

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON AN EU FRAMEWORK STRATEGY FOR ROMA INTEGRATION UP TO 2020: UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

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1. INTRODUCTION

The UK welcomes the Council Conclusions on Roma integration adopted at the EU Employment, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) in May 2011 and subsequently endorsed by the European Council in June 2011.

The EPSCO Conclusions follow a number of earlier Council Conclusions on Roma adopted in recent years and are a clear indication of the importance that the EU Member States and institutions attach to advancing inclusion of Roma. They also complement the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma integration adopted by Council of Europe Member States in October 2010.

A significant number of Roma, in many parts of Europe, experience extreme poverty, discrimination and exclusion, and, as the Council Conclusions make clear, the primary responsibility for tackling this lies with the Member States. We therefore welcome the fact that these Conclusions represent a clear political commitment by EU Member States to take concrete steps to improve the situation of their Roma nationals, while recognising that the situation in each Member State is different.

In the UK, the policy areas covered by the Council Conclusions are the responsibility of the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, while the UK government is responsible for these matters in England. The various approaches adopted in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are set out below.

2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

In the UK we have a strong and well-established legal framework to combat discrimination and promote equality. That protects all individuals, including Roma, Gypsies and Travellers from racial and other forms of discrimination. The law in this area has been progressively strengthened, including by the transposition of the EU Race Directive (2000/43/EC) into domestic law in

2003. The equality and anti-discrimination law in Great Britain is now consolidated into the Equality Act 2010 which strengthens and simplifies our legislation in this area. Not only does our legislation prohibit discrimination in key areas like employment, education and housing, it also places a positive duty on public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between members of different groups. In Northern Ireland, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 outlaws discrimination on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. The Irish Traveller community is specifically identified in the Order as a racial group against which racial discrimination is unlawful. The antidiscrimination legislation in Northern Ireland was further strengthened in 2003 to bring it into line with the EU Race Directive.

Our criminal law includes a number of racially aggravated offences, with higher penalties for such hate crimes. These protect all individuals of whatever ethnic origin, including Roma, Gypsies and Travellers from racially motivated crime.

3. ROMA, GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN THE UK

It is important to note, in the UK context, that the definition of Roma used in the Council Conclusions includes a diverse range of groups, including Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers, as well as Roma who have migrated to the UK from other parts of Europe.

Gypsies and Travellers

A number of traditional travelling groups have lived and travelled in Great Britain and Ireland for centuries. They include Romany Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Scottish Gypsies/Travellers. Many now live in houses and do not travel, or do not travel all of the time, but nonetheless consider travelling to be part of their identity. There are no firm statistics on the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. Estimates vary from 80,000 to 300,000. The 2011 census for the first time included a Gypsy and Traveller tick-box in the ethnic origin question. When the results of this are available, it is hoped that they will clearer indication of the numbers of people who identify as Gypsy or Traveller.

Roma

The term “Roma” is usually used in the UK for people of Roma origin who have come to the UK in recent years, particularly following the end of the Cold war and successive enlargements of the EU in 2004 and 2007. There are no reliable data on the number Roma in the UK – entrants to the UK are not monitored by ethnic origin.

4. EU NATIONALS IN THE UK

The rights of EU citizens and their family members to live and work in other European countries, and to be accompanied by their third country national family members, are set out in the Free Movement Directive, by which all EU Member States are bound. The UK has implemented the Directive via the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006 ("the EEA Regulations").

The right of free movement for EU citizens is one of the founding principles of the European Union, enabling citizens to live and work across in other Member States. Over 900,000 UK citizens live and work elsewhere in the EU, and the UK has benefited from the talents of EU citizens living here, including those from Member States which joined the EU in 2004 and 2007.

Transitional restrictions on Romanian and Bulgarian nationals' access to labour market mean they cannot work in the UK unless that work has been authorised by the UK Border Agency. The restrictions mean that Romanians and Bulgarians cannot generally reside in the UK beyond three months as a job seeker. These restrictions will remain in place until December 2013.

These restrictions only apply to workers and Bulgarian and Romanian citizens can exercise their Treaty rights as self-employed persons in the same way as any other EU citizens.

5. ENGLAND

Integration policy

The Government set out its approach to integration in England in a paper entitled "*Creating the Conditions for Integration*", published in February 2012: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/integration>

This paper sets out our conviction that the challenges facing local communities today are too complex to be tackled simply by blanket solutions - or by singling out specific groups for special treatment. We are moving away from a centrally dictated approach towards one in which the Government encourages local areas to take the lead. Government will act only exceptionally.

In the integration paper we also note that there is a long history of migration to this country and that migrants have enriched their neighbourhoods and the country as a whole and made major contributions to national and local life. Since the 1990s, and particularly since EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007, we have seen changing patterns of migration to the UK and this has, of course, included the migration of other EU nationals, including Roma, to the UK.

While we make clear that integration is predominantly a local issue, we also set out actions for Government, including initiatives to celebrate shared

values, promote a strong sense of personal and social responsibility, improve social mobility, encourage participation, and challenge all forms of extremism and intolerance. We have many balanced and successful communities, but we know that this is not the case everywhere and there are still enduring problems in many neighbourhoods. We are determined to give everyone the ability and aspiration to prosper, breaking down barriers to social mobility. This will benefit all members of our communities, including Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, but we must also recognise that every community is different and so we need local leadership, not central prescription, if we are to grow prosperous and productive communities.

