma who do “business” in which they take advantage of others. These Roma may for example organise trips or lend money at a high interest rate.
- The third group consists of Roma who commit crimes such as petty theft or theft or who break into houses.²⁰²

Roma from other EU member states who come to Finland to beg are in practice unable to rely on public services in Finland if they cannot provide proof of their identity. Knowing that reliance on authorities would reveal their possible lack of valid identity card or passport is a powerful incentive for these Roma not to rely on public services. Avoiding treatment is sometimes the only way for them to avoid incurring medical costs and becoming a burden on the social security system. Roma who come to Finland to beg are willing to risk their health and well-being to save money.²⁰³

c. Financial situation/social transfers/debts/borrowing

There are no accurate and comprehensive data available on the socioeconomic status of Roma in Finland due to the prohibition on processing sensitive personal data. In addition to a lack of statistical data, there have been very few ad hoc reports or surveys of the Roma population.²⁰⁴

According to the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, many elderly Roma’s only income is the guarantee pension and housing allowance for pensioners. They also receive social assistance to cover the costs of medications and electric bills. In addition, women receive social assistance to help cover the costs of the traditional Roma skirt. According to the study, only very few elderly Roma are entitled to an earnings-related pension or a spouse’s pension.²⁰⁵

For the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, 58 elderly Roma were asked about their financial situation. Among them, 43 received a national pension, with 17 being entitled to an earnings-related pension. The number of those entitled to a disability pension was 16, and six of the interviewees were entitled to a spouse’s pension. Of the interviewees, 23 received compensation for medication, and 41 households received a housing allowance.²⁰⁶

According to Section 19 of the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki / Finlands grundlag*), those who cannot obtain the means necessary for a life of dignity have the right to receive indispensable subsistence and care. In practice, this right is realised through social assistance, which is

²⁰² Finland, Helsinki Deaconess Institute (*Helsingin Diakonissalaitos*) (2010). *Final report of the Rom po drom - project 14.6.2010* (Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010), Helsinki, Helsingin Diakonissalaitos, available at: www.hdl.fi/images/stories/liitteet/ROM_PO_DROM-loppuraportti.pdf.

²⁰³ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170.

²⁰⁴ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

²⁰⁵ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

²⁰⁶ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

a last resort form of income security.²⁰⁷ However, Roma from other EU member states often avoid turning to the social security system of their destination country. One reason for this may be that they fear being sent back to their home country. Another reason is the lack of knowledge of the procedure of applying for social assistance. The latter seems to be more common among Romanian Roma who come to Finland. Some Roma beggars have cash with them upon arrival in Finland, and they earn some money begging. However, the money they earn is not enough to make begging a profitable business activity and as a result, Roma beggars live without the means necessary for a life of dignity.²⁰⁸

d. Malnutrition/hunger

No data is available.

e. Material deprivation and/or other non-income poverty indicators

No data is available.

²⁰⁷ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (b). (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) *Support and benefits*, available at: www.stm.fi/en/income_security/benefits.

²⁰⁸ Puumalainen, M. (2009). 'Out of sight, out of mind: Roma beggars and freedom of movement' (Poissa silmistä, poissa mielestä: Romanikerjäläiset ja liikkumisvapaus) in Mäkinen, V. and Pessi, A. (eds.) *Begging yesterday and today* (Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään), Tampere, Vastapaino, pp. 121-170

7 Active citizenship/Rights awareness

a. Awareness of the existence of representative Roma organisations, other civil society organisations, anti-discrimination legislation and equality bodies;

There are two supreme overseers of legality in Finland, the Chancellor of Justice (*oikeuskansleri / justitiekansler*) and the Parliamentary Ombudsman (*eduskunnan oikeusasiamies / riksdagens justitieombudsman*). Their tasks and powers are largely the same. In principle, a complaint can be made either to the Chancellor of Justice or the Ombudsman. However, small differences in the division of tasks between them determine which of them ultimately investigates a complaint.²⁰⁹

The Parliamentary Ombudsman's (*eduskunnan oikeusasiamies / riksdagens justitieombudsman*) task is to ensure that authorities and officials observe the law and discharge their duties. The scope of the Ombudsman's oversight also includes other individuals performing tasks of a public nature. The Ombudsman pays special attention to the implementation of fundamental and human rights. Investigating complaints is the most central component of the Ombudsman's work. There are also two Deputy Ombudsmen (*apulaisoikeusasiamies / biträdande justitieombudsman*), who act independently and with the same authority as the Ombudsman.²¹⁰

Like the Parliamentary Ombudsman (*eduskunnan oikeusasiamies / riksdagens justitieombudsman*), the Chancellor of Justice (*oikeuskansleri / justitiekansler*) also supervises authorities' compliance with the law and pays particular attention to the observance of fundamental and human rights. In addition, the Chancellor supervises the actions of advocates, though the primary responsibility for this rests with the Finnish Bar Association (*Suomen Asianajajaliitto / Finlands Advokatförbund*). The Chancellor of Justice is supported by the Deputy Chancellor of Justice (*apulaisoikeuskansleri / biträdande justitiekansler*). The Office of the Chancellor of Justice (*oikeuskanslerinvirasto / justitiekanslersämbetet*) works in connection with the Government (*valtioneuvosto / statsrådet*).²¹¹

The National Discrimination Tribunal (*syrjintälautakunta / diskrimineringsnämnden*) is an independent organ promoting legal protection. It examines cases of discrimination based on ethnic origin, except those involving discrimination in employment, which should be referred to the local occupational safety and health inspectorate. The National Discrimination Tribunal may confirm conciliated settlements between parties or prohibit any continued or repeated discrimination or reprisals. It may also impose conditional fines to enforce compliance with its decisions, and order a payment of these fines. A decision by the National Discrimination Tribunal has the same legal effect as a judgement by a general court of law. A court of law, the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*), other public authorities and voluntary associations may request the opinion of the National Discrimination Tribunal on the application of the Non-Discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki / lag om likabehandling*) to any matter of ethnic discrimination. The powers of the National Discrimination Tribunal are subsidiary to other judicial bodies.²¹²

²⁰⁹ Finland, Parliamentary Ombudsman (*eduskunnan oikeusasiamies / riksdagens justitieombudsman*). available at: www.oikeusasiamies.fi/Resource.phx/ea/english/index.htm.

²¹⁰ Finland, Parliamentary Ombudsman (*eduskunnan oikeusasiamies / riksdagens justitieombudsman*). available at: www.oikeusasiamies.fi/Resource.phx/ea/english/index.htm.

²¹¹ Finland, Chancellor of Justice (*oikeuskansleri / justitiekansler*). available at: www.chancellorofjustice.fi/index.html.

²¹² Finland, National Discrimination Tribunal (*syrjintälautakunta / diskrimineringsnämnden*). available at: www.syrjintalautakunta.fi/intermin/hankkeet/sltk/home.nsf/pages/indexeng.

The Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) supervises compliance with the prohibition of ethnic discrimination under the Non-Discrimination Act (*yhdenvertaisuuslaki / lag om likabehandling*). The Ombudsman aims to prevent ethnic discrimination and promote equality and intervenes in discrimination by issuing statements and opinions. Overseeing the situation of the Roma and promoting the realisation of their rights have been tasks of the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) since 2002. The Ombudsman is an independent authority, though administratively the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities is located within the Ministry of the Interior. The Ombudsman is assisted by the Advisory Board for Minority Issues (*vähemmistöasiain neuvottelukunta / delegationen för minoritetsärenden*).²¹³

Roma most often contact the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*). In 2007, the Office of the Ombudsman handled 93 cases concerning Roma; in 2008, there were 110 cases. In 2008, most of the cases handled by the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities were lodged by Roma women (56 % of all cases). 23 % of the cases were lodged by Roma men. Where the issue concerned a child, the mother was most often the one to contact the Office of the Ombudsman. In the rest of the cases, the one to contact the Office of the Ombudsman was a local authority, an organisation, an assistant, or sometimes even a member of the majority population. In 2009, the Office of the Ombudsman handled 100 cases concerning Roma; in 2010 there were 76 cases.²¹⁴

The Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutetun toimisto / minoritetsombudsmannens byrå*) is contacted by Roma from all over Finland. In 2008, Roma from 41 different regions contacted the Office of the Ombudsman. Of the cases, 17 were from the Helsinki region. In 2008, there were no cases involving Roma from Lapland. Five cases involved Finnish Roma living or staying in Sweden.²¹⁵

²¹³ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*). available at: www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/pages/index3.

²¹⁴ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2008) *2007 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2007 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2007), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/\\$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/vuosikertomus_fi_2007/$file/vuosikertomus_fi_2007.pdf).

Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009) *2008 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2008 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2008), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/\\$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV2008_suomeksi/$file/VV2008_suomeksi.pdf).

Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2010) *2009 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2009 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2009), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/\\$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf).

Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2011) *2010 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2010 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2010), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at: [www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV%20vuosikertomus%202010/\\$file/VV%20vuosikertomus%202010.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV%20vuosikertomus%202010/$file/VV%20vuosikertomus%202010.pdf).

²¹⁵ Finland, Ombudsman for Minorities (*vähemmistövaltuutettu / minoritetsombudsmannen*) (2009). *2009 Annual report of the Ombudsman for Minorities* (Vähemmistövaltuutetun vuosikertomus 2009 / Minoritetsombudsmannens årsberättelse 2009), Helsinki, vähemmistövaltuutettu, available at:

The National Advisory Board for Romani Affairs (*Romaniasiaain neuvottelukunta / Delegationen för romska ärenden*) and four regional advisory boards for Romani affairs perform in Finland the functions that in many other EU Member States are carried out solely by NGOs: promoting equal opportunities for Roma to participate in decision-making and aiming to improve the realisation of the economic, social and cultural rights of Roma in Finland. The advisory boards address structural deficiencies and aim to improve the situation of the Roma in the long run.²¹⁶ The composition and activities of the National Advisory Board and the regional advisory boards are regulated by the Government decree on the National Advisory Board for Romani Affairs and the regional advisory boards for Romani affairs (*Valtioneuvoston asetus valtakunnallisesta romaniasiaain neuvottelukunnasta ja alueellisista romaniasiaain neuvottelukunnista / Statsrådets förordning om den riksomfattande delegationen för romska ärenden och regionala delegationer för romska ärenden*). The National Advisory Board was founded in 1956 and the regional advisory boards were set up in 2006. The Roma have had a representative on the National Advisory Board since 1968, and they are also represented on the regional advisory boards.²¹⁷

b. Participation in elections and political representation

The active participation of Finnish Roma in society has developed slowly considering there have been Roma in Finland for over 500 years. According to the Finnish Roma Forum (*Fintiko Romano Forum*), this is partly due to structural discrimination and marginalisation. The Finnish Roma are not politically organised to the same extent as the Swedish-speaking population in Finland or Roma living in other countries.²¹⁸ In its report on the 2011 parliamentary elections, the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights notes that the Finnish Roma are still not fully included in mainstream society socially and politically, though the situation has improved over the years. In addition, many elderly Roma are illiterate, making it difficult for them to vote. Furthermore, limited access to finances for campaigning may make it harder for Roma candidates to run for office.²¹⁹

Section 11 of the Personal Data Act (*henkilötietolaki / personuppgiftslag*) prohibits the processing of sensitive data. Personal data are deemed to be sensitive if they relate to or are intended to relate to for example a person's ethnic origin or their political affiliation. There are thus no statistical data available on the participation of Roma in European, national, regional or local elections.

The Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*) calls for the reinforcement of the Roma

[www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/\\$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf](http://www.vahemmistovaltuutettu.fi/intermin/vvt/home.nsf/files/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi/$file/VV_Vuosikertomus_suomi.pdf).

²¹⁶ Finland, Advisory Board on Romani Affairs (*Romaniasiaain neuvottelukunta / Delegationen för romska ärenden*). *Romaniasiaain neuvottelukunnan tehtävät*, available at: www.stm.fi/stm/neuvottelukunnat/ronk/tehtavat.

²¹⁷ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

²¹⁸ Finland, Finnish Roma Forum (*Fintiko Romano Forum ry*) (2011). 'FRF on tehnyt hallitusaloitteen', press release, 4 June 2011, available at: www.romanifoorumi.fi/index.php?mact=News,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=10&cntnt01origid=78&cntnt01returnid=78.

²¹⁹ OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) (2011). *Republic of Finland, Parliamentary elections 17 April 2011. OSCE/ODIHR election assessment mission report*, Warsaw, OSCE/ODIHR, available at: www.osce.org/odihr/8112

population's active involvement and functional capacity by making use of their own strengths. The basis for sovereign citizenship is created in early childhood and adolescence. According to ROMPO, this requires providing Roma children and youth with increased opportunities to participate and make their voices heard. They also need to be able to have their say in matters concerning themselves, both in society at large and within the Roma community. ROMPO notes that hobbies and participation in leisure activities are one way to enhance an individual's ability to function as a member of society.²²⁰

Following the Government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipolitiikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer*), the Ministry of Education and Culture (*opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö / undervisnings- och kulturministeriet*) and the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs (*Romaniasian neuvottelukunta / Delegationen för romska ärenden*) are to begin preparing measures to promote Roma children's and adolescents' opportunities for participation. According to the resolution, possible measures include:

- Setting up bodies of student representatives in schools;
- Setting up youth delegations;
- Organising national cultural events.²²¹

The National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2012-2013 (*Kansallinen perus- ja ihmisoikeustoimintaohjelma 2012-2013 / Nationell handlingsplan för grundläggande och mänskliga rättigheter 2012-2013*) proposes a project to promote the equal implementation of participation rights. The project is to map out the various challenges and obstacles related to the practical implementation of participation rights and find ways to eliminate them. The aim of the project is to establish which legislative and other measures are required to secure the equal implementation of rights to civic participation. The project will take into account the recommendations in the final report of the OSCE election observation delegation.²²²

