

## Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups



A number of groups within our societies face higher risk of poverty and social exclusion compared to the general population.

These vulnerable and marginalised groups include but are not limited to: people with disabilities, migrants and ethnic minorities (including Roma), homeless people, ex-prisoners, drug addicts, people with alcohol problems, isolated older people and children.

The problems these groups experience are translated into homelessness, unemployment, low education, and subsequently, their further exclusion from society.

**Inclusion of vulnerable groups is one of the priorities of the European Social Protection Social Inclusion Process.** In this context, Member States have committed to develop integrated and coordinated responses to the multiple disadvantages and the need of particular groups.

The European Union has a three-fold approach to overcoming discrimination and increasing the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups –

- increasing access to mainstream services and opportunities,
- enforcing legislation to overcome discrimination and, where necessary,
- developing targeted approaches to respond to the specific needs of each group.

**Ethnic minorities and immigrants** are identified as disadvantaged in almost every Member State. They exhibit lower scores on social inclusion such as employment rates, income in employment, and higher scores in school drop-out rates, homelessness, financial exclusion and criminal propensity. The European Union strives to increase the labour market participation of immigrants and ethnic minorities to the same level as the majority population, and to promote their participation in social, cultural and political life. The precarious situation of Roma is tackled accordingly in all countries where they reside.

**Disabled people** also face higher risk of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination. The European Union works towards narrowing the gap in the employment rates between disabled and non-disabled people though the implementation of active employment measure at Member State level.

Measures are implemented in favour of areas marked by exclusion – combating regional inequalities, tackling disadvantages faced by rural areas, and helping regenerate deprived areas and disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Eliminating the barriers to education and training for all vulnerable groups and at all levels is a key issue.

The European Union continues to work on the development of targets, objectives and common indicators, based on effective and reliable data and concrete statistics, in order to gain a clear picture of the situation and needs of each country and measure the actual impact of policies targeting vulnerable groups.

# Documentation

## Other EU websites

- [EU action against discrimination](#)
- [The EU and Roma \(thematic website\)](#)

## Key documents

### Best Practice (links to the Peer Review website)

- [Multi-regional Operational Programme to Combat Discrimination \(Spain - 2007\)](#)
- [Social aspects of human trafficking \(Denmark 2007\)](#)
- [Preventing the risks of exclusion of families with difficulties](#)
- [Municipal programme of shanty towns eradication in Aviles \(Asturias\)](#)
- [Field social work programmes in neighbourhoods threatened by social exclusion](#)
- [The "Reception platforms" to promote the integration of immigrants](#)