



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR

**World Health
Organization**
Europe

Healthy Ageing of Roma Communities: Endowers – Realities – Perspectives

Expert-level European Symposium

Pécs, Hungary, 27–29 October 2014

30 June 2014

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Scope and purpose

Most Roma people face gross inequities in health and health care across Europe. Evidence shows poorer health and higher rates of illness and mortality among Roma than in majority populations. Poverty, segregation and communication barriers have been documented as the main factors preventing Roma from equitable access to health care and enforcement of their right to health. This situation is observed at both individual and community levels.

The University of Pécs Medical School in partnership with the WHO Regional Office for Europe and in coordination with the WHO Country Office, Hungary will organize and host a European expert-level symposium, entitled Healthy Ageing in Roma Communities: Endowers – Realities – Perspectives.

Objective

The main objective of the event is to provide a scientific forum for the exchange of experience in promoting the health of Roma populations at community level, in accordance with:

- the new European policy framework for health and well-being (Health 2020) in general and one of its main strategic objectives concerning the reduction of health inequalities in particular; and
- the new strategic goal of the European Commission concerning healthy ageing.

Furthermore, it is expected that the discussions and conclusions of the expert meeting will contribute to the development of policy tools for the Age-friendly environments in Europe (AFEE) joint project of the Regional Office and the European Commission.

Topics

The main topics of the symposium are:

- an overview of the Regional Office work on the health of Roma in the European Region;
- an overview of the Strategy and action plan for healthy ageing in Europe, 2012–2020 and its relevance for formulating policies to improve the situation of ageing Roma communities in Europe;

- health components of the European Union framework for national Roma integration strategies and best practices;
- disease prevention and vaccination among Roma communities;
- community-based health promotion and continuing health care activities among Roma;
- culturally sensitive health care for ethnic minorities;
- health and the Decade of Roma Inclusion; and
- the tasks and challenges of the higher education system in Europe in supporting the implementation of healthy ageing initiatives targeting the Roma population.

Proposed programme

The symposium will start on Monday, 27 October 2014 at 15:00 and conclude on Wednesday, 29 October at 17:00.

The programme will consist of the opening plenary, speeches from keynote speakers, in parallel working groups addressing the above topics, a report to the closing plenary and the formulation/acceptance of a meeting statement.

During the symposium, a half-day field visit to the Ormánság Health Centre is planned to take place. The centre is located in south-western Hungary, which has several Roma settlements. Meetings with representatives of local Roma communities will also be organized.

Participants

Participants in the symposium include subject matter experts from the Regional Office, experts from the WHO Collaborating Centre on Social Inclusion and Health at the University of Alicante (Spain) and the WHO Collaborating Centre on Vulnerability and Health at the University of Debrecen (Hungary), and researchers from the Norwegian Centre for Minority Health Research (NAKMI) (Norway) and Bucks New University (United Kingdom). Participants will also include scientists, academics, representatives of civil/Roma rights organizations, and members of the Roma Health Network.

The event is sponsored by the Hungarian State Secretariat for Social Inclusion.