The Government Resolution on Promoting Democracy (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös demokratian edistämistä Suomessa / Statsrådets principbeslut om främjandet av demokratin i Finland*) also calls for the promotion of the equal participation rights of different population groups. Special attention is to be paid to promoting the participation of people who are underprivileged or at risk of being marginalised. Actions proposed in the resolution include:

- Supporting the dialogue between different population groups;

²²⁰ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

²²¹ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2010). *Government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma* (*Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipolitiikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer*), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=1087414&name=DLFE-14641.pdf

²²² Finland, Government (2012). *National Action Plan on Fundamental and Human Rights 2012-2013* (*Kansallinen perus- ja ihmisoikeustoimintaohjelma 2012-2013 / Nationell handlingsplan för grundläggande och mänskliga rättigheter 2012-2013*), available at: www.om.fi/Satellite?blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobcol=urldata&SSURIdapptype=BlobServer&SSURIdcontainer=Default&SSURIdsession=false&blobkey=id&blobheadervalue1=inline;%20filename=OMSO_20_2012_88p.pdf&SSURIdcontext=Satellite%20Server&blobwhere=1335335807027&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&ssbinary=true&blobheader=application/pdf.

- Increasing knowledge of minority cultures;
- Increasing knowledge of the principles of equality and non-discrimination.

The equality aspect is to be taken into account in all political preparatory work and research related to democracy. The responsibility for implementing the resolution lies with the Ministry of Justice (*oikeusministeriö / justitieministeriet*).²²³

In Finland, municipal elections are held every four years. Everyone who is resident in the municipality and fulfils the other requirements set out in Section 26 of the Act on Municipalities (*kuntalaki / kommunallag*) is entitled to vote in the municipal elections. Sections 33 and 34 of the Act set out the requirements for eligibility to run in municipal elections. The next municipal elections will be held on 28 October 2012. In the 2008 municipal elections, there was at least one candidate of Roma background. She ran in the Helsinki region but was not elected to the Helsinki City Council.²²⁴

Parliamentary elections are also held every four years. According to Section 14 of the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki / Finlands grundlag*), every Finnish citizen aged 18 or older is entitled to vote. According to Section 27, everyone entitled to vote is also entitled to run, provided they have not been declared legally incompetent. In the 2011 parliamentary elections, around 3 % of the candidates were of a foreign background. A person has a foreign background if their mother tongue is not Finnish, Swedish or Sami. The Swedish People's Party (8.4 %) and the Green League (5.3 %) had the highest proportions of candidates of a foreign background, while the True Finns had the lowest proportion (0.8 %). Of those entitled to vote, 1.3 % are of a foreign background.²²⁵ There was at least one candidate of Roma background in the 2011 parliamentary elections. She ran in the Helsinki electoral district but was not elected.²²⁶ There are currently no members of Roma background in the Parliament. In the 2007 parliamentary elections there was also at least one candidate of Roma background. She ran in the Uusimaa electoral district but was not elected.²²⁷

Presidential elections are held every six years. According to Section 14 of the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki / Finlands grundlag*), every Finnish citizen aged 18 or older is entitled to vote. According to Section 54, presidential candidates must be Finnish citizens by birth. There were no candidates of Roma background in the 2012 elections, nor in the previous elections in 2006.

According to Section 14 of the Constitution of Finland (*Suomen perustuslaki / Finlands grundlag*), every Finnish citizen regardless of domicile as well as every national of an EU Member State other

²²³ Finland, Ministry of Justice (*oikeusministeriö / justitieministeriet*) (2010). *Government Resolution on Promoting Democracy in Finland* (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös demokratian edistämistä Suomessa / Statsrådets principbeslut om främjandet av demokratin i Finland), Mietintöjä ja lausuntoja 17/2010, Helsinki, oikeusministeriö, available at: www.om.fi/Satellite?blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobcol=urldata&SSURIdatatype=BlobServer&SSURIdcontainer=Default&SSURIsession=false&blobkey=id&blobheadervalue1=inline;%20filename=OMML%2017%202010%20Periaatep%E4%E4t%F6s%20demokratian%20edist%E4%20Suomessa.pdf&SSURIsscontext=Satellite%20Server&blobwhere=1266335635515&blobheadername1=Content-Disposition&ssbinary=true&blobheader=application/pdf.

²²⁴ Helsingin Sanomat (2008). 'Vaalikone', available at: www3.vaalikone.fi/kunta2008/naytaehdokas/Janette+Gr%C3%B6nfors/2/613.

²²⁵ Finland, Statistics Finland (*Tilastokeskus / Statistikcentralen*) (2011). *Background analysis of candidates and elected MPs in the Parliamentary elections 2011*, available at: http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/evaa/2011/evaa_2011_2011-04-29_kat_001_en.html.

²²⁶ Helsingin Sanomat (2011a). 'Vaalikone', available at: www.vaalikone.fi/eduskuntavaalit2011/tulos/ehdokas/01/40/

²²⁷ Helsingin Sanomat (2007). 'Vaalikone', available at: www3.vaalikone.fi/eduskunta2007/naytaehdokas/Miranda+Vuolasranta/1017/3166.

than Finland who is resident in Finland is entitled to vote in the European Parliamentary elections provided they are aged 18 or older. The provisions on eligibility are the same as in parliamentary elections. In addition, persons holding certain positions cannot be members of the European Parliament. The previous elections were held on 7 June 2009. There are currently no Finnish Roma in the European Parliament.

The Ministry of Justice (*oikeusministeriö / justitieministeriet*) maintains a website with information on the different elections in Finland. Information on the 2012 presidential elections was made available in the Romani language as well.²²⁸

c. Participation and representation in non-governmental organisations

Roma have traditionally lived in well-knit communities and, in contrast to the majority population, lack the tradition of belonging to various organisations. They have been able to rely on their families and other Roma for assistance and socialising. For the 2008 study on the service needs of elderly Roma, 58 elderly Roma were asked about their participation in organisations. Among them, only one belonged to an actual organisation.²²⁹ Of the Roma interviewed for a 2012 study on the Finnish Roma's use of cultural services, 38 % (n=136) belonged to a Roma organisation while 25 % (n=139) did not belong to any organisation. Most of the elderly and middle-aged interviewees belonged to a Roma organisation.²³⁰

Finnish Roma in general are very religious, and many Roma belong to religious organisations. According to the 2012 study on the Finnish Roma's use of cultural services, one reason why the Roma frequently attend spiritual events is that they can be certain that the content of these events is in line with their faith. Members' strong desire to avoid anything potentially sinful is especially typical in revivalist movements to which many Finnish Roma belong. Another reason why the Roma frequent spiritual events is that they can be fairly certain there will be other Roma present and that they will feel welcome even when dressed in traditional Roma clothing. Of the Roma interviewed for the 2012 study, 90 belonged to a religious community and 41 did not. Ten interviewees did not answer the question. Of the interviewees, 29 % (n=141) belonged to both a Roma organisation and a religious community.²³¹