Our new approach is focused on how we create the conditions for integration to happen. We want to inspire civil society and local areas to take action on integration issues that are important to them, and we hope that Gypsy and Traveller and Roma organisations will play a full part in that.

Gypsies and Travellers in England

In the integration paper we said that we are determined to give everyone the ability and aspirations to prosper, breaking down barriers to social mobility. Gypsies and Travellers experience and are being held back by some of the worst outcomes of any group in this country, across a wide range of social indicators:

- In 2011 just 12% of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils achieved five or more good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, compared with 58.2% of all pupils¹
- There is an excess prevalence of miscarriages, stillbirths, neonatal deaths in Gypsy and Traveller communities²
- Around 20% of traveller caravans are on unauthorised sites.³

In addition, Gypsies and Travellers experience harassment and hate crime⁴ and in many places, lead separate, parallel lives from the wider community.⁵

In November 2010, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government set up a ministerial working group to tackle these issues, bringing together ministers from seven Government departments⁶.

¹ Source: Dept for Education

² Parry, G. et al. (2004): *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*. University of Sheffield.

³ DCLG; *Traveller Caravan Count* <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/20309312>

⁴ See for example, [Greenfields M, Home R, Cemlyn S et al., *West of England - Gypsy Traveller Accommodation \(and Other Needs\) Assessment 2006–2016*, Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College \(2007\)](#)

⁵ CRE *Common Ground* 2006 p13

⁶ Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP (Chair) and Andrew Stunell MP, Department for Communities and Local Government; Nick Gibb MP, Department for Education; Anne Milton MP, Department of Health; Lynne Featherstone MP, Home Office; Lord McNally, Ministry of Justice; Maria Miller MP, Department for Work and Pensions; Mark Hoban MP, HM Treasury

A lack of trust and understanding between Gypsy and Traveller communities, their neighbours and mainstream service providers was identified as a factor in many of the problems. The Ministerial Working Group looked at what Government could do and, through a series of meetings, developed proposals that would help mainstream services work more effectively with Gypsies and Travellers.

The Ministerial Working Group will shortly publish a progress report, which contains 28 commitments from across Government, and for which Government will be held to account, in the following areas:

- Identifying ways of raising educational aspirations and attainment of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children
- Identifying ways to improve health outcomes for Gypsies and Travellers within the proposed new structures of the National Health Service.
- Encouraging appropriate site provision; building on £60 million Traveller Pitch Funding and New Homes Bonus incentives.
- Tackling hate crime against Gypsies and Travellers and improving their interaction with the criminal justice system.
- Improving knowledge of how Gypsies and Travellers engage with services that provide a gateway to work opportunities and working with the financial services industry to improve access to financial products and services.
- Sharing good practice in engagement between Gypsies and Travellers and public service providers.

The working group took an evidence-based approach but we recognise that the evidence base on Gypsies and Travellers can be weak. The Ministerial Working Group progress report outlines work done to improve understanding of how Gypsies and Travellers use services and commitments to identify gaps in data and research.

The focus of the Ministerial Working Group was on ethnic Gypsies and Travellers (including, where appropriate, travelling show people and those who are living in conventional housing). Issues affecting Roma in this country come into scope where they overlap with those impacting Gypsies and Travellers; Department for Education policy and evidence explicitly includes Roma for example and that is reflected in the Working Group's progress report.

The Government also announced in January 2012 the allocation of £47million of Traveller Pitch Funding up to 2015 which will help provide over 600 new pitches and refurbish over 160 existing pitches:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/2061166>

New bids for the remaining £13 million of the £60 million budget will continue to be considered. The Homes and Communities Agency will help those who put in unsuccessful bids to improve and resubmit their offers so further pitches can be delivered over the next three years.

The New Homes Bonus will match fund the additional council tax raised for new homes (including traveler pitches) for the following six years. Traveller pitches are usually rated as Band A for Council Tax, so, at present, local authorities will get a bonus of £959 per year for six years for each new pitch.

Traveller pitches owned by local authorities and housing associations will attract an additional £350 per year enhanced bonus (like other 'affordable' homes).

The New Homes Bonus means that for the first time local authorities will benefit financially from the development of all privately owned traveller pitches in their area. In April 2011 we applied the Mobile Homes Act 1983 to traveller sites owned by local authorities. This means that residents of these sites now have greater protection against eviction and other rights and responsibilities that already apply to residents of other residential mobile home sites. It also means residents can challenge poor site management through the residential property tribunal if the site owner (the local authority) has not fulfilled obligations set out in the pitch agreement.

The terms implied by the Mobile Homes Act into pitch agreements oblige the local authority (where they are the site owner) to maintain the parts of the site they are responsible for in a clean and tidy condition and to repair the amenity blocks provided on the pitch. Likewise, the pitch agreement also obliges residents to maintain, in a clean and tidy condition, their pitch and the outside of their mobile home.

