National Roma Network 2015-2017

Developments, learning and action

Migration Yorkshire
Strategic leadership, local support

Metropolitan

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Foreword by Kate Green MP

The UK has a long history of Roma migration. Two distinct waves took place in recent history: the first after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the second as a result of the expansion of EU. These different periods of migratory behaviour took place in very different contexts, but the obstacles all Roma communities in the UK face suffer from a similar root problem of lack of data.

Despite claims to the contrary, the government has consistently overlooked the Roma community. Regardless of some positive noises by Ministers, the government's Race Disparity Audit simply revealed the dearth of information collected or accessible to government departments on the Roma population in this country. This stretches from uncertainty over basic information such as how many Roma migrants there are in the UK, to outcomes in health, housing, employment amongst many other areas. Yet understanding the service deficiencies which we know exist is important, not only to help improve the experience of the individuals who use them, but also to contribute to a wider integration strategy.

Instead, the lack of knowledge contributes to a lack of policy interest, and prevents evidence based arguments for new rights and access from being heard. Without suitable data it is difficult to put pressure on government ministers and decision makers to ensure services and expertise exist that meets the needs of Roma communities.

In some areas, however, some progress has been made. Education is one area where there is slightly better data, due to the school census – a statutory census that takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms. While the data that does exist shows high exclusion rates and lower outcomes, starting right from early years, this has at least meant that advocacy organisations can point to official government data to map key issues and barriers, to develop and press for solutions, and to call for the spread of good practice.

But even in education, problems exist in a fragmented system: the growth in academies and free schools has made it difficult for pressure for improvements to be applied by local education authorities. Meanwhile, the lack of ring fenced funding, and of staff with relevant expertise and knowledge to provide effective support, shows that while data is important to understand the problems, the appropriate resources and political will are vital to address them.

Brexit is another pressure on minority groups, including migrant Roma. The resources necessary to tackle the inequalities Roma experience will be even harder to come by as groups and schemes supporting marginalised communities lose funding they have been receiving from the EU through the European Social Fund. It is vital that the

British government commit to, at the very least, replacing this funding. But the most pressing issue is the creation of the new settled status after Brexit. The government has shown little interest in the difficulties marginalised groups may face in obtaining the information and evidence needed to apply for settled status. As a result, some will simply stay without it, unrecorded, under the radar, and even more vulnerable. Indeed, there are already reports of Roma who have arrived here lawfully facing deportation when found homeless or unable to supply documents. There's an urgent need for a communication programme via Roma groups to ensure that clear information is passed on about documentation requirements, application procedures that need to be followed, and sources of independent advice.

These are just some of the issues faced in addressing the extreme disadvantage and exclusion experienced among Roma communities in this country. We can't be satisfied either with the poor outcomes that they too often experience, or with a lack of information to address them. Good data collection, including in the next census, tailor made policy, and engaging with the Roma community are all vitally needed. Politicians, alongside advocacy groups, must now speak out.

Kate Green MP, co-chair of the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, and the APPG on Migration

Executive summary

Roma migrants have been arriving and settling in the UK for over 10 years in search of a better life. Their experiences of poverty and discrimination in their countries of origin often mean that they have faced additional challenges while accessing services in the UK, and have been perceived as having complex needs by services. Those needs are gradually being recognised at local levels and support measures are being put in place in many areas across the country, but there is still work to be done to join-up those measures and create comprehensive long-term solutions.

Despite local actions, wider progress is more challenging without a specific and coherent approach from central government to strategic and practical policy solutions.

The National Roma Network was set up to support local authorities, services and practitioners to respond to Roma migration. It provides a platform for them to engage with voluntary organisations and emerging

Roma activists, discuss current issues and agree the way forward.

The difficulties and barriers recognised in the early years of Roma migration by practitioners and support organisations do not seem to be diminishing. The lack of national leadership and policy focus on the issue has led to challenges for Roma migrants and their ability to integrate in the UK, but also for the local communities to which they are migrating.

Brexit has provided a further opportunity for the government to engage with Roma issues in the context of migration and integration. If the UK is to avoid the entrenched exclusion of Roma experienced in a number of areas across Europe, there needs to be greater recognition that Roma migrants are a distinct group with additional vulnerabilities, and a holistic framework is required to facilitate their integration and encourage inclusion in society.

Introduction to Roma migration to the UK

Roma migration to the UK has been happening since at least the 1950s. Numbers rose in the 1990s and early 2000s, due to Roma individuals seeking asylum from persecution experienced in Central and Eastern Europe (Poole and Adamson, 2008). However, a significant increase was noted after the countries with the greatest number of Roma, such as Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Romania joined the European Union (EU) in 2004 and 2007.

The Roma migration pattern has been largely described as 'chain migration' (Horton and Grayson, 2008). Roma families from specific countries, or even cities and villages, have been settling in particular areas of the UK, where wider family networks were already present. The majority of locations where Roma migrants initially arrived (such as Glasgow, Sheffield, London, Rotherham, Manchester or Peterborough) became settlement areas, as they were known to Roma who were dispersed to those cities as asylum seekers. This nation-wide settlement pattern has continued, and in many localities there is a dominant nationality among Roma migrants. In London, for example, the Roma population are particularly of Polish and Czech origin, in Sheffield the majority are from Slovakia (Sheffield City Council, 2015), while in Manchester (University of Manchester, 2018) and Luton (Luton Roma Trust, 2018) Roma residents are predominantly of Romanian origin.

Other important features of Roma migration include the pace at which numbers increased and the concentration of Roma in particular areas. Reports found that Roma were moving to a single UK location in 'significant numbers either at the same time or over a period of time' (Brown et al, 2013). Therefore some neighbourhoods (such as Page Hall in Sheffield, Eastwood in Rotherham or Govanhill in Glasgow) experienced quite rapid change (Clark, 2014). Yet with no requirements for EU migrants, including Roma, to register their presence in the UK, there was no means to monitor the numbers and challenge negative press coverage (Sheldrick, 2013; Jackson, 2016).

Roma have been arriving in the UK predominantly to seek work and a better life for their children (Brown et al, 2016), as EU nationals exercising their treaty rights of free movement. However, due to continuing persecution and discrimination in their home countries, the reasons for their migration are in practice more complex, placed somewhere 'between forced and voluntary' (Craig, 2011). As the majority come from marginalised and excluded communities, within which they had little or no access to public services (FRA, 2016), arguably their needs are more comparable to those of asylum seekers and refugees than economic migrants (Poole and Adamson, 2008).