Finnish Roma are not entirely satisfied with Roma organisations and the people active in them. The 2012 study on the Finnish Roma's use of cultural services, based on semi-structured interviews with 141 Roma, found that Finnish Roma want to see new individuals and families leading and representing these organisations and making decisions in them. In addition, Roma want to see new faces representing them in other organisations and organs with Roma representatives. According to the study, it is unlikely that this desire for change is because the current leader figures have done something wrong; the more likely explanation is that young Roma would like to be more actively

²²⁸ Finland, Ministry of Justice (*oikeusministeriö / justitieministeriet*) (2011). 'Tasavallan presidentin vaali vuonna 2012', press release, 15 December 2011, available at: www.vaalit.fi/57038.htm

²²⁹ Majaniemi, P. and Viljanen, A.M. (2008). *Service needs of the elderly Roma* (Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus), Helsinki, Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry, available at: http://www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi/pdf/sry_palvelutarvekartoitus.pdf.

²³⁰ Toivanen, R. (2012). *Roma and culture* (Romanit ja kulttuuri), Helsinki, Ihmisoikeusliitto, available at: http://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/images/pdf_files/Romanit%20ja%20kulttuuri.pdf.

²³¹ Toivanen, R. (2012). *Roma and culture* (Romanit ja kulttuuri), Helsinki, Ihmisoikeusliitto, available at: http://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/images/pdf_files/Romanit%20ja%20kulttuuri.pdf.

involved themselves. The study notes that the latter is not possible until the current leader figures willingly give up their seats to younger Roma.²³²

d. Awareness and use of complaints procedures

In Finland, no research or surveys have ever been carried out on Roma's awareness of antidiscrimination legislation or complaints bodies.

In the light of available information, the most used complaints body for Roma in discrimination cases is the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities. The number of Roma complaints to the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities are given in Table 2.1. and Table 2.2. in Annex 3.

e. Experiences and perceptions of racial/ethnic discrimination

Discrimination and marginalisation have an adverse effect on a person's ability to participate in society. Ensuring the non-discriminatory treatment of minorities enables them to actively participate in society on equal terms with the majority population. According to the 2012 study on the Finnish Roma's use of cultural services, issues related to the Romani culture are all too often discussed without listening to the views of the Roma themselves. In addition, because of the small size of the Finnish Roma population, it is easy for certain voices and people to dominate discussions on the entire community's needs and wishes. According to the study, competing groups have formed within the Finnish Roma population, and not everyone's voice is heard. The views of the few groups that are heard may then be taken to represent the views of the entire Roma population.²³³

According to the Finnish national policy on Roma (ROMPO) (*Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma, ROMPO / Finland's politiska program avseende romer, ROMPO*), the present legislation and service system should create a good foundation for promoting the equal treatment of the Roma population. However, ROMPO also notes that special measures are needed at all levels of authorities to reach the goal of inclusion and de facto equal treatment of the Roma. According to ROMPO, local authorities have a key role in promoting the equal treatment of Roma.²³⁴ In its resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma, the government expressed its support for the setting up of local Roma working groups and development of their activities in municipalities. According to the resolution, the aim is to strengthen the cooperation structures at the local level as well as the inclusion of the Roma.²³⁵

Between 1 January 2007 and 31 August 2008, district courts in Finland handled 23 criminal cases involving discrimination. Most of the cases involved discrimination in the provision of services; only

²³² Toivanen, R. (2012). *Roma and culture* (Romanit ja kulttuuri), Helsinki, Ihmisoikeusliitto, available at: http://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/images/pdf_files/Romanit%20ja%20kulttuuri.pdf.

²³³ Toivanen, R. (2012). *Roma and culture* (Romanit ja kulttuuri), Helsinki, Ihmisoikeusliitto, available at: http://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/images/pdf_files/Romanit%20ja%20kulttuuri.pdf.

²³⁴ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2009). *The proposal of the working group for a national policy on Roma: Working group report* (Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys / Politisk program för romerna i Finland: Arbetsgruppens promemoria), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=39503&name=DLFE-11164.pdf.

²³⁵ Finland, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health (*sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, STM / social- och hälsovårdsministeriet, SHM*) (2010). *Government resolution on guidelines for a policy on Roma* (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös romanipoliittikan linjauksiksi / Statsrådets principbeslut om riktlinjer för politiken avseende romer), Helsinki, sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö, available at: www.stm.fi/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=1087414&name=DLFE-14641.pdf.

one concerned discrimination in housing. The study states that most of the complainants in the cases were Roma without specifying the figure.²³⁶ No information pertaining to other years is available.

²³⁶ Aaltonen, M. Joronen, M. and Villa S. (2009). *Discrimination in Finland in 2008* (Syrjintä Suomessa 2008), Helsinki, Ihmisoikeusliitto.

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2. Statistical tables

No statistics available.

3. Table of complaints

Table 2.1. Customer cases of the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities in 2007-2011. (Sources: the annual reports of the Ombudsman for Minorities).

	Customer cases in total	Of which concerned Roma
2011	830	63
2010	848	76
2009	921	100
2008	712	110
2007	737	93
Total	4048	442

Table 2.2. Customer cases of Roma handled at the Office of the Ombudsman for Minorities in 2007-2011. (Source: Joronen, M (2012) *Discrimination of Roma and immigrants in applying for housing* (Romanien ja maahanmuuttajien syrjintä asunnon haussa. Ihmisoikeusliitto. (pdf-publication forthcoming),

	Complaints by Roma in total	Housing	Other
2011	63	44	19
2010	76	42	34
2009	100	39	61
2008	110	51	59
2007	93	46	47
Total	442	222	220