We will review the impact of the application of the Mobile Homes Act to local authority sites in two years' time. This review will look at the extent to which residents are aware of their new rights and responsibilities.

Roma in England

As already stated there is a lack of comprehensive data on Roma in England. However, the body of research is increasing, and this provides some encouraging evidence of Roma integration, while local authority reports of integration challenges make clear that there is no cause for complacency.

One piece of research in 2009 provided anecdotal evidence that a number of Roma children who had previously been in segregated or special schools in their countries of origin successfully completed their education at mainstream schools in the UK.⁷

This encouraging finding is reinforced by more recent pilot research on the impact of mainstream education in the UK on Roma pupils who had previously studied in two other EU member states.⁸ The key findings include that 85% of the Roma pupils interviewed had been in placed in special

⁷ European Dialogue: *The movement of Roma from new EU Member States: a mapping survey of A2 and A8 Roma in England*. August 2009

⁸ Equality: *From Segregation to inclusion. Roma pupils in the United Kingdom, a pilot research project*. November 2011

schools or *de facto* segregated schools in their countries of origin, but that only a small cohort of Roma pupils at the UK schools surveyed were regarded as requiring special educational needs because of learning difficulties or disabilities. For these Roma, this help was given in mainstream schools. The report also found that while a large majority of the Roma students said they had experienced racist bullying or verbal abuse in school in their countries of origin, Roma students in seven out of the eight UK locations reported that they were not experiencing any form of racism in UK schools.

The UK has also been pushing for more practical coordination between Member States to tackle organised crime, particularly the issue of trafficking, which can affect Roma, especially Roma children. The UK-Romania Joint Investigation Team has disrupted trafficking of over 1,000 children from Romania, delivered arrests and convictions, disrupted a number of criminal networks and protected these vulnerable children. When Roma children have been found to be victims of trafficking in the UK, the UK authorities and police have worked with the Romanian authorities to ensure their safe return home to Romania.

6. WALES

The objective of the Welsh Government is to ensure that the needs of Gypsies and Travellers are assessed, planned and implemented in a more strategic way. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring an approach towards the delivery of services and support for Gypsies and Travellers in Wales, which delivers fairer outcomes. That is; an approach which recognises cultural differences and the issues which have often led to the social exclusion of this group, an approach which recognises the tensions which often exists between Gypsies and Travellers and the settled community, an approach which attempts to address these by the promotion of inclusive services.

'Travelling to a Better Future' A Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan

In September 2011 the Minister for Finance and Leader of the House launched 'Travelling to a Better Future' A Gypsy and Traveller Framework for Action and Delivery Plan. The Framework for Action is the first document of its kind to be produced in the UK and sets out policy direction for the Welsh Government and its partners in respect of Gypsies and Travellers.

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dsjlg/publications/equality/110928gypsytravelleren.pdf>

The Framework aims to address the inequalities and poverty experienced by the Gypsy and Traveller community, to ensure equality of opportunity and to enable the community to access resources and mainstream services.

The Framework comprises of sections on health and continuing care, education and training, participation and engagement and accommodation and employment. In the chapter on education, the Framework makes a commitment to combating poverty of aspiration and opportunity which is a particular issue for Gypsy and Traveller young people as well as the promotion of varying approaches to education to improve attendance as well as attainment.

The section on health aims to tackle the high rates of infant mortality, accidents and illness and the low life expectancy experienced by the Gypsy and Traveller community by working with Gypsies and Travellers and health care practitioners.

The section on accommodation makes a commitment to increase and improve accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, making it appropriate to their specific cultural needs. The Welsh Government acknowledges that a suitable and appropriate place to live underpins all other aspects of inclusion, community and access to services.

Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant

To facilitate the development of Gypsy and Traveller sites, the Welsh Government has made available a grant programme for local authorities in

respect of Gypsy and Traveller sites. The grant can be used to refurbish and extend existing Gypsy and Traveller sites and establish new ones. The grant, which provides 100% funding for projects, is intended to improve the quality of life and standard of living for Gypsy and Traveller residents throughout Wales.

There is evidence that a permanent place of accommodation can improve access to educational facilities for Gypsy and Traveller children and young people who are the lowest achieving of any minority ethnic learner group. A mobile lifestyle means that children and young people from Gypsy and Traveller communities often do not get a chance to settle down in school and often have very poor attendance records. A permanent place of accommodation can alleviate this poverty of aspiration and the associated cycle of poverty.

A key criterion of the grant is that local authorities must have undertaken an Accommodation Needs Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers in their areas and planned for this need.

In 2006, as part of the wider Housing Market Assessments, the Welsh Government provided guidance to local authorities on how to successfully undertake an Accommodation Needs Assessment for Gypsies and Travellers.

Good Practice Guides

The Welsh Government has developed Good Practice Guides for the Design and Management of Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Good Practice Guides are intended to assist local authorities when developing new sites and refurbishing existing ones by making suggestions in respect of pitch size, health and safety requirements including fire safety play areas, communal areas and site management.

The guides provide criteria which will help local authorities to choose a suitable location when identifying new Gypsy and Traveller sites.