Due to the systematic state discrimination in their countries of origin, Roma have rarely sought contact with the authorities in the UK. As a result, many local councils and statutory services were unaware of Roma migrants present in

their areas (Brown et at, 2013), let alone the issues they were facing such as exploitation related to work and housing, difficulties in accessing health and benefits or securing school places.

Income poverty was recognised to be a linking feature and a central aspect of Roma exclusion (Brown et al, 2015). Yet the restrictions imposed by the Workers Registration Scheme on nationals of Accession 8 (A8) countries, the stricter Accession Worker Authorisation Card for Accession 2 (A2) nationals, and further alterations to social security and housing benefits from 2014 (Home Office, 2014) have meant that Roma migrants in need largely have not received support that is comparable to UK nationals.

The disadvantages Roma experience in the UK have increasingly impacted on the local communities in which they have settled, creating tensions and fuelling anti-migrant sentiments (Casey, 2016).

This feeling of insecurity among the Roma community was further exacerbated during the EU referendum campaign and subsequent vote in June 2016, which brought about a surge in hate crime (Ansell, 2016) and uncertainty in relation to their future in the UK (NRN, 2017).

Priority policy and practice issues

The fast pace of migration from the new EU states and difficulties engaging with this new, very diverse group are the main issues reported by local authorities (European Dialogue, 2009). At first, Roma were seen as migrants from Central and Eastern Europe as they were identified by services by their nationality - – Slovak, Czech, Polish or Romanian – for instance when applying for a National Insurance Number. Then they were identified as of Roma ethnicity - often by educational services who were, in many localities, one of the first services to engage with Roma communities on the ground (Equality, 2011). At this stage Roma would be supported through existing Traveller Education Services (TES) or ethnic minority achievement services.

Research studies indicate that in most areas of the UK education has played 'a central role in the social inclusion and wellbeing' of Roma children and families (Lever, 2012) and educational services were the most involved with Roma migrants (Brown et al, 2013). In other areas, families would come to the attention of the local authority via health visitors, housing officers or from police community support officers, sometimes after complaints from neighbours (Brown et al, 2013).

Despite having extensive experience of working with multi-ethnic communities, few local authorities or statutory services had any previous experience of working with Roma families. Staff were frequently unaware of Roma culture and historical experiences, the reasons for their migration to the UK and the implications of their immigration status, and found the complexity of their needs very challenging (Brown et al, 2013).

Initially, in many areas newly arrived Roma migrants were supported through the Migration Impact Fund (MIF), which was available between 2009 and 2010 via local authorities from central government. In Yorkshire and the Humber, for example, where many local authorities saw significant increases in Roma migrants, the funds were used to employ additional community support and advocacy officers to address the social exclusion these communities were facing (Migration Yorkshire, 2010). However, MIF funding was abruptly discontinued by a new government in June 2010. Local authorities found it difficult to continue to deliver these services, despite seeing engagement with and providing services for Roma migrants as 'an ongoing priority' (Migration Yorkshire, 2010). This combined with other public sector cuts, diminished funding for ESOL, the abolition of TES and national policy changes directed at migrants (welfare changes restricting access to Housing Benefit and Jobseeker's Allowance in 2014) allowed local conditions to deteriorate (Migration Yorkshire, 2017b).

Commitments to take concrete steps to improve the situation of the UK's Roma population were made back in 2012

(Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2013), following the adoption of the European Commission's EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) a year earlier. However issues raised by local authorities and other partners were not evident in the government's official plan (European Commission, 2012). While migrant Roma arriving in the UK as EU nationals were clearly recognised as a separate group within the wider GRT umbrella (and were mentioned within the relevant background information in the integration strategy), the 28 commitments that followed did not mention them specifically. The exception was measures related to education 'where they overlap with those impacting Gypsy and Travellers' (Communities and Local Government, 2012).

With a limited response, lead or specific policy direction from central government, many local communities, neighbourhoods and services felt that they were left to address the situation by themselves. This has led to significant differences in how towns and cities across the UK have responded to the needs of Roma communities (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Examples of the responses to the needs of Roma communities across the UK

Type of response	Examples	Details	Location
Local authority city wide	Manchester Roma Strategy	Roma strategy 2011-14 (Manchester City Council, 2013 and Manchester City Council, 2016)	Manchester
	Glasgow initiative	Local action plan (Scottish Churches Racial Justice Group, 2016)	Glasgow
Strategic Migration Partnership led	Migration Yorkshire	Roma Source, Roma MATRIX, NRN, South Yorkshire Roma Project (Migration Yorkshire website)	Yorkshire and the Humber
	East of England Local Government Association	Parallel Lives Roma Project (East of England, 2017)	East of England
Statutory sector	Health	Public Health – Slovak Roma Health Needs Assessment (Willis, 2016) and Roma Community Health Needs (Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, 2013)	Sheffield and Rotherham
		Primary Care – Slovak Roma Health project (Primary Care Sheffield, 2018)	Sheffield
	Education	LA coordinated – strategy and capacity building (Sheffield City Council, 2017)	Sheffield
		GRT teams (NRN, 2017a; NRN, 2017c)	Leeds, Leicester, Doncaster
		Early Education – St. Edmund's Nursery (NRN, 2017b)	Bradford
		School led – Babington College (Penfold, 2015)	Leicester
	Housing	Selective Licensing Schemes (Sheffield City Council, 2014)	Sheffield
		LA partnership with Housing Association – Granby Toxteth Development Trust (GTDT website)	Liverpool
	Employment	LA led – Pathways to employment (Migration Yorkshire, 2015b)	Rotherham
Churches	Diocese St Alban's	Luton Roma Trust (Luton Roma Trust, 2018)	Luton
	Liberty Church	Community activities (Migration Yorkshire, 2017b)	Rotherham
Universities	University of Salford	National research (for example Brown et al, 2013) and capacity building – Supporting Roma Voices (Brown et al, 2016)	National

