

# Press Release

## Directorate of Communication

Ref: 770a10

Tel. +33 3 88 41 25 60

Fax +33 3 88 41 39 11

Internet: [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

e-mail: [pressunit@coe.int](mailto:pressunit@coe.int)



### 47 member States

Albania  
Andorra  
Armenia  
Austria  
Azerbaijan  
Belgium  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czech Republic  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Georgia  
Germany  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Italy  
Latvia  
Liechtenstein  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Moldova  
Monaco  
Montenegro  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Poland  
Portugal  
Romania  
Russia  
San Marino  
Serbia  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
"The former Yugoslav  
Republic of  
Macedonia"  
Turkey  
Ukraine  
United Kingdom

## European governments act to help Roma

Strasbourg, 20.10.2010 – Representatives of the 47 Council of Europe countries, the EU and the Roma community gathering in Strasbourg today unanimously condemned widespread discrimination against Roma and their social and economic marginalisation.

Council of Europe Secretary General Thorbjorn Jagland, who called the meeting following concerns about Roma rights during the summer, said "the time for action has come. Today we have made a fresh start to actually helping the Roma population of Europe. Roma are fellow Europeans".

Member states agreed to a joint effort and pan-European response to meet the needs of the estimated 12 million Roma living in Europe.

The "Strasbourg Declaration" includes guiding principles and priorities:

- a) Non-discrimination, citizenship, women's and childrens rights.
- b) Social inclusion including education, housing and healthcare.
- c) Empowerment and better access to justice.

It also foresees the creation of a new European training programme for more than a thousand Roma mediators, who will give legal and administrative advice to communities. Some 440 Roma mediators will be trained in 2011; the figure could rise to over 1000 in the following years, depending on the available resources. The Council of Europe plans to train some 100 lawyers in 2011. Roma mediators and lawyers will work to tackle access to housing, schools, health and jobs, and to link the Roma communities and civil society.

Efforts will build on the expertise of the Council of Europe to develop relevant co-operation with national, regional and local authorities and international organisations.

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.