7. SCOTLAND

- **The Scottish Government is fully committed to eradicating racial discrimination against our most vulnerable communities. We recognise that Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities are among the most disenfranchised and discriminated against in Scotland.**
- **The Scottish Government's Race Equality Statement made it very clear that it recognises Gypsies/Travellers as a distinct ethnic group who suffer particular discrimination and we have singled them out as a priority area for action.**
- **In Scotland today, many Gypsies/Travellers live on authorised council sites, while others live on private sites or roadside encampments. Access to health, education and social services can be difficult for Gypsies/Travellers.**

1. Gypsies/Travellers have been in Scotland for many centuries and still retain their own cultures and customs. The term 'Gypsy/Traveller' refers to distinct groups, such as Romany Gypsies, and Scottish/Irish Travellers, who regard the travelling lifestyle as being part of their ethnic identity. There are also other types of Traveller, such as Travelling Showpeople and New Age Travellers - distinct groups who do **not** regard themselves as Gypsies/Travellers.

2. The Scottish Government's Race Equality Statement made it very clear that we recognise Gypsies/Travellers as a distinct ethnic group and encourage others to do the same. We know that Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities are amongst the most disenfranchised and discriminated against in Scotland. As a result, we have identified them as a priority group for action. The areas of focus include:

- o Developing and implementing an education strategy for Gypsies/Travellers including Travelling Show People.
- o Meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsies/Travellers through providing direct support to local authorities to develop transit sites.
- o Supporting community development work with Gypsy/Traveller communities, aimed at laying the ground work for the eventual emergence of representative bodies for the communities.
- o Developing further engagement work with young Gypsies/Travellers.

Funding

3. During 2011-12, the Scottish Government has provided funding totalling £223,520, to the following organisations in order to deliver projects which specifically target Gypsies/Travellers:

- **Article 12 - £62,250** - is an organisation which up-skills young Gypsies/Travellers on issues relating to prejudice and discrimination. During 2011-12 their work has focused on improving relations between Gypsies/Travellers and the settled community.
- **Minority Ethnic Carers' Older People's Project (MECOPP) - £57,570** - received this funding in order to carry out a specific project to identify and document the nature and extent of informal caring (including health and social care needs) within Gypsy/Traveller communities in Scotland; to provide a support service including advice, information and some casework support; and to provide a complementary service to partner agencies to develop their capacity to respond more appropriately to the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community.
- **Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) - £113,700** – received joint funding from the Scottish Government's Equality and Communities Division and the Learning and Justice Directorate of £50,000 and £63,700 respectively, in order to enable the continuation of the programme's ground breaking work in creating a virtual learning environment for young Gypsies/Travellers enabling them to stay engaged in education.
- Transfer of £40,000 from Equality & Communities to Housing colleagues to provide a grant offer to Aberdeenshire Council for the provision of a temporary Gypsy/Traveller site.

Statistics

4. Between 1997 and 2009, the Scottish Government conducted a twice yearly count of Gypsies/Travellers living in Scotland. The count was intended to help provide the Scottish Government and local authorities with a reference point for the development of policy and inform the provision of services. This included Gypsies/Travellers with distinct ethnic identities and did not include Travelling Show People, New Age Travellers or Gypsies/Travellers living in settled housing. Although the count provided a useful twice yearly picture of the number of Gypsy/Traveller households using local authority sites, privately owned sites, and those using unauthorised encampments, it was felt that a more comprehensive method could be developed in order to try and capture in more detail the number of Gypsies/Travellers living in Scotland. To this end, the Scottish Government has undertaken a review of the count, which considered the current data usage, scope and future need. The findings were shared with Scottish local authorities in order to try and develop better methods for collecting this data. The arrangements for doing so are currently being finalised and we understand that the count will resume later this year (2012).

5. Summary of findings from the most recent count (July 2009):

- The July 2009 Count recorded a total of 684 Gypsy/Traveller households living on Council/Registered Social Landlord Sites (RSL) sites, private sites and unauthorised encampments in Scotland. This

represents an estimated population of around 2,120 people, a small decrease from the July 2008 population of 2,455 people.

- There were 294 (43%) households living on Council/RSL sites, 161 (24%) on private sites and 229 (33%) on unauthorised encampments. Comparable figures for July 2008 were 313 on Council/RSL sites, 162 on private sites and 269 on unauthorised encampments.
- There were 31 Council/RSL sites across Scotland, one less than in the July 2008 Count. 28 of these operated all year round and 3 only opened in the summer. These sites provided a total of 478 pitches (down from 499 in the July 2008 Count) of which 345 (72%) were tenanted, 61(13%) were available for let but untenanted and 72 (15%) were unavailable for letting.
- Of the 31 Council/RSL sites, 8 were operating at full capacity. All 3 seasonal sites were in use at the time of the Count while the site in Glasgow was not being used.
- Around 225 (64%) of households based on Council/RSL sites had been tenants for over a year. 31% of all households had held their tenancies for 5 years or more.
- There were 22 private sites at the time of the Count, 17 of which operated all year round and 5 of which were seasonal open only in the summer months. 161 households were living on private sites, with the great majority 148 (92%) having been there for 4 weeks or longer.
- The number of unauthorised encampment locations occupied on the day of the July 2009 count stood at 46 across 18 local authorities. Over the six months to July 2009 there were 195 encampment locations used. The national average encampment size during that six month period was 5.2 caravans.