Type of response	Examples	Details	Location
	University of Derby (Multi-faith Centre)	Building capacity – Roma Community Care (Henry, 2015)	Derby
	University of Manchester (Humanities)	Research – MigRom project (University of Manchester, 2018)	Manchester
Roma-led organisations	Roma Support Group	Advocacy and policy work (Roma Support Group website)	London
	COMPAS	Community organisation (COMPAS website)	Peterborough
	Friends of Romano Lav	Community activities (NRN, 2017c)	Glasgow
	Roma Khamoro	Hosted by REMA (REMA, 2016b)	Rotherham
Other third sector organisations	**Ethnic minority – REMA**	Roma Forum, Roma drop-in (REMA, 2016b)	Rotherham
	EU migrants: The AIRE Centre	Roma Rights project (The AIRE Centre, 2018)	London
	Health: Darnall Well-being and Thornbury Centre	Roma Health Project (Darnall Wellbeing website), health related projects	Sheffield, Bradford
	Youth: Youth Association, YMCA/My place	Youth work (NRN, 2017a and NRN, 2017c)	South Yorkshire, Rotherham
	Education: Clifton Learning Partnership	Advocacy, training, CSE awareness (Clifton learning Partnership website)	Rotherham
	Roma focused: The Roma Project	Advice and advocacy (The Roma Project website)	Coventry
Limited company	Big Issue North	Self-employment (Big Issue North, 2010) and well-being (Migration Yorkshire, 2014)	Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield
Funders	Metropolitan Migration Foundation	Roma Migrant Funding Programme (Metropolitan migration Foundation, 2015)	Across the country
	Joseph Rowntree Foundation	For example NRN, Supporting Roma Voices, Roma Rights project	Across the country
	Big Lottery Fund	For example – South Yorkshire Roma Project, Kent Roma Project (NRN, 2017c), other smaller community projects	Across the country

National Roma Network

The National Roma Network (NRN) was set up in 2012 by Migration Yorkshire as part of the larger European 'Roma SOURCE' project. It included representatives from local authorities and central government, voluntary sector and universities. The network's main ambition was to enable effective communication between various stakeholders on the issues relating to migrant Roma communities in their local context and share good practice (Migration Yorkshire, 2012). The network was hosted by Migration Yorkshire until December 2017.

From the start, the focus of the NRN was on migrant Roma who came to the UK from Eastern and Central Europe, predominantly after the expansion of the EU in 2004 and 2007. This was due to the recognition that this group possesses distinctive needs and challenges, often very different from those of indigenous Gypsy and Traveller communities or other migrants.

The NRN was seen as an effective tool by the government. It was cited in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's 2012 Human Rights and Democracy report as the central UK action to 'overcome the challenges to Roma integration' (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2012) and was mentioned in Parliament by Baroness Warsi during the International Roma Day debate in 2014 as a mechanism that 'makes information and best practice sharing possible' (BBC, 2014).

The NRN requested funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) but none has been available during the seven year period. Instead the NRN has relied on a range of other funders – the European Commission through the Roma Source and Roma MATRIX programmes, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and most recently the Metropolitan Migration Foundation

Roma involvement

In 2015 the NRN was re-structured. It became more a formal partnership with agreed aims and objectives, and also more inclusive, involving members of Roma communities and voluntary organisations. Greater meaningful participation from members of Roma communities, the focus on enabling Roma to have an active voice and support for Roma activists were all seen as essential factors to create change and build trust with the wider Roma communities across the UK.

The aims of the NRN were broadened and include:

- Enabling and supporting a national strategic approach to migrant Roma integration in the UK;
- Ensuring a more joined-up approach to migrant Roma integration across sectors, including central government, local government, other statutory organisations, the voluntary

sector, Roma groups and individuals;

- Increasing Roma participation and involvement in policy across the UK;
- Ensuring a strong united voice in influencing policy and practice affecting migrant Roma at national and local levels;
- Enabling exchange of information and sharing good practice.

The work of the NRN is directed by a working group, consisting of representatives from local government, the voluntary sector, universities and Roma activists. In May 2016 two Roma individuals chosen by Roma communities became co-chairs of the NRN. They provide additional perspectives on the issues discussed and ensure that the work of the network is shaped by Roma priorities.

One co-chair is Denisa Gannon (formerly Psenickova), the first Roma qualified lawyer in the UK (Baksi, 2018), originally from Czech Republic. She is a 'brilliant role model to young Roma' as she regularly gives presentations at schools to increase aspirations, and is a great ambassador for the Roma community.[1]

The second co-chair is Liviu Dinu, a Romanian Roma student at the University of Salford. Liviu is a 'thoughtful speaker with a keen analysis of the issues faced by migrant Roma across the EU', and is 'experienced in a range of fora and… well regarded within a number of networks across the EU'.[2]

NRN Forum meetings

Between September 2015 and December 2017 the NRN organised a number of thematic events involving a representation from the government, statutory services, local authorities, voluntary organisations and Roma professionals, activists and community members (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. NRN Forum meetings

Date	Themes
September 2015	Roma participation and leadership
April 2016	Education
July 2016	Police and criminal justice
October 2016	Employment
June 2017	Brexit
September 2017	Housing
December 2017	Final NRN Conference 'Right , Equalities and Future Roma Voices

These events aimed to discuss the most pressing policy issues, highlight local responses and best practice, and enable peer learning and sharing of expertise. More importantly, they were intended to provide a platform for members of migrant Roma communities to engage with statutory services and the government, contributing their perspectives on the issues discussed, sharing their communities' concerns and proposing the way forward.

[1] Information submitted in support of Denisa's nomination.

[2] Information submitted in support of Liviu's nomination.

Most of the priority policy and practice issues relating to Roma migration to the UK were discussed at those meetings. Plans to cover health and anti-discrimination as further themes were superseded by the EU referendum result, which changed priorities for NRN members and Roma communities. As a result, health and anti-discrimination were not discussed as separate themes. However, they are included in this report as they remain relevant to the situation of Roma in the UK.

NRN Forum meetings helped to facilitate discussion with a number of government departments and leading Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) and migration organisations. They included:

- **Mark Sims, Ofsted**. Mark researched and wrote the Ofsted report on the support provided to Roma children in schools, 'Overcoming Barriers – ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education' (Ofsted, 2014). He attended a national Forum meeting to present his findings, answer questions and listen to the debate.

- **Marcus Bell, Director of the Race Disparity Unit at the Cabinet Office**. Marcus attended two consecutive meetings of the

NRN to offer an insight into how the Race Disparity Audit (RDA) might meet the aspirations of the Roma communities, and to gauge the types of concerns Roma might have in regards to such exercises.

- **Kate Green MP**, co-chair of the APPG for Gypsies, Travellers and Roma and of the APPG on Migration, gave a lead presentation at the final event in London.

- **NATT+ (the National Association of Teachers of Travellers and other professionals),** were involved in a joint national forum meeting on education.

- **Other leading NGOs** – including Roma Support Group, Roma Community Care, Migrant Rights Network, AIRE Centre, and Housing Rights/MigrationWorks – presented and shared their expertise at a number of meetings.

- **Local authority professionals** – including staff from Sheffield, Glasgow and Leeds teams – who shared local experience of, and responses to, issues relating to education, housing and employment.

