

ROMA INTEGRATION POLICY AND COORDINATION IN FINLAND

12-12:30 Ad Hoc Committee of
Experts on Roma and Travellers
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NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE

THE FINNISH ROMA POPULATION

- The Roma live everywhere in the country, but mostly in southern Finland and in the Helsinki area.
- Official estimates put their numbers between 10,000 and 12,000. In addition, some 3,000 Finnish Roma live in Sweden.
- Exact figures and precise details of their whereabouts are unknown, because the law prohibits the registration of people by ethnic background
- Roma are active in pursuing their interests, but only when the process is truly inclusive and they are given power.



FINLAND'S NATIONAL ROMA POLICY 2018–2022 (ROMPO2)

- **The primary objective :**

- To support the progress in the societal integration of Roma
- Continue positive development in Roma linguistic, cultural and social rights.

Background: Finland's 1st policy was EU:s the first NRIS, before the EU initiative.

Finnish Roma politics since 1970's is strongly based on Roma populations own representation in Negotiation Boards and training of Roma education mediators. National Board of Education allocated state subsidy (2001> (2meur) with great results in Education.

BASED ON CURRENT LEGISLATION

- Finland's current legislation and comprehensive service system provide a good foundation for the promotion of the equality of the Roma population. Universal services, housing and social security.
- The mainstreamed actions and measures targeted specifically at the Roma population set out in the National Roma Policy will create further capacities for considerable improvements in the human rights and socioeconomic status of Roma.

SELF-GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTIONAL MINORITY RIGHTS

- Policy must take place by increasing the level of activity, inclusion and access to influence among the Roma population
- National Negotiation Board of Romani Affairs and 5 Regional Negotiation Boards guarantee Roma participation in all actions concerning Roma.
- Strong Roma NGO's (including Finnish Roma Forum, member of ERTF)
- Respect for and by strengthening the Romani language and Roma culture and identity.



STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY

- On the basis of follow-up report on Finland's 1st National Policy on Roma (2009-2017) the new policy program will:
- Increase the amount, effectiveness and planning of cooperation in Roma issues at the local and regional levels in particular.
- One way of reaching these objectives and monitoring progress made is to create county-specific Roma programmes (MAARO Programmes) that support the implementation of the Counties Act that is currently being drafted alongside with Health Social Services Reform.

IMPLEMENTING, FOLLOWING AND MONITORING THE POLICY

- The objective of Roma Wellbeing Study: to produce data on Roma health and wellbeing comparable with the data from other population surveys (FinTerveys 2017, FinSote, Migrant Health and Wellbeing Survey); which form the data basis for national health and wellbeing monitoring.
- To produce data for the development of culturally appropriate services and follow-up of Roma policies and development of new ones
- Part of the Nevo Tiija- new era-project, funded by the European Social Fund 2016 - 2019



STUDY OF THE FINNISH ROMA POPULATION

- Last thorough survey in 1970's census - socioeconomic status and the living conditions weaker than those of the whole population. Inadequate housing was a core problem.
- Housing Act – s state subsidy for municipalities to allocate public housing for Roma.

NRIS 1(rompo 1) is promoting health and wellbeing, targeting (universal) social and health services towards the Roma with better coordination and culturally sensitive approach.

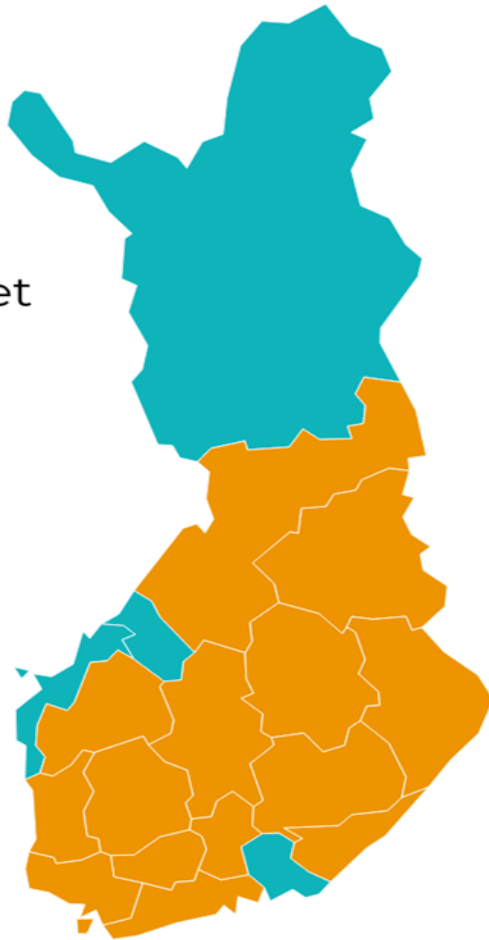
- Need for data (which services are needed, how and where)

IMPLEMENTATION

- Data collection around Finland (N= 350) in Roma community meetings, home visits, appointments
- Contents of the study:
 - health examination (45-60 minutes)
blood pressure&heart rate, height, weight, waist circumference, test of cognitive functions (verbal fluency, memory test), hand grip strenght test, join function tests, chair stand test, eyesight tests (near and distant vision) and Hopkins Symptom Checklist (HSCL)
 - structured face-to-face interview or self-filled a questionnaire
socio-economic status, housing conditions, employment, education, health, discrimination, use of services, functional ability
 - short-interview for those refusing or not able to participate in the longer interview (20-30 minutes)



 Roosan
tutkimusalueet



STUDY REGIONS

CHALLENGES

- how to identify the target population (self-identification)
- how to reach and motivate the participants (voluntary participation)
- how to gain trust among the Roma community
- how to ensure cultural appropriateness of the study content and practice.

EXPERIENCES OF DATA COLLECTION

- Finnish Roma have a great fear of being registered as a minority –historical mistrust towards the authorities.
- Ethnicity is sensitive data (Personal Data Act)- Roosa does not create a register
- However, many Finnish Roma see the study as a chance to speak openly about difficult issues anonymously
- Roma research assistants build trust and motivate people to participate. Personal experiences of participation are positive and strengthen Roma communities understanding of healthy lifestyles

PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

Planning:

Roma wellbeing Pre-Study 2013: ensuring cultural appropriateness in focus group interviews and pre-study (N30)

Practice:

Community member field personnel, Roma Steering Group, dialogue, culturally sensitive attitude

Reporting:

Researchers and focus group working together in learning cafe-workshops, discussing preliminary results. Steering group comment round of final results & further study plans.

FINALLY

The Finnish National 2nd Policy on Roma

seeks also to take into account matters relating to information provision and preservation of **Roma cultural heritage**.

Along with the needs of Finland's traditional Roma population, the National Roma Policy also covers the needs of **foreign and non-sedentary Roma** living in Finland temporarily or on a long-term basis.



PUBLICATION

- <http://www.julkari.fi>
- <http://terveytemme.fi/>

Reports-series

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