Unauthorised encampments

6. The Scottish Government recognises that maintaining good community relations is central to any policy or strategy intended to address the requirements and concerns of any minority group. The biggest challenge faced by Scottish local authorities in relation to Gypsies/Travellers is unauthorised encampments. The reasons for unauthorised camping by Gypsies/Travellers can be varied and complex. It may be due to overcrowding at official sites; not wanting to share a site with another family or group of travellers; need for a very short-term stopping place when travelling to another location; or simply a cultural desire to avoid official sites.

7. This issue was particularly acute in the north east of Scotland. As a result, and in an attempt to foster good community relations, in 2010 the then Minister for Housing & Communities, Alex Neil MSP established and chaired a working party. The working party comprised individuals and representatives

of local authorities, police and individual representatives of both Gypsy/Traveller and settled communities.

8. The working party was tasked with producing an interim strategy designed to “improve and maintain community relations through action that can be sustained by all parties and in a manner underpinned by improved communication, respect and understanding.” The strategy was published on the Scottish Government’s website in March 2011, and the key themes are as follows:

- Improve community liaison and mediation arrangements
- Enhance current site provision and capacity
- Improve communications between key public authorities e.g. local authorities and the police service
- Improve operational procedures to deliver the most effective response to situations as they arise
- Identify and share good/best practice
- Deliver pro-active media handling
- Identify key elements of long term strategy to consolidate initial gains, and future planning for improved community relations.

9. The Scottish Government is particularly keen to ensure that various aspects of “best practice” that have been developed in relation to Gypsy/Traveller matters, are acknowledged and shared between all those involved in this important area of Scottish culture - local authorities, the police, relevant representative organisations.

10. The Scottish Government guidelines on managing unauthorised encampments aim to help local authorities and the police to develop policies to manage unauthorised camping. It is the Scottish Government’s position that the guidelines should not be viewed in isolation as the solution to problems associated with unauthorised camping. The guidelines should be part of each authority’s co-ordinated strategy for addressing the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller community in a way which both recognises their ethnicity, reflects local circumstances and the needs of the settled community. It is important that local solutions are developed and put in place which have the support and reflect the interests of both the Gypsy/Traveller and the settled communities.

Planning & local authority provision of accommodation

- **The Scottish Government has worked closely with the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities to introduce far reaching reforms to the way in which local authorities plan for new housing provision. These reforms have strengthened requirements in relation to provision for Gypsies/Travellers.**

11. The Scottish planning system has gone through a period of modernisation with changes to both legislation and procedures. With regard to engagement with communities, there has been a drive towards “front loading” the system, either at the development planning stage or, where the

development is classed as major, through statutory pre-application consultation.

12. In addition, national planning policy as contained in Scottish Planning Policy notes that the needs of all Gypsies and Travellers for appropriate accommodation should be considered through the housing needs and demand assessment and local housing strategy. Given the typically transitory nature of Gypsies and Travellers, provision should be made for those communities which are in an area already and those who may arrive at a later date. Planning authorities should identify suitable locations for meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and set out policies about small privately owned sites.

13. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is proposing that the government sets a date by which all local authorities with a tradition of Gypsy/Traveller populations identify and set aside sufficient public or private land to adequately house Scottish Gypsy/Traveller people on a temporary or semi-permanent basis.

14. The Scottish Government has worked closely with the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities to introduce far reaching reforms to the way in which local authorities plan for new housing provision. These reforms have strengthened requirements in relation to provision for Gypsies/Travellers. These include requirements for local authorities to:

- assess the housing needs of Gypsies/Travellers as part of their housing need and demand assessment. (set out in new Scottish Government Guidance on Housing Need and Demand assessment published in 2008 and can be accessed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/guidance>)
- ensure that the needs of equality groups, including Gypsies/Travellers, are addressed in their local housing strategies (set out in new Scottish Government and COSLA guidance on Local Housing Strategies, published in 2008 and can be accessed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/supply-demand/lhs>)
- identify suitable locations for sites for Gypsies/Travellers in their Development Plans where there is evidence of need. (set out in Scottish Planning Policy 3: Planning for homes in 2008 and included in consolidated Scottish Planning Policy, published in 2010 and can be accessed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/03132605/0>)

15. The new framework is in early stages of implementation. Most local authorities are in the process of completing their housing need and demand assessments and are in the early stages of preparing their new local housing strategies. There is a statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare local housing strategies and consult on them. These strategies set out the key housing issues in the local authority area and how these will be addressed.

Education

- **The Scottish Government recognises that children of Gypsies/Travellers may face additional challenges in accessing the curriculum on account of interrupted learning related to mobility of lifestyle.**
- **The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that all children and young people with additional support needs receive the education and support they require to achieve their maximum potential in life and legislation has been put in place to support this policy.**
- **The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to meet the additional support needs for all children for whose school education they are responsible, and to tailor provision according to their individual needs.**

Background

16. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 Act provides the legal framework which underpins the system for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning. The Act aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their full potential. It also promotes collaborative working among all those supporting children and young people and sets out parents' rights within the system.