1. Education

Education is one of the most important policy areas for NRN members for a number of reasons. Firstly, schools and traveller services were among the first public services to engage with newly arrived members of Roma communities, and good practice has emerged with regards to their engagement with Roma communities and improving attainment of students (Penfold, 2015). A better future for their children is one of the main reasons why Roma families have been moving to the UK (Sime, 2014) and their experience of schools in the UK has largely been positive (Equality, 2011).

Schools are not only the service Roma families engage with more frequently (Brown, 2013) - noticeably they also are proactive in creating partnerships with other services to provide a more co-ordinated response to Roma needs (Lever, 2012). Additionally, education is perhaps the only area in which the government acknowledges the additional challenges faced by migrant Roma. Ofsted was asked to produce a report exploring the barriers migrant Roma children face in school settings (Ofsted, 2014) and to identify examples of good practice (Ofsted, 2015). Nonetheless, it does not appear that Ofsted's subsequent recommendations have as yet been acted upon by the government.

Recent cuts to public spending, the abolition of Traveller Education Services (TES) and policy changes disproportionally impacting Roma families, have made the work of schools and other education services challenging. For example, many Roma children have missed out on free school meals (FSM) due to evolving restrictions on EU migrants' access to benefits. Eligibility for FSM is linked with the pupil premium, and thus impacts upon schools' income streams (Roma Support, 2016a). Had the pupil premium been available, it could have been used to employ Roma speaking staff or extra English as an Additional Language (EAL) support – interventions noted as very effective (Payne, 2015).

The NRN Forum on Education, organised jointly with NATT+ in April 2016, explored a number different aspects of education. These included the role of TES services in supporting Roma children and their school experience. In particular, the impact of cuts to the service on schools and families was discussed, as it has resulted in lost expertise, affecting the ability of schools to support Roma children and families. This can often lead to family disengagement with the school – and an overall worse experience of education in the UK.

The role of community organisations in supporting Roma families with education, and the issues they face, was explored by a support worker from Luton Roma Trust. They reported on how difficulties in communicating with local authority educational departments affect children's experiences of schooling in the UK.

Safeguarding in school and beyond was discussed by Dan Allen from Salford University and Gaba Smolinska-Poffley from the Roma Support Group. They provided an overview of initial findings

from the research carried out in the North of England on safeguarding. Examples of the assistance Roma Support Group provides to Roma families in some areas and the impact this has, were also discussed.

Other issues explored were Roma pupils' eligibility to free school meal and the implications of this; the importance of high quality EAL and ESOL provision for children and families; how to address issues in education and work with schools and other partners; the role of Roma Saturday schools; and the sharing of good practice in schools was presented by Babington College and Mark Sims from Ofsted.

Issues identified by NRN members:

- The need to increase Roma involvement in schools, eg. Roma staff, involvement of the Roma community in decision-making;
- EAL and ESOL provision for children and parents does not take into account additional issues faced by Roma (such as lack of primary education, illiteracy, English being a third language);
- Low awareness of Roma culture among teachers and other educational staff;
- Issues with funding linked to free school meals and ascription;
- Support needed for Roma parents on how the UK education system works;
- High level of exclusions, often linked to experiences of racism in schools;

- Safeguarding, including child protection, CSE;
- Roma students are not progressing towards higher education;
- Low take up of free nursery places by Roma parents (Early Years education).

Current practice and NRN actions:

- Roma members of staff, who can become trusted links between schools and members of their community;
- Provision for children waiting for school places involving whole families (NRN, 2017c);
- Roma cultural training for educational professionals;
- Joint engagement projects – school/children's centres with support organisations (Clifton Learning Partnership website);
- Family and school mediation;
- Sharing reports related to Roma experiences of UK schooling;
- Sharing resources and examples of good practice within the education sector on the website and through the NRN updates;
- Engaging with wider policies affecting Roma – NRN responded to NATECLA's proposals to develop ESOL strategy for England by providing Roma experiences of accessing ESOL and highlighting additional barriers they are facing (NRN, 2018).

2. Police and criminal justice

Migrant Roma are hardly mentioned in any commitments to community cohesion. The government published a new Hate Crime Strategy (Home Office, 2016) in which focus was given to Gypsy and Traveller communities and Roma were mentioned as belonging to GRT communities. Yet, the report failed to acknowledge additional problems Roma migrants might face when reporting hate crime, such as the language barrier, deep-rooted fear of police or the risk of becoming more 'visible' and more vulnerable to administrative removals by the Home Office.[3]

Similarly, government hate crime operational guidance was updated with additional information on Gypsy and Traveller culture, but little attention was given to the cultural background of migrant Roma. This is despite the fact that Roma belong to two of the four main groups identified as requiring more engagement (GRT and new migrant communities), and have been recognised as more likely to be affected by hate crime yet avoid reporting it.

Some relevant work has been done on hate crime nationally and locally. At a national level, the Gypsy Roma Traveller Police Association was seen as an example of good practice. The first Roma police officer, Petr Torak, (who was awarded an MBE for his services to the Roma community in 2015 (Peterborough Telegraph, 2015), was the chair and migrant Roma were included. Locally, Bradford worked on cross community mediation involving Roma and other settled communities (Migration Yorkshire, 2015a) and Derby on supporting Roma victims and offenders (NRN, 2017b).

The NRN Forum on police and criminal justice explored issues relating to these areas and presented local examples of work being done with Roma communities to build better relationships with police. Roma Community Care presented on their work with Roma communities in Derby, which involved engagement with local police officers and programmes for Roma youth on raising awareness on UK laws and decreasing offending. AIRE centre shared findings from their investigation into the Home Office's administrative removal of vulnerable EU nationals, many of whom were thought to be Roma – a practice since found by UK courts to be in breach of human rights (Taylor, 2017).

This was followed by Professor Margaret Greenfield, who shared research into youth offenders from the Roma community and examined the support they were receiving.

Issues identified:

- General distrust of police among Roma;
- Increase in hate crime post-EU referendum (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a);
- Reluctance to report crime, due to the fear of police passing victims'

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[3] NRN Forum on Police and Criminal Justice: discussion notes

details to Immigration Enforcement, which in turn might lead to removals;

- Over-representation of Roma in prisons and youth offending institutions;
- More joined-up actions and better engagement needed on issues affecting the Roma community, such as CSE and trafficking.