4. Table of sources (reports and studies on Roma)

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanilasten perusopetuksen tila: Selvitys lukuvuodelta 2001-2002</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	✓
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>Parents of 174 Roma families and 380 schools that had Roma pupils in the school year 2000–2001 participated in the survey</i>
	Location	<i>Nationwide</i>
	Target population	<i>Finnish Roma children in basic education (grades 1-9) and their parents; basic education establishments with Roma pupils</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -19 % of Roma pupils stay back at some point of education - Repetitive absenteeism significantly affects the education of at least a third of Roma pupils - 5 % of Roma pupils dropped out of school during the school year 2000–2001 -12 % of Roma pupils changed schools mid-term during the school year 2000–2001 - 50 % of Roma pupils take part in special education - 16 % of Roma pupils in grades 1–6 study according to a partly or completely adjusted educational plan - 29 % of Roma pupils in grades 7–9 were moved into special education during the school year 2000–2001 - The availability of classes in the Romani language is very limited - A significant number of Roma children are home-schooled - The enrolment of Roma children into preschool is very limited - Parents feel that skill and art subjects are their children's strong points - Parents and schools see sociability as the children's strong point
	Methodology	<i>Quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the situation of Finnish Roma children in basic education in the school year 2000-2001</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanioppilaiden perusopetuksen tilannekatsaus 2010-2011 ja toimenpide-ehdotukset</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	✓
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>Electronic questionnaire answered by 1 341 headmasters of basic education establishments</i> <i>Interviews with 120 Roma pupils and 120 guardians of Roma pupils</i> <i>Interviews with representatives of municipalities receiving government aid to improve basic education of Roma pupils</i>
	Location	<i>Basic education establishments situated in and Roma interviewed in areas of six Regional State Administrative Agencies</i>
	Target population	<i>Finnish Roma children in basic education (grades 1-9) and their parents; basic education establishments with Roma pupils; representatives of municipalities</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Cooperation between schools and homes works well</i> - <i>The number of children in preschool has increased in last 10 years</i> - <i>Support measures reach Roma pupils</i> - <i>Roma pupils are not subject to systematic discrimination</i> - <i>Bullying faced by pupils mostly ethnic name-calling</i> - <i>Number of pupils studying Romani language has more than doubled in 10 years</i> - <i>There are some problems with absences</i> - <i>More and more pupils complete basic education</i> - <i>Pupils have discovered the possibility of vocational studies after basic education, but they should be encouraged to apply to upper secondary school as well</i>
	Methodology	<i>Quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the situation of Finnish Roma children in basic education in the school year 2010-2011</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Enemmän samanlaisia kuin erilaisia: Romanilasten ja nuorten hyvinvointi ja heidän oikeuksiensa toteutuminen Suomessa</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental report</i>

Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	✓
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>Interviews with 36 Roma children and youth aged 10-18 and nine Roma adults working with children</i>
	Location	<i>In different areas around Finland</i>
	Target population	<i>Finnish Roma children and youth aged 10-18; Roma adults working with children</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Attending preschool made starting school easier</i> - <i>The presence of Roma adults at school as assistants/ Roma language teachers helps support and encourage studies and planning of schooling after primary level</i> - <i>Roma children and youth experience considerably more school bullying when compared with the national average</i> - <i>Roma children and youth have a high threshold for what they consider bullying: the experience of discrimination is becoming routine</i> - <i>Roma adults and children/ youth have fairly similar concerns regarding schooling</i>
	Methodology	<i>Qualitative, thematic interviews</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Only for this particular group; not possible to extrapolate responses to all Finnish Roma children</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanien pitkä matka työn markkinoille : tutkimus romanien työmarkkinoille sijoittumisen edistämisestä</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental study</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	✓
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<p><i>34 interviews with authorities, Roma employees and jobseekers and those involved in Equal projects</i></p> <p><i>Questionnaires answered by 46 Roma contact persons working in labour administration, 152 Roma jobseekers, and 306 employers (small/ medium enterprises)</i></p> <p><i>Hearing of experts (authorities, educational organisations,</i></p>

		<i>representatives from Roma organisations and Federation of Finnish Enterprises)</i> <i>Analysis of background information of 1,471 Roma jobseekers in the labour administration's client data system</i>
	Location	<i>Nationwide</i>
	Target population	<i>Finnish Roma jobseekers and Roma representatives; authorities and employers</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The majority of Roma jobseekers consider finding work important for their future</i> - <i>A low level of general and vocational education and lack of work experience are the biggest obstacles to employment</i> - <i>Lack of suitable jobs, special features of Roma culture and deeply rooted prejudices and negative attitudes towards Roma are also obstacles to employment</i> - <i>75 % of employers are willing/ possibly willing to offer on-the-job training to Roma jobseekers</i> - <i>The attitude to recruiting Roma applicants is more positive in companies where Roma have worked previously</i> - <i>Only a small minority of unemployed Roma have access to special employment services</i> - <i>Roma jobseekers can be divided into (a) those whose basic education is incomplete, (b) those who have no vocational training after basic education, and (c) those who have work experience and/or a vocational qualification and need support especially in job seeking</i>
	Methodology	<i>Quantitative and qualitative questionnaires and interviews; analysis of existing materials</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the obstacles to Finnish Roma's employment as well as the role of the labour administration in promoting the employment of Roma</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanivanhusten palvelutarvekartoitus</i>
	Source and type	<i>Non-governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	✓
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	✓
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>Interviews with 58 elderly Roma, 20 Roma taking care of their relatives at home, and 59 social and healthcare professionals</i>

	Location	<i>Southern Finland</i>
	Target population	<i>Elderly Finnish Roma and their relatives; social and healthcare professionals working with elderly Roma</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The situation of elderly Roma in housing is good: the elderly have a place to live and are mostly satisfied with their accommodation</i> - <i>In general, services are available close by. Most of the elderly consider their own health moderate.</i> - <i>There are shortcomings in rehabilitation</i> - <i>Caretaker relatives are concerned with the quality of public services</i> - <i>Social and healthcare professionals receive cultural training but would like to receive more</i> - <i>Professionals sometimes have difficulty communicating with elderly Roma</i>
	Methodology	<i>Questionnaires and interviews with quantitative and qualitative characteristics</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Only regional</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Toiveena monipuolinen asukasrakenne: selvitys asumisen etnisen yhdenvertaisuuden toteutumisesta pääkaupunkiseudulla</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	✓
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<p><i>45 interviews with immigrants and 12 interviews with Roma</i></p> <p><i>Three interviews with housing authorities, three with housing advisors and four with representatives of organisations</i></p>
	Location	<i>Three cities in southern Finland: Helsinki, Espoo and Vantaa</i>
	Target population	<i>Immigrants and Finnish Roma; housing authorities</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Half of the Roma felt discriminated against because of their ethnicity when applying for housing</i> - <i>In general, authorities take into account the Romani culture when allocating housing, thus preventing the formation of areas with only Roma occupants</i> - <i>Successful Roma with no major problems in life generally did not experience problems related to housing, while those Roma struggling with everyday life experienced discrimination and felt authorities do not sufficiently take Romani culture into account when allocating housing</i>

		- Roma want to live in multicultural areas with relatively few other Roma
	Methodology	Questionnaires with quantitative and qualitative sections
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Only regional