17. The 2004 Act also requires each authority to have a named person who will be responsible for providing information and advice on the local arrangements for children with additional support needs.

18. The Act has been subsequently amended and strengthened by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009.

Additional Support Needs

19. Additional support needs encompass a wide range of barriers to learning including those which might impact on children from Gypsy/Traveller families, such as interrupted learning. There is no definition of what might constitute a barrier to learning for which additional support might be required in the legislation, but the *Supporting Children's Learning code of practice* contains a non exhaustive list which includes interrupted learners.

Health

- **There is no room for discrimination in National Health Service Scotland. NHS Scotland recognises Gypsies/Travellers as a distinct ethnic group who are entitled to the same health care services as the 'settled' population.**
- **A wide range of activity has been undertaken centrally to support NHS Scotland to understand and respond to the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller population.**

20. The National Resource Centre for Ethnic Minority Health (NRCEMH – now part of NHS Health Scotland's Equalities, People & Performance Directorate) carried out a systematic stock-take of every Board and Trust to assess the delivery of culturally-competent services, and to identify health challenges specifically facing Gypsies/Travellers. Gypsy/Traveller health needs are incorporated into race equality schemes and action plans of NHS Health Boards.

21. As a result of the stock-take exercise, the Scottish Government funded the National Resource Centre for Ethnic Minority Health to work with the Gypsy/Traveller community to develop hand-held patient records in recognition of their lifestyles and the difficulties they experience in accessing health services.

22. Health is intrinsically linked to choice of accommodation, location and condition of Travellers' sites; common inability to follow up treatment when being forced to move on; lack of continuity of care; poor uptake of preventative medicine; lack of medical records resulting in delays in diagnosis and treatment – patient-held record was developed to resolve this matter.

23. A copy of the Patient Record of Personal Health was distributed to each Health board in October 2005 for further distribution to appropriate health professions. Chief Executives were requested to ensure that arrangements were put in place to ensure the Patient Record of Personal Health was deployed effectively.

24. In March 2006 a further letter was sent to the Practice Manager of every general practitioner (doctor) practice, to encourage them to circulate amongst colleagues and an invitation to request further copies where appropriate. This led to approx 1060 copies being requested, with the largest requests coming from Greater Glasgow and Clyde and Lothian.

25. NHS Health Scotland commissioned Save the Children to develop health awareness and promotion materials suitable for Gypsy/Traveller youth. These were produced using a participatory health intervention approach, where the products were designed by young people discussing health matters and raising their own awareness.

Roma Community in Scotland

- The Scottish Government is fully committed to eradicating racial discrimination against our most vulnerable communities. We recognise that the Roma community is one of the most disenfranchised and discriminated against in Scotland.
- The Scottish Government recognises the Roma Community as an ethnic minority in all our race equality work and we encourage others to do the same. From a legal perspective **Roma/Romani** are an ethnic group for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010.

Funding:

26. Through the Scottish Government Race, Religion and Refugee Integration (RRRI) Funding Stream and additional funds to help implement the recommendations of the Race Equality Statement, the Scottish Government allocated funding to voluntary organisations to develop projects specifically targeting the Roma community including:

- Bridges Programme – (£95,000 during 2010-11) and further funding of £95,000 awarded in 2011-12.
- Crossroads Youth and Community Association - (£160,000 during 2008-11) and further funding of £60,000 awarded in 2011-12.
- Govanhill Law Centre - (£244,000 during 2008-11) and further funding of £85,000 awarded in 2011-12.

27. In addition, over 3 years of *Equally Well* test site status (2009-2012), the Govanhill test site was allocated £673,000 from *Equally Well* to work on a number of work streams, including those relating to Roma Health Inequalities.

Background

28. Roma people living in Scotland live largely in the Govanhill area of Glasgow. They have been affected by many issues including sub-standard housing conditions and poverty. Concerns around these issues have been raised by stakeholders over the last couple of years. Most Roma people living there are from Slovakia, with the remainder being from Romania.

29. During 2008-12 through the Scottish Government's Race, Religion and Refugee Integration Fund two projects were funded in the Govanhill area: the Govan Law Centre and Crossroads Youth and Community Association. The Govan Law Centre provides a legal advice project to the community in Govanhill – the project has a particular focus on the Roma community there. The service provides a dedicated shop front, surgery sessions, telephone and email advice, legal representation and legal training to local organisations delivering advice.

30. Crossroads Youth and Community Association project provides one to one advocacy, information and support; using Czech/Slovak speaking workers. They provide a weekly job club aimed at the Roma community; a drop-in group with various activities; women's group focussing on health;

access to IT and arts and crafts. New partnership work has been developed during 2011-12 focusing on awareness-raising in schools around Roma issues (the Understanding Each Other project in partnership with Bridging the Gap).

31. The Bridges Programme's "Ladders to Employability and Integration", aims to improve the economic and social integration of refugees and asylum seekers generally (not just in Govanhill), as well as other ethnic minority groups including Roma women. They achieve this through a series of work-based interventions, engaging with employers and partners.

8. NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Anti-discrimination legislation

The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 ^(a) (RRO) outlaws discrimination on grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origin. The Irish Traveller community is specifically identified in the Order as a racial group against which racial discrimination is unlawful.

The antidiscrimination legislation was further strengthened in 2003 to bring it into line with the EU Race Directive (EC/2000/43).

2. Education

Promoting Roma and Traveller Inclusion

Inclusion Policies

The Department of Education launched a policy '**Every School a Good School – Supporting Newcomer Pupils**' in April 2009. The policy is to support Education and Library Boards and schools in welcoming all newcomer pupils into their school communities, so that they are assisted in their acquisition of the language of instruction in an inclusive manner, to enable them to access the curriculum in particular and partake in every aspect of school life.

This is done on two levels:

- through a regional Inclusion and Diversity Service, the Department of Education provides support to newcomer pupils and their parents, primarily through building the capacity of schools. The Diversity Service also provides interpreters, translators and a multi-lingual website for teachers and parents; and
- direct funding allocations to schools to afford them the flexibility to determine the best way to welcome, value and support newcomer pupils and promote their inclusion.

The Department's "**Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education**" policy aims to contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self respect, respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination and, by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities, to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions.

The Department recognises that both Roma and Traveller children face particular barriers to education and has put in place additional measures to reduce inequalities and enable them to benefit fully from these policies.

Guidance for Schools

In August 2010 good practice guidance was issued to schools on (1) the education of Children and Young People from the Traveller Community in the context of a whole school approach to diversity and (2) Every School a Good School – Newcomer Guidelines for Schools.

Additional funding to schools to support Roma and Traveller pupils

Grant aided schools are funded by the Department of Education under a Common Funding Scheme. Under this Scheme, schools with Traveller children are allocated additional funding of over £1,000 per year for each Traveller pupil. This enables schools to provide additional support to tackle Traveller educational underachievement and exclusion.

The same amount is allocated to schools for each pupil who does not have sufficient skills in the language of instruction to participate fully in the school curriculum. As Roma pupils face barriers to education similar to Traveller children and also have significant difficulties with English, schools receive additional funding of over £2,000 every year for each Roma pupil.

Education and Library Board Support for Roma and Traveller Pupils and Families

The Department of Education recognises that Roma families encounter additional social and welfare problems which create barriers to education. The Educational Welfare Service has put in place a programme to support these families and the schools attended by Roma children. The programme includes: early intervention with Roma parents to improve school attendance; developing education resources for Roma families; developing protocols and collecting and assessing data.

The Education and Library Boards also provide a Traveller Education Support Service to schools with Traveller children, the pupils themselves and their parents. The Service is being reorganised on a regional basis to improve the consistency and co-ordination of support.

Free School Meals

In 2009, the Department of Education revised the criteria for free school meals eligibility to enable schools to provide meals to pupils on humanitarian grounds to children who came to school hungry which was preventing them from getting maximum benefit from their education. This has allowed schools to give free school meals to Roma children who suffer from extreme poverty but whose parents, unlike Traveller parents, did not meet the previous eligibility criteria.

Taskforce on Traveller Education

Despite considerable investment and support the educational outcomes of Traveller children are still unacceptably low. Improving the educational attainment of Travellers will be a significant element in reducing inequalities and encouraging their full inclusion in society.

In 2008 the Department established a Taskforce on Traveller Education to review the educational needs of Traveller children. The Taskforce included members of the Traveller community and representatives from non-government organisations, government Departments and public bodies including the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

The Taskforce report, which was launched in December 2011, made a range of recommendations aimed at improving Traveller education in a number of areas including access, attendance, inclusion and attainment. The Department of Education is currently developing a draft "Action Framework on the Education of Children and young People from the Traveller Community" to address the Taskforce recommendations.

3. Health

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) together with the Department of Health and Children (DOHC) in the Republic of Ireland launched the All Ireland Traveller Health Study Reports on 2 September 2010. The study, which was launched in July 2007, examined the health status and health needs of all Travellers living in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Traveller community has been recognised as a disadvantaged group and the findings of this study provide a framework to work upon to ensure that Travellers have good access to healthcare services to meet their needs. The Summary of Findings report highlights a number of key points which DHSSPS and DOHC are taking forward appropriately in conjunction with Health and Social Care bodies and other Government Departments. The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have launched their strategy for improving Traveller health and well-being.

Web site links:

DHSSPS:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/equality/eq-travellers/all-ireland-traveller-health-study.htm>

Belfast HSC Trust:

<http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/pdf/TravellerHealthStrategySept2011.pdf>

Public Health Agency (PHA) - All Ireland Traveller Health Study (AITHS) Actions Undertaken

The Public Health Agency and the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB) have established since October 2010 a Regional Travellers' Health & Wellbeing Forum. The PHA has secured the participation of the Health & Social Care Board, Trusts and Traveller Support organisations in the new Forum. The focus of the Forum is to implement key priorities identified within the AITHS now reflected in an Action Plan.