Current practice and NRN actions:

- Sharing existing resources created to increase understanding and boost the reporting of hate crime among members of GRT communities;
- Promoting understanding of Roma culture among police officers

(Roma Support Group, 2015) and culture training sessions;

- Sharing example of good practice of working with the Roma community – Roma Community Care in Derby (work with youth offenders) and Roma Support Group (working with communities to design court diversion and intervention services – e.g. Roma girls small business/sewing project);
- Increasing awareness and resilience among Roma communities regarding child sexual exploitation – materials created by The Children's Society (The Children's Society, 2017) and REMA (REMA, 2016a);
- Roma recruited as police officers and special constables.

3. Employment

There are many reports (e.g. Horton and Greyson, 2008; Brown et al, 2013; Brown et al, 2016), describing Roma experiences of low skilled insecure employment often through employment agencies and with big concentrations of Roma at particular workplaces. Like other new migrants, Roma are often unaware of their rights, and as a result exploited. Studies in Bradford (NRN, 2017a) and Glasgow (Adams and McKay, 2016) found that majority of the Roma employees interviewed were paid below minimum wage. Instances of Roma being asked to pay for an offer of work were also reported (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a). Due to difficulties finding mainstream employment many have turned to the informal economy, working in car washes, as self-employed cleaners and scrap metal collectors. Self-employment as Big Issue sellers was also commonly reported among Romanian Roma living in Manchester and Leeds, due to the legacy of market restrictions affecting A2 nationals.

There are examples of employment initiatives focusing on Roma. Apart from support with language and CV workshops offered by many third sector organisations, some work was done in Glasgow (The Scottish Government, 2014) and Rotherham (Migration Yorkshire, 2015b), which was co-ordinated by local authorities. In Glasgow, the focus was on a range of advocacy and practical support, with services involved adapting their approaches to meet the needs of their Roma service users, especially poor level of English and literacy skills. In

Rotherham, apprenticeships at local businesses and the council were offered to a group of Roma young people as pathways to more sustainable employment. Sheffield also runs a scheme through the local authority lifelong services focused on upskilling and career progression for local Roma individuals (Morris, 2016).

Some current initiatives also define Roma as a target group, such as the Connecting Opportunities project in the Leeds City Region, funded by the Big Lottery and European Structural Fund through Building Better Opportunities programme. One of the challenges reported in attracting Roma participants is due to strict employability/ economic inactivity criteria of some programmes, as Roma are often ineligible due to their working status.

The NRN Forum on Employment provided the opportunity to engage with a number of issued mentioned by the members. Sheffield and Glasgow Councils discussed initiatives in their localities, their successes and challenges. Big Issue in the North shared experiences of working with Roma and some insights into the difficulties and aspirations among their Roma vendors.

There were also presentations from a number of agencies, such as local Job Centres, ACAS and Employment Agency Standards, who explained their role in supporting vulnerable workers in the UK.

Issues identified:

- Prevalence of insecure and low-paid employment;
- Big Issue selling seen as a long-term employment possibility;
- Difficulties in accessing ESOL while maintaining employment;
- Lack of progression to better paid jobs;
- Exploitation – paid below minimum wage;
- Available projects do not fit Roma needs – some are seen as 'useless pieces of paper that cannot move you onto the labour market' (Brown et al, 2015);
- Apparent lack of, or small number of, role models within the Roma community in secure employment.

Current practice and NRN actions:

- Informal English sessions linked with practical skills – cooking, sewing;
- Family based language interventions;
- Paid youth placement schemes with lower entry points (Migration Yorkshire, 2015b);
- Local Roma employability projects – ESOL, CV workshops and IT classes.

4. Brexit

Brexit has been a dominant issue since the referendum in June 2016. Almost every other issue related to Roma migration has since been framed in this context. Some initial experiences of Roma and their reactions in South Yorkshire were captured by the report produced by Migration Yorkshire (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a) and a report by BBC Look North (Ansell, 2016). Since the referendum there has been lots of uncertainty and anxiety among many EU national groups. However, Roma, and many organisations supporting them, feel that Roma might be particularly affected by the new rules and vulnerable to post-Brexit deportations (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a).

The other issue raised in relation to Roma and Brexit was further funding for Roma projects and the wider impact of Brexit on Roma in Europe. European Funds currently support this group in the UK and concerns were raised about this funding ending, resulting in calls on the government to ensure that this funding is replaced (Morris, 2016). With Brexit likely to make migration to the UK harder, less remittances will also be sent to support Roma back in countries of origin (Jancarikova, 2016).

The NRN Forum on Brexit was an opportunity for Roma and support organisations to find out more about the current government's proposals related to EU nationals in the UK, to learn about the concerns communities have, and to share examples of best practice. Roma Support Group described their efforts to engage the relevant government departments and ensure Roma perspectives on the issue are understood.

Issues identified:

- Evidence that Roma are often targeted by the Home Office for removal from the UK for not exercising their EU treaty rights (Roma Support Group, 2016c);
- People feel scared and are feeling compelled to apply for residency cards; they don't know where to go and are often exploited by unscrupulous people (NRN, 2017a);
- Concerns that Roma might be more adversely affected by the post-Brexit arrangements, due to difficulties accessing legal help or fulfilling permanent residency requirements;
- Anecdotal reports of Roma being stranded in France and Slovak authorities not allowing them to return to the UK – claiming that their orders come from Britain;
- Young people unsure about their status if their families return to home countries (NRN, 2017a);
- Organisations supporting Roma need advice on how to guide Roma during this time of uncertainty;
- Increase in hate crime, including children experiencing hate crime within schools, feeling unwelcome and treated differently by shopkeepers, doctors (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a);

- Many families feeling forced to go back to Slovakia or Czech Republic, due to inability to support themselves (the main issues are difficulties getting a job and accessing benefits) and the involvement of social services (mainly due to alleged neglect) (NRN, 2017a);
- Lack of free legal help.

Current practice and NRN actions:

- Preparing a briefing after the referendum reassuring Roma of their rights as EU nationals in the UK, made available in most Roma languages;[4]
- Collecting the experiences of Roma post-referendum;
- Identify challenges Roma might face in applying for settlement –

e.g. continuity of employment and the fact that applications for settlement documentation must be done online, creating problems for many with limited access to computers or lacking ICT skills; continuity of employment;
- Working with other migrant organisations on securing rights of EU nationals after Brexit and representing Roma issues in the Brexit debate;
- Information sessions for community members;
- Limited assistance available with completing residency applications – due to OISC limits;
- Help with challenging administrative removals.

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[4] Brexit briefing was produced by Migration Yorkshire and translated by NRN members

5. Housing

Issues faced by Roma migrants related to securing accommodation in the UK, as well as the quality of accommodation, have been widely reported (Brown et al, 2016). Some are similar to the problems faced by other migrants with low levels of English or sufficient knowledge to navigate UK systems, while others, such as overcrowding, people gathering on the streets and low level anti-social behaviour were more unique to Roma migrants.