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanien asuminen ja yhdenvertaisuus</i>
	Source and type	Governmental report
Thematic area	Education	
	Housing	✓
	Employment	
	Health	
	Poverty	
	Migration	
	Active citizenship	
	Sample	<p>Electronic questionnaire filled out by 83 representatives of municipalities and 12 representatives of non-profit rental accommodation providers</p> <p>Interviews with 32 people including representatives of authorities, experts, Romani organisations and individual Roma</p> <p>Complaints made to authorities concerning the housing situation of Roma during the past five years</p>
	Location	Responses to questionnaire from 65 municipalities; interviews conducted around Finland
	Target population	Finnish Roma and Roma representatives; representatives of municipalities/ authorities and non-profit rental accommodation providers
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Features of the Romani culture and relations between Roma make it difficult to allocate suitable housing to Roma - Other factors making allocation difficult include a poor credit history and a history of being behind in rent - The Roma do not have a clear picture of the process of applying for housing, which leads to misunderstandings and feelings of being discriminated against - Problems with landlords and members of the original population exist - The Roma feel they are often wrongly accused of disturbing conduct by neighbours - The Roma are often automatically allocated housing in areas with lots of immigrants, drug users and poor people - Stereotypes, efforts by other Roma to influence those allocating housing, and the duty to ask other Roma living in the area for

		<i>permission to move in cause inequality between Roma and the original population and between Roma</i> <i>- The housing situation of working Roma does not differ from that of the majority population</i>
	Methodology	<i>Questionnaires with quantitative and qualitative sections; qualitative interviews</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the housing situation of Finnish Roma</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Kansallinen perus- ja ihmisoikeustoimintaohjelma 2012-2013</i>
	Source and type	<i>National Human Rights Action Plan 2012-2013 (governmental)</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	✓
	Sample	<i>The Ministry of Justice appointed a working group on 9 September 2011 to prepare a proposition for the first national human rights action plan of Finland</i>
	Location	<i>Nationwide</i>
	Target population	<i>The whole Finnish population, including Finnish Roma; authorities</i>
	Key findings	<i>Proposals for action concerning Roma include:</i> <i>- Developing indicators to monitor the welfare and equal treatment of Roma</i> <i>- Promoting the equality and human rights of Roma women</i> <i>- Promoting the constitutionally recognised right of Roma to uphold and develop their language</i>
	Methodology	<i>- Open dialogue with NGOs and other human rights actors</i> <i>- Addressing the Government's priorities in promoting the basic and human rights during the current Government's term of office</i> <i>- Charting the roles of the different actors in the field of human rights</i> <i>- Coming up with concrete measures for promoting the realisation of basic and human rights in different administrative sectors</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Everyone in Finland, including the Roma</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Suomen romanipoliittinen ohjelma: työryhmän esitys</i>
	Source and type	<i>Working group report (governmental)</i>

Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	✓
	<i>Housing</i>	✓
	<i>Employment</i>	✓
	<i>Health</i>	✓
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	✓
Sample	<i>The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health set up a working group in December 2008 to draft the first Finnish national policy on Roma. The working group published its proposal on 25 November 2009.</i>	
Location	<i>Nationwide</i>	
Target population	<i>The whole Finnish Roma population; authorities</i>	
Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The present legislation and service system should create a good foundation for promoting the equal treatment of the Roma population</i> - <i>Special measures are needed at all levels of authorities to reach the goal of inclusion and de facto equal treatment of the Roma</i> - <i>The Roma population's active involvement and functional capacity must be reinforced by making use of their own strengths</i> - <i>Local authorities have a key role in promoting the equal treatment of Roma</i> - <i>A grant should be added to the state budget for municipalities to use for developing the practices referred to in the Policy</i> - <i>Strengthening the participation of Roma in education and raising their level of education in general are primary objectives</i> - <i>The placement of Roma in working life must be supported</i> - <i>The allocation of social and healthcare services to Roma must be improved</i> - <i>Equal treatment in housing must be ensured</i> - <i>Maintaining the Romani language constitutes a prerequisite for the implementation of the cultural rights of the Roma</i> 	
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Roma were given an opportunity to be heard during the preparation of the Policy: hearing sessions were organised in five different cities</i> - <i>A hearing session for representatives of the educational and social sectors of municipalities with large Roma populations was organised</i> 	
Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>All Finnish Roma</i>	

	Title, author, source	<i>Yhteiset kentät? Puheita ja tekoja vähemmistöihin kuuluvien nuorten yhdenvertaisen liikunnan ja urheilun edistämiseksi</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	✓
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<p><i>30 interviews with experts on issues concerning multiculturality, gender and sexual minorities, sports-related civic activities and youth</i></p> <p><i>Unofficial conversations with different actors</i></p> <p><i>Participation in events related to topic of report</i></p> <p><i>Analysis of existing materials</i></p>
	Location	<i>Nationwide</i>
	Target population	<i>Youth belonging to ethnic and sexual minorities</i>
	Key findings	<p><i>- Much research has been carried out in recent years on immigrants' participation in sports, while gender and sexual minorities and old ethnic minorities, such as the Finnish Roma have received little attention</i></p> <p><i>- Obstacles to immigrants' participation in sports involve financial issues, problems with flow of information, gender inequality and negative attitudes</i></p> <p><i>- Research has revealed inequality between the sexes when it comes to boys' and girls' exercise and participation in sports-related civic activities. Because of the already disadvantaged position of ethnic minorities, women and girls belonging to ethnic minorities face even greater obstacles to equality in participation</i></p> <p><i>- Many Roma children give up hobbies involving sports as they approach their teenage years</i></p> <p><i>- Many Roma boys get exercise by participating in the youth work of parishes and municipalities</i></p> <p><i>- Roma girls do not exercise as much as boys, and their hobbies are often confined to the home and the private circle of family and friends</i></p> <p><i>- More emphasis needs to be placed on finding good practices</i></p> <p><i>- Projects aimed at achieving equality are often short-lived and do not result in the formation of long-term practices</i></p> <p><i>- The administrative separation of exercise and youth issues in many municipalities makes it difficult to promote equality</i></p> <p><i>- Youth need to be made aware of their right to be treated equally and their active participation in issues related to sports and exercise needs</i></p>