Key actions being undertaken:

- The Public Health Agency has produced a summary report of the findings and recommendations of the AITHS study. This report has been complemented with additional data on Travellers and has been made available on the PHA website and disseminated to key stakeholders.
- PHA and the Health & Social Care Board have agreed continuation funding for An Munia Tober (a Traveller support group) to ensure ongoing meetings of Travellers who were employed as peer researchers under the AITHS study to ensure their participation and involvement in securing action on the key recommendations.
- PHA has agreed an £83,000 Health Improvement contract for Travellers' health in the Belfast area.
- PHA and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have agreed joint funding to progress the employment of Travellers in an innovative primary care scheme called the Travellers' Health Advocacy Project. This project will employ two Travellers as Belfast Trust staff who will work to improve the interface between Travellers and Trust services. It is hoped that this may 'model' the employment of Travellers by the public sector in general.
- PHA will target improvements in screening services to the Traveller community including cancer screening. A working group has been established and the Travellers' Health Network has prepared a report for consideration for service improvement
- Existing data on training and education provision for Travellers has been compiled by Co-operation and Working Together and additional information is being added to the existing audit.
- A submission has been made to adopt a common definition of Travellers and other ethnic groups in Government information gathering systems.
- A commitment has been made to engage with other Government departments in respect of addressing the needs of Travellers.

4. Accommodation

Traveller Accommodation

- The Caravans Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 took operational effect on 1 September 2011. The primary purpose of the Act is to introduce

statutory protections for those who occupy a caravan as their main residence on sites approved for that purpose

- A consultation paper tabling amendments to Policy HS3 of Planning Policy Statement 12 has enabled the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) much more scope to extend its land identification process for Traveller accommodation. A paper outlining the NIHE response to draft policy HS3 Travellers' Accommodation was approved by the Board on 31 August 2011
- The 3rd Comprehensive Traveller Accommodation Needs assessment will be commissioned in 2012 for completion in 2013. Currently the NIHE review the Traveller programme on an annual basis in an attempt to reflect the changing needs and aspirations of the Traveller Community
- NIHE is currently in tri-partite discussions with Department for Social Development and the Housing Advisory Unit to revise both technical and design issues on Traveller Accommodation as part of a review of the 1999 Department of the Environment design guidelines
- The NIHE has also highlighted a number of key challenges around public perceptions and Traveller expectations towards accommodation provision. The NIHE continues to work to address these issues as part of the PATHS programme in delivering Traveller Cultural Awareness training for both staff and Housing Community Network members
- NIHE is currently working with Power NI (an energy provider) to provide individual metering on all Traveller Sites where communal meters are in use, to allow occupants of sites equality of treatment and citizenship
- The NIHE continues to work with all stakeholders towards the provision of suitable traveller accommodation
- NIHE continues to identify options for accommodation and site provision through the land identification process and has completed a comprehensive review of all NIHE and non-NIHE lands in areas of identified Traveller Accommodation need
- Continue to ensure standards of provision meet the needs of Travellers
- Continue to work with Traveller Support groups and other fora in their engagement with Traveller issues and strategies
- Continue to undertake consultation with local residents and other local stakeholders when seeking planning permission to provide Traveller specific accommodation
- The accommodation needs of Travellers in Northern Ireland remains a priority for NIHE. The NIHE will continue to work towards delivering the identified accommodation needs of the Traveller population in Northern Ireland by means of the accommodation programme despite the considerable obstacles which present themselves. We continue to work with all partners nationally, regionally and locally in the delivery of Traveller accommodation.

Roma in Northern Ireland

For the first time this year the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) included questions on Roma families in their annual Black and Minority Ethnic Mapping report.

Three questions were included on the Roma community in the survey. The first question was aimed at determining if Roma individuals and/or families are living and working in the districts. The second question was aimed at establishing the numbers of Roma individuals and/or families visiting the NIHE and the reasons for visiting. The question required a simple yes or no answer and the following tables highlights the findings:

	Yes	No
Districts where NIHE Staff are aware of Roma individuals / families living and working there:	Antrim Armagh Dungannon South Belfast	Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Coleraine, Collon Terrace, Cookstown, Downpatrick, East Belfast, Fermanagh, Larne, Limavady, Lisburn Antrim St, Lisburn Dairy Farm, Lurgan / Brownlow, Magherafelt, Newry, Newtownabbey 1, Newtownabbey 2, Newtownards, North Belfast, Omagh, Portadown, Shankill, Strabane, Waterloo Place, Waterside and West Belfast
		50

	Yes	No
Districts where NIHE Staff are aware of Roma individuals / families visiting the NIHE District Office:	Antrim Armagh South Belfast	Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Banbridge, Bangor, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Coleraine, Collon Terrace, Cookstown, Downpatrick, Dungannon, East Belfast, Fermanagh, Larne, Limavady, Lisburn Antrim St, Lisburn Dairy Farm, Lurgan / Brownlow, Magherafelt, Newry, Newtownabbey 1, Newtownabbey 2, Newtownards, North Belfast, Omagh, Portadown, Shankill, Strabane, Waterloo Place, Waterside and West Belfast

The main reasons for Roma families coming to the district offices was “seeking accommodation” and “to find out about housing applications”.