Welfare reforms, such as sanctions and housing benefit cuts, have also led to Roma families facing insecurity in the private rented sector. The financial difficulties experienced by some Roma while in the UK may prohibit them from returning to their countries of origin and, as a result, some are beginning to move around within the UK to find more affordable accommodation and employment (NRN, 2017a).

In some parts of the UK with high Roma concentration, licencing schemes for landlords were introduced, with additional funding provided for third sector organisations to support Roma navigating the private sector housing market (Burke, 2017).

Joint initiatives between local authorities and housing associations were also reported. In Liverpool, Roma development workers were employed to help with community cohesion and to raise awareness of environmental issues among Roma communities (NRN, 2017a), while in Glasgow Govanhill Housing Association were refurbishing unused flats, which were then rented to local residents on low incomes, many of whom were Roma (NRN, 2017a).

The NRN Forum on Housing discussed many of these issues in detail and shared experiences of local authorities involved in selective licencing schemes. The University of Salford (Brown et al, 2016) and Migration Yorkshire (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a and 2017b) shared finding from their reports on experiences of Roma linked to housing. They were able to confirm that some problems previously reported had become more extensive. Sheffield City Council provided their take on the successes and challenges of selective licencing scheme run in the Page Hall area of Sheffield, where Roma migrants were settling in significant numbers, while Housing Rights (MigrationWorks) gave a legal overview of migrants' access to housing.

Issues identified:

- Housing conditions of variable quality, many in low end of the private sector;
- Overcrowding, as Roma often have big families and live with extended family, but can't afford large properties;
- Inability to challenge landlords due to lack of knowledge and language skills;
- Illegal evictions;
- Deportations of EU rough sleepers;
- Difficulties accessing Housing Benefit;

- Anecdotal evidence of requests for sexual favours instead of rent;
- Discrimination in rental market due to being 'high risk';
- High mobility due to difficulties in securing long term accommodation.

Current practice and NRN actions:

- Rental rights and responsibilities awareness sessions;
- Assistance with securing accommodation;
- Mediation between individuals/families and landlords;
- Assistance with challenging evictions and benefits decisions;
- Neighbourhood actions – recycling, street cleaning.

6. Health

Health was among the themes mentioned in the Ministerial Working Group's progress report (Communities and Local Government, 2012). The specific challenges faced by migrant Roma when accessing health services were briefly mentioned in relation to language obstacles. It was recognised that poor English could create an additional barrier to navigating the health system for migrant Roma, and therefore affect their access to healthcare, but no specific actions were proposed.

The recommendations for the Department of Health do not include Roma communities specifically, under the remit of the National Health Inclusion Board, there were a number of reports and good practice in relation to the health needs of Roma communities.

Roma specific health assessments have been undertaken in many areas around the UK, such as in Sheffield (Slovak Roma), Rotherham (Czech and Slovak) and Leeds. In other places Roma were included in health needs assessments of other vulnerable groups – e.g. migrants, Eastern and Central Europeans, or Gypsy Roma and Travellers.[5]

There have been a number of initiatives addressing Roma needs relating to health. These include a primary care project to improve Roma access to GPs in Sheffield, in which community members were based at GP practices (Primary Care Sheffield, 2018). Awareness projects also took place, such as Roma women's health champions in Yorkshire, in which Roma community members disseminated information and helped improve access to services (Migration Yorkshire, 2014).

Sheffield Children's Hospital produced a number of bilingual resources for Slovak Roma parents about common childhood health problems (Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust website);

Mental health needs among Roma communities are also being increasingly recognised and starting to be addressed (Roma Support Group, 2012; Robinson, 2016).

Issues identified:

- Problems with registration and access to GPs;
- Low take-up of immunizations;
- Hearing issues among children – Sheffield (Sheffield City Council, 2016; University of Leeds, 2018);
- Difficulties accessing disability benefits (Roma Support Group, 2017b).

Actions by NRN and its members:

- Local health needs assessments;
- Roma community members employed as health advocates;
- Roma interpreters employed by GP practices;
- Joint initiatives undertaken by health services and schools;

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[5] Links to health assessments involving Roma communities are available on NRN website

https://nationalromanetwork.wordpress.com/nrn-resources/health-and-the-roma-community/

- Roma culture leaflets and training sessions for health service staff (Roma Support Group, 2016b).

Cross-cutting themes

Data on migrant Roma

One of the main difficulties the NRN has been facing while advocating for change and influencing policy and practice at national and local level is the lack of reliable, or often any, data on the size and characteristics of the Roma population in the UK. In many cities across the UK there is locally gathered information on Roma migrants facing difficulties in various aspects of lives, but due to the lack of reliable data collection it is very challenging to establish the scale of their exclusion. This, many argue, leads to Roma continuing to be 'invisibilised' (Craig, 2011). The recent outcome of the Race Equality Audit showed that Roma were almost non-existent within national statistics. Only the Department for Education had some '*rather disquieting information about GRT children and how they are doing',* while other departments knew very little (House of Commons, 2018).

There are no official ways to monitor the numbers of migrant Roma coming to or living in the UK. Public services either collect data on nationality (such as the DWP, when monitoring applications for National Insurance Number) or ethnicity, none of which have categories 'catering' for Roma communities. Current ethnicity forms used by public services are predominantly based on categories used in the 2011 Census, in which 'Roma' are grouped with Gypsy and Travellers. This creates additional difficulties, as many Roma do not identify as Gypsy and find this term offensive, and they are

therefore are unlikely to select this category on forms.

This set-up also prevents proper monitoring of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies. It interferes with attempts to plan for the future 'through resource allocation and informing provision of services' (Office for National Statistics, 2012), as the needs of the groups put together as GRT are often very different. This issue was picked up by the Council of Europe, where, in the response to the UK's report on protection of national minorities, the Advisory Committee noted that there was 'often a conflation between policies addressing Gypsies and Travellers, on one hand, and Roma, on the other hand,' which 'does not always allow targeting of the specific needs of each group' (Council of Europe, 2017). This call for separating Roma and Gypsy Traveller categories has been previously made by others (Penfold, 2014).

In the absence of official data collection methods, there have been local attempts to estimate the numbers of Roma migrants, aiming to address the gap and enable local authorities to respond to the needs of their communities. Some studies estimated the numbers using 'new national insurance registrations from certain EU states' (Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, 2015), while others utilised different data sources, such as the school census of pupils and GP registrations (Sheffield City council, 2016). Often these studies

were supplemented with additional information, such as assumptions of family makeup (Glasgow City Council, 2013) or other local 'intelligence' (Manchester City Council, 2013).