		<i>to be emphasised</i> <i>- Issues related to minorities and equality need to receive more attention in youth work</i>
	Methodology	<i>Qualitative interviews</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Youth living in Finland and belonging to ethnic minorities, including Roma youth, or sexual minorities</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanit ja kulttuuri</i>
	Source and type	<i>Non-governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	✓
	Sample	<i>Questionnaire answered by 141 Roma, including men and women from different age groups. Some answers were received by interviewing the subjects.</i>
	Location	<i>Nationwide, though most of the answers received came from Southern and Eastern Finland</i>
	Target population	<i>Roma men and women aged 15 to 85</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The Roma's views on the quality and content of cultural services differs from the views of the mainstream population</i> - <i>The Roma are not frequent users of cultural services in general</i> - <i>Opera and classical music concerts are not popular among Roma</i> - <i>Spiritual cultural services are popular as Finnish Roma are very religious</i> - <i>The Roma would like to see more musical events organised by spiritual associations and municipalities</i> - <i>The main reasons for not using cultural services are lack of interest in what is offered, high fees and lack of time</i> - <i>Roma would like to see more cultural services produced and performed by Roma</i> - <i>The situation of Roma artists is a cause for concern: more technical and financial support structures</i>
	Methodology	<i>Questionnaire with quantitative and qualitative sections</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the Finnish Roma's thoughts on cultural services</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Kuka ei kuulu joukkoon? Lasten ja nuorten kokema syrjintä Suomessa</i>
	Source and type	<i>Governmental report</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	✓
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
Thematic area	Sample	<i>Online questionnaire answered by 337 children and youth aged 10 to 17</i> <i>Interviews with 23 youth belonging to ethnic, religious or sexual minorities</i>
	Location	<i>Nationwide</i>
	Target population	<i>Children and youth between the ages of 10 and 17 belonging to an ethnic, linguistic, religious or sexual minority or who are disabled</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>About a third of the respondents to the online questionnaire said they had experienced discrimination</i> - <i>Certain forms of discrimination are more commonly directed at minority youth</i> - <i>Boys experience more violence and threats, while girls are more often subjected to prejudices</i> - <i>Discrimination is most common in secondary school</i> - <i>Discrimination takes various forms and the trigger may be any kind of difference in appearance or behaviour</i> - <i>The one who discriminates is most often someone the discriminated child or youth knows</i> - <i>Children and youth feel that adults lack ways to intervene in discrimination</i>
	Methodology	<i>Qualitative interviews and quantitative online questionnaire</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Collection of data not based on statistical sampling, so not possible to extrapolate findings on a statistical level. Still, gives a good overview of the phenomenon and its effects on children and youth.</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Kerjääminen eilen ja tänään</i>
	Source and type	<i>Collection of articles (non-governmental)</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	
	<i>Employment</i>	✓
	<i>Health</i>	✓
	<i>Poverty</i>	✓

	<i>Migration</i>	✓
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>Collection of articles by representatives of various scientific fields. The writers present historical, legal, and socio-political views on begging. The articles examine for example the historical background of policies on vagrants and Roma. In addition, human rights and especially legal issues related to freedom of movement are examined.</i>
	Location	<i>The articles examine issues at the national, Nordic and EU levels</i>
	Target population	<i>Beggars, including Roma from other EU countries who come to Finland to beg</i>
	Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most beggars arriving in Finland are Roma from Romania - Begging is a carefully planned 'business' - Most beggars are EU citizens and therefore entitled to freely move and seek employment within the EU. They leave their home countries because of the impossible employment situation. - If a person's papers are in order, entry cannot be refused even if that person's livelihood is begging - Authorities can only intervene if begging turns aggressive or endangers public order - Finns have both positive and negative attitudes to foreign beggars
	Methodology	<i>The editors sought out researchers interested in the themes of poverty, ethnic minorities and begging. The group held discussion sessions on the challenges begging presents to Finnish society.</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the begging phenomenon</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Kerjäämisen kieltämistä selvittävä työryhmä: loppuraportti</i>
	Source and type	<i>Working group report (governmental)</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	✓
	<i>Employment</i>	✓
	<i>Health</i>	✓
	<i>Poverty</i>	✓
	<i>Migration</i>	✓
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>On 21 May 2010, the Ministry of the Interior (sisäasiainministeriö / inrikesministeriet) set up a working group to examine the need to criminalise begging. The group was to examine the need to amend the Public Order Act (järjestyslaki/ ordningslag). The group presented its final report on 30 September 2010.</i>
	Location	<i>Nationwide</i>
	Target population	<i>Beggars, including Roma from other EU countries who come to Finland to beg; authorities</i>
	Key findings	<i>- Crime and the setting up of unauthorized camps are common side</i>

		<p><i>effects of begging</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>The money made by some beggars and buskers goes to organised crime</i> - <i>Police do not have the necessary means to intervene in disturbing begging and the setting up of unauthorized camps</i> - <i>A prohibition on begging in a public place to support oneself must be included in the Public Order Act 612/2003 (järjestyslaki/ ordningslag)</i> - <i>A prohibition on the organisation of begging must be added to Chapter 17 of the Criminal Code 39/1889 (rikoslaki/ strafflag)</i> - <i>A prohibition on unauthorized camping must be included in the Public Order Act 612/2003 (järjestyslaki/ ordningslag)</i> - <i>Authorities must take into account the provisions on human trafficking to help possible victims get the support they need</i> - <i>Finland must cooperate with countries of origin to ensure they have accurate information on Finland</i> - NOTE: <i>The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health disagreed with the proposals to prohibit begging and the organisation of begging, considering them discriminatory against Roma</i>
	Methodology	<i>Examining the occurrence of begging and current legislation in Finland and other countries and forming legislative proposals based on this information</i>
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	<i>Good overview of the begging phenomenon in Finland as well as related legislation</i>

	Title, author, source	<i>Rom po drom -projektin loppuraportti 14.6.2010</i>
	Source and type	<i>Rom po drom was a project of the Helsinki Deaconess Institute (Helsingin Diakonissalaitos) , implemented at the request of the Social Services Department of the City of Helsinki, which also financed the project (non-governmental)</i>
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	✓
	<i>Employment</i>	✓
	<i>Health</i>	✓
	<i>Poverty</i>	✓
	<i>Migration</i>	✓
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	<i>wo employees of the Helsinki Deaconess Institute sought out and talked with approximately 3 000 people earning their living on the streets by for example begging</i>

	<i>Cooperation with authorities concerning for example child protection</i>
Location	<i>Helsinki</i>
Target population	<i>Beggars, including Roma from other EU countries who come to Finland to beg</i>
Key findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Most of the people encountered by the workers were Roma from Eastern Europe</i> - <i>Begging Roma most often pray quietly in the streets and do not disturb anyone</i> - <i>Groups of buskers are mostly all-male. Their wives beg.</i> - <i>There are some problems between Roma from the Gorji region and those from other areas of Romania</i> - <i>Most of the begging Roma in Helsinki are from the Teleorman region</i> - <i>After the arrival of Roma from the Teleorman region, cases of aggressive and disturbing begging began to emerge</i> - <i>Begging Teleormani women are very young with several children. Pregnant women only take a few days' break to give birth before returning to begging.</i> - <i>Roma beggars arrive in Helsinki via Stockholm or Tallinn</i> - <i>For many of the Roma encountered, this was their second time in Finland</i> - <i>Roma earn their living legally by begging, peddling, or busking or illegally by stealing</i> - <i>Roma must beg to pay off the debt caused by borrowing the money to come to Finland</i> - <i>Some Roma are victims of a wider organised business which disregards human rights. For example, some Roma are lured into Finland with false promises of employment.</i> - <i>Children learn begging from their parents</i> - <i>The Roma arriving in Finland from different areas of Romania form their own distinct groups with their own internal rules</i>
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Open discussions with Roma beggars on their situation</i> - <i>Assisting Roma with job seeking</i> - <i>Accompanying Roma to hospitals, emergency rooms and so on when necessary</i> - <i>Organising "shower evenings" where Roma could come to wash themselves, discuss various issues and eat a warm meal</i> - <i>Resolving conflicts between groups of Roma and Roma and the majority population</i>