There was also an attempt to estimate numbers regionally and nationally. Scotland produced estimates of its Roma communities (The Social Marketing Gateway, 2013) and assessments of their needs (Scottish Churches Racial Justice Group, 2016). In the UK, the University of Salford undertook a survey with all local authorities, concluding that in 2013 the was number is close to 200,000. This has since been considered a 'conservative estimate' (Brown et al, 2013).

Some progress has been made to address the lack of data collection methods. There are now Roma ethnicity categories in some education and health data. However, opportunities to improve ethnic monitoring data elsewhere have been missed, for example when new Universal Credit services were being developed. In education 'Roma' was added as a separate ethnic category in the school census from September 2015 (Department for Education, 2015) following the Ofsted report on overcoming barriers Roma pupils face in schools, which stressed the importance of accurately monitoring the number of Roma pupils (Ofsted, 2014) and heavy lobbying by the third sector organisations. Within the health sector, Roma codes were developed and added to standard ethnicity codes used by GP practices available across the country from April 2016, which was the result of the Sheffield Slovak Roma health

assessment, in which the lack of reliable data collection methods was mentioned as 'a key challenge' (Willis, 2013).

Work is also being done by the Cabinet Office, following the RDA, who are '*talking to departments about what data they collect, about which groups and about which categories they use, with a view to getting a bit more consistency in their approach*' (House of Commons, 2018). The Office for National Statistics is currently reviewing ethnicity categories available in the census and it is considering 'Roma' as one of the categories to be added to the list (Office for National Statistics, 2018).

It needs to be acknowledged that other challenges related to data monitoring still remain. Many reports highlight the fact that prejudice and discrimination experienced in their countries of origin influence Roma perceptions of statutory services in the UK and adversely affect their willingness to self-identify as Roma (Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 2014; Penfold, 2015; Sheffield City Council, 2016). Fearing discrimination and not having access to knowledge of the benefits fully explained to them by services, there is reluctance among Roma to disclose their ethnicity to public officials.

This reluctance and fear was very visible at the NRN Forum meeting in September 2017, when the RDA was discussed with the Cabinet Office. A number of Roma attendees raised concerns around publishing data on Roma, due to the fear of victimization. Though many recognised that gathering this data is an important step towards advocating for change,

some felt that the risks associated with disclosing ethnicity outweigh the benefits. This shows that there is still a lot to be done to build the trust.

Cultural awareness and diversity of the migrant Roma population

Greater understanding of Roma culture and the recognition of diversity has been seen as an important step towards positive engagement with this community (Migration Yorkshire, 2017b). Roma migrants coming to the UK are not a homogenous community and there are distinct differences between various Roma groups, even within those from the same country e.g. some local tensions between Romanian and Slovak Roma were reported by the NRN members.

The majority of Roma speak the language of the country they come from, with some speaking Romani as well. However, some will speak Romani only, and in such cases providing an interpreter based on nationality might not be helpful. It should also be noted that there are various dialects of Romani, which are very different.

There are also distinctions between Roma communities relating to immigration status. Due to labour market restrictions imposed on A2 nationals (Romania and Bulgaria), until January 2014 Romanian Roma faced additional barriers to employment, compared to A8 nationals. Many were unable to get an Accession Worker Authorisation Card, unlike Roma involved in self-employed activities (such as Big Issue sellers, cleaners or collectors of scrap metal),

who do not have to apply for the registration card. While these market restrictions were since lifted, there is still a legacy of certain self-employment routes among some Romanian Roma. The presentation from The Big Issue in the North in October 2016 showed that majority of their sellers in Yorkshire and the North of England are Romanian Roma, with many seeing it as a permanent job rather than a path to other more sustainable employment.

Some Roma come from very traditional communities, with stricter moral and behavioral codes, and their approach to services might be different than those from more modern Roma groups.

While there are many free resources explaining aspects of Roma culture (e.g. Roma Support Group, 2016b) and Roma workshops in some locations (Sheffield City Council, 2017), more coordinated action needs to take place to increase professionals' understanding of this diverse group, so it is more consistent across the UK.

Complexity of the Roma situation

Poverty has been a reoccurring theme at NRN meetings, as well as within many studies on Roma communities in Europe and Roma migrants in the UK. The reasons for this include the difficulties Roma experience when seeking employment and accessing welfare benefits (NRN, 2017c). This creates greater vulnerability to exploitation, such as below minimum wage pay, and often triggers the involvement of social services due to perceived child neglect

(NRN, 2017a; NRN, 2017c) or administrative removals by the Home Office.

NRN members reported an increased number of Roma families on child protection plans (NRN, 2017a; NRN, 2017c) and a high number of Roma children being taken into care (Cox, 2012). This has significant consequences for affected families, but also prevents other services from building positive relationships and earning the trust of the community (Migration Yorkshire, 2017a). Many practitioners involved with families feel that the cultural differences of Roma families were not well understood (Community Care, 2017) and families do not understand the process relating to child protection and its implications (Law for Life, 2017).

Roma are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking, especially for forced criminal activities (Anti-slavery, 2014) or, as reported in the UK, to enable third country nationals to secure their immigration status (BBC News, 2017; NRN, 2017c). There are also instances of trafficking within the Roma community in which the victims are women and children (Europol, 2016).

Another recurring safeguarding issue is child sexual exploitation (CSE). Concerns have been raised about the vulnerability of Roma girls in a number of locations around the country, such as Rotherham (University of Salford, 2015) and Glasgow (the Harold, 2017). While a number of community groups have made efforts to address the issue and raise awareness within Roma communities (REMA, 2016a; The Children's Society,

2017), no formal actions towards this have been taken by the government.

Roma girls and women might face additional challenges and barriers to accessing services. In more traditional Roma families women might be expected to marry and have children early (NRN, 2017a) and they are often unable to leave the house without being accompanied by a male relative. They might have fewer opportunities to learn English (Sime, 2014) and be more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, including domestic violence.

Despite recognition that Roma migrants have complex needs, the lack of comprehensive understanding of their situation or a strategic overview means that the support provided is under very narrow 'headings' and for limited time periods. It addresses 'symptoms' rather than underlying causes and often leads to the situation deteriorating, further victimization of the Roma community and increased distrust (Figure 3).

There are some examples of partnership working and strategic approaches to supporting Roma locally (NRN, 2017a; NRN, 2017b; NRN, 2017c), but this is often hindered by national policies. Education is one of the examples. Cuts to ESOL, removal of the ring-fencing of funding for Traveller Education, and funding for schools being linked to Free School Meals (at the same time when access to benefits for migrants was restricted), make educational objectives related to school attendance and attainment very difficult to achieve and render wider government commitments to social mobility ineffective.

Figure 3. Diagram showing some of the complexities of the Roma situation in the UK

Social exclusion and lack of education in countries of origin affects ability to learn English, navigate the UK system and secure stable employment in the UK; discrimination experienced back home leads to distrust of authorities.

⬇

Insecurity of income and lack of knowledge of UK law creates vulnerability to exploitation – being paid below minimum wage, difficulties in meeting requirements for welfare benefits; being overcharged by landlords for sub-standard houses; frequent evictions.

⬇

Not being able to afford/secure accommodation leads to overcrowding, destitution/homelessness and high mobility, which in turn leads to people congregating on streets, disruption to children's education.

⬇

Involvement of social services due to neglect (poverty related); immigration deportations of homeless individuals; negative press coverage.

⬇

Further distrust of authorities and disengagement.

Conclusion

The majority of the difficulties faced by Roma communities during the earlier years of migration are still as relevant as they were ten years ago. Discussions at NRN meetings and local updates provided by NRN members revealed that the majority of issues for Roma communities identified in past reports and earlier NRN meetings are still relevant today (NRN, 2017a; NRN, 2017b; NRN, 2017c).

In some ways Roma migrants are becoming more excluded. New issues are being recognised, such as bullying and racial abuse in schools and communities, the high rate of school exclusions (Roma Support group, 2017a), safeguarding concerns and, more recently, increased insecurity caused by the EU referendum (Morris, 2017), while older problems are not going away and are even, due to policy changes, becoming more widespread.

A lack of national guidance has left local areas to deal with immediate issues reactively, rather than supported to plan improvements to the Roma position long-term. In some instances national policy changes have undermined good work done locally. While examples of successful initiatives are emerging, (with Roma advocates becoming more involved and a dialogue between areas of Roma settlement starting to happen), meaningful change needs to be supported by formal structures and commitment from the government.

In the absence of this support, the NRN has acted as a platform for professionals and community members alike to *'share experiences/information relating to common concerns, issues, statistics and research'*[6] and it has evolved into a tool for change. *'NRN moved from fact finding to practical understanding of communities, experiences, expertise and evidence.'*[7] NRN meetings revealed that local authorities and services, many of which are new to Roma migration, or have not previously been aware of Roma living in their area, previously had no one to turn to. Many were struggling to find support outside of the NRN, further risking alienating these groups.

The letter sent to the government in 2013 by the then chair of the NRN warned that *"we are at a crossroads on this issue in the UK. Migrant Roma are present in significant numbers and continuing to arrive and settle in the UK. We can either plan for dealing with this and achieve inclusion, or take no action and risk intractable exclusion"*[8]. Five years on and this is just as relevant, with the UK seemingly drifting to the latter option.

Recent actions by the government indicate acknowledgement of the difficulties and barriers Roma migrants are facing. In November 2016, the government brought back a fund for local

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[6] Feedback received about the NRN in September 2017

[7] Ibid.

[8] Letter sent to Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Communities and Local Government in April 2013 by the chair of the NRN

authorities to help with local pressures of migration, some of which is now used for projects focusing specifically on Roma migrants, and some supporting areas of known Roma concentration (Home Office, 2017). In January 2018, the cross-departmental[9] fund for Gypsy Roma Traveller was announced, aiming to pilot initiatives hoping to improve outcomes for these communities. Out of six successful projects, three have a specific focus on migrant Roma (Travellers Times, 2018).

Building on the current focus of the government on integration in the UK, it is important to develop a coherent national plan in which Roma are fully recognised as a specific group, with specific issues and needs, for the benefit of Roma and other local communities.

The urgency identified early on in the NRN's existence remains, although as time goes on the need for action becomes more acute: *'we fear that inaction at national level will exacerbate problems locally and that this will increasingly and inevitably play out at national level too… Once this group becomes further stigmatized and excluded, the issues will, without exception, become entrenched with impact on both Roma and all other communities.'*[10]

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[9] The Department for Communities and Local Government, in collaboration with the Department for Education and the Department of Health

[10] Letter sent to Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Communities and Local Government in April 2013 by the chair of the NRN

Recommendations

1. The government should lead a strategic long-term commitment to address issues for Roma and local communities
2. Roma policy and practice should be evidence-based, with further evidence and learning prioritised where gaps exist
3. The needs and issues relating to Roma should be explicitly included in approaches to other government commitments e.g. exploitation and modern slavery, homelessness, equality and tackling 'burning injustices'
4. Enable expansion of holistic, partnership based approaches relevant to local community contexts, for tackling the complex barriers often faced by Roma
5. Prioritise opportunities and development for Roma leadership, involvement and decision-making for their communities and beyond
6. Provide meaningful support to Roma individuals and grassroots Roma organisations wanting to help their communities
7. Ensure that Brexit planning specifically, comprehensively and sensitively includes Roma perspectives and needs

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A&N Care Solicitors (Yorkshire)

ACERT

Apna Haq (Rotherham)

Babington College (Leicester)

Big Issue in the North

Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Clifton Learning Partnership (Rotherham)

COMPAS (Peterborough)

COSLA (Scotland)

CrossReach (Glasgow)

Darnall Well-Being (Sheffield)

Derby City Council

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

EELGA (East of England)

Equality

FCH and Sheffield Roma Network (Sheffield)

Friends of Romano Lav (Glasgow)

Glasgow City Council

Granby Toxteth Development Trust (Liverpool)

Hope for Justice

Leeds City Council

Leeds University

Leicester City Council

Liverpool University

Luton Roma Trust

Liberty Church (Rotherham)

Manchester City Council

Migrants Organise

Migration Yorkshire (Yorkshire and Humber)

NATT+

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Peterborough City Council

Red Zebra (Kent)

REMA and Roma Khamaro (Rotherham)

Roma Café and Community Advice Centre (Leeds)

Roma Community Care (Derby)

Roma Futures (Sheffield)

Roma Support Group (London)

Roma Voices of Manchester

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Salford University

Sheffield City Council

Sheffield University

St. Edmund's Children's Centre (Bradford)

The AIRE Centre (London)

The Roma Project (Coventry)

Thornbury Centre (Bradford)

West of Scotland Regional Equality Council

YMCA White Rose (Rotherham)

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