		- The street workers' findings were incorporated into a wider framework to improve the situation of Roma
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Good overview of the begging phenomenon; relevance of report not limited to the Helsinki region

	Title, author, source	<i>Romanien ja maahanmuuttajien syrjintä asunnon haussa</i>
	Source and type	Non-governmental report
Thematic area	<i>Education</i>	
	<i>Housing</i>	✓
	<i>Employment</i>	
	<i>Health</i>	
	<i>Poverty</i>	
	<i>Migration</i>	
	<i>Active citizenship</i>	
	Sample	Discrimination test in housing. Altogether 128 valid tests were carried out, of which 61 concerned Roma and 67 immigrants.
	Location	Helsinki, Espoo and Turku.
	Target population	Roma
	Key findings	<p>- 16,4 % of Roma (n=61) faced discrimination when applying for housing. The figure for immigrants (n=67) was 14,9 %.</p> <p>- Roma experienced most discrimination (22,2 %) when contacting lessors by e-mail.</p> <p>- Roma experienced least discrimination (12,9 %) when the contact was made by phone.</p> <p>- 16,7 % of Roma experienced discrimination when the application for housing was made with an electronic application form.</p>
	Methodology	Discrimination test methodology
	Representativeness, transferability of findings	Small sample, but allows general inferences on the frequency of discrimination when applying for housing.

5. Roma networks

Type of Associations, Organisations, NGOs	Name of Organisation	Email/Website	Roma involvement	Main area of expertise
<i>Governmental</i>	<p>1) Advisory Board on Romani Affairs PL 33 00023 VALTIONEUVOSTO Tel. +358 9 1607 4308</p> <p>2) Southern Finland Regional Advisory Board on Romani Affairs PL 110 00521 Helsinki</p> <p>AND</p> <p>PL 150 01301 Hämeenlinna</p> <p>Tel. +358 40 730 4195</p> <p>3) Eastern Finland Regional Advisory Board on Romani Affairs PL 1741 70101 Kuopio Tel. +358 40 727 5709</p> <p>4) South-Western Finland Regional Advisory Board on Romani Affairs PL 22 20801 Turku Tel. +358 50 302 3935</p> <p>5) Northern Finland Regional Advisory Board on Romani Affairs PL 293 90101 Oulu Tel. +358 50 456 0170</p>	<p>ronk@stm.fi , www.stm.fi/stm/neuvot telukunnat/ronk/etusiv u</p>	<p>- The Advisory Board on Romani Affairs and the Regional Advisory Boards function under the administration of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health</p> <p>- They promote equal opportunities for Roma to participate in decision-making and aim to improve the realisation of the economic, social and cultural rights of Roma in Finland</p>	<p>Economic, social and cultural rights of Roma Active citizenship Anti-discrimination Romani language Romani culture</p>
<i>NGO</i>	<p>Fintiko Romano Forum ry Mäkelänkatu 58-60 A 00510 Helsinki FINLAND Tel. +358 44 33 77 102</p>	<p>toimisto@romanifoorumi.fi , www.romanifoorumi.fi</p>	<p>- Fintiko Romano Forum registered association is an umbrella organisation for 12 NGOs working for and with Roma</p> <p>- Its primary task is to act as guardian of the interests of its member organisations</p>	<p>Fundamental and human rights Anti-discrimination Romani culture Romani language Integration of Roma into society Active citizenship</p>
<i>NGO</i>	<p>Romano Missio ry Vilppulantie 2 C 4 00700 Helsinki FINLAND Tel. +358 41 45 92 529</p>	<p>toimisto@romanomissio.fi , www.romanomissio.fi</p>	<p>- Romano Missio registered association is a Finnish NGO that provides services for Finnish Roma</p> <p>- It is a child welfare and social service organisation</p> <p>- Romano Missio also produces Christian and educational services</p>	<p>Child and youth welfare Social service work Spiritual well-being Education Romani culture Romani language</p>

			<p>- <i>Romano Missio cooperates with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and United Christians</i></p> <p>- <i>It also works with the state, municipalities and other Roma organisations</i></p>	
NGO	<p>Elämä ja Valo ry Välinäenkatu 8 37100 Nokia FINLAND Tel. +358 40 70 00 134</p>	<p>info@elamajavallo.fi , www.elamajavallo.fi</p>	<p>- <i>Elämä ja Valo registered association is a Finnish NGO which aims at improving the spiritual, physical and social well-being of Roma in Finland and abroad</i></p> <p>- <i>The organisation also improves and develops the educational and recreational opportunities of Roma children and youth and is involved in anti-discrimination work</i></p> <p>- <i>Elämä ja Valo publishes a periodical four times a year.</i></p>	<p><i>Child and youth welfare</i> <i>Spiritual and missionary work</i> <i>Substance abuse (preventative work)</i> <i>Working with inmates</i> <i>Romani culture</i> <i>Romani language</i></p>
NGO	<p>Suomen Romaniyhdistys ry Linnanrakentajantie 6 C 26 00880 Helsinki FINLAND Tel. +358 45 32 96 226</p>	<p>sry@suomenromaniyhdistys.fi , www.suomenromaniyhdistys.fi</p>	<p><i>Suomen Romaniyhdistys registered association is a Finnish NGO offering help and advisory services to Roma and authorities</i></p> <p>- <i>It organises meetings between authorities and families, holds training sessions and distributes materials on Roma culture</i></p> <p>- <i>Suomen Romaniyhdistys publishes a periodical once a year</i></p>	<p><i>Housing</i> <i>Social welfare</i> <i>Pensions</i> <i>Education</i> <i>Romani culture</i></p>
NGO	<p>Drom ry Tel. +358 44 50 90 683</p>	<p>nina.casten@gmail.com , www.drom.fi</p>	<p>- <i>Drom registered association is a Finnish NGO which aims to promote Romani art and foster equality and cooperation between Finland's original population and ethnic minorities</i></p>	<p><i>Romani art and culture</i></p>
NGO	<p>Nevo Roma ry c/o Grönfors Valtimontie 1 B 19 00610 Helsinki FINLAND Tel. +358 40 81 85 177</p>	<p>janettegronfors@hotmail.fi</p>	<p>- <i>Nevo Roma registered association is a Finnish NGO which aims to promote Romani art and culture</i></p>	<p><i>Romani art and culture</i></p>
NGO	<p>Finnish League for Human Rights Döbelninkatu 2, 8.krs 00260 Helsinki FINLAND Tel. +358 9 4155 2500</p>	<p>info@ihmisoikeusliitto.fi , www.ihmisoikeusliitto.fi</p>	<p>- <i>Finnish League for Human Rights (FLHR) is a religiously and politically non-aligned general human rights organisation, whose principal objective is to monitor and improve the human rights situation in Finland</i></p> <p>- <i>The FLHR also promotes the realisation of the rights of Roma</i></p>	<p><i>Fundamental and human rights</i> <i>Anti-discrimination</i> <i>Romani cultural rights</i></p>