

# COVID19 impact on Roma health: challenges and solutions

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## About EPHA

EPHA is the a change agent striving for universal good health and well-being, where all have access to a sustainable and high quality health system

Its actions reflects its values: equity, solidarity, sustainability, universality, diversity and good governance

Structure: 85 members

European and national organisations, patients groups, public health NGOs, health professionals and disease groups



European Medical Students' Association



Eurohealth



ENSP

European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention

HAI HEALTH ACTION INTERNATIONAL 40



# Public health impact of COVID is exacerbated by existing social disparities



## Inequalities in COVID19 protection and prevention affecting Roma

- Scientific evidence\* demonstrates a correlation between health and social inequalities and COVID19 fatalities
- Mainstream public health protection and prevention measures are less accessible to Roma (physical distancing, self-isolation, increased hygiene, testing)
- Interrupted medical follow-up during lockdowns
- National governments responses to COVID19 led to multiple disadvantages for Roma (lockdowns of Roma settlements, police checkpoints, isolating Roma from mainstream society, reduced access to essential services), including increased discrimination and stigma
- Poor living and working conditions increasing the exposure to COVID19, including substandard housing, overcrowded homes, poor access to running water and sanitation; poor or outdated road infrastructure;
- Lower access to public services such as regular rubbish collection creating favourable conditions for contaminations and communicable diseases
- Higher vulnerability to environmental pollution due to the location of Roma settlements (near dumps, agriculture and industrial areas, flooding zones)
- Poor energetic efficiency of houses in Roma settlements leading to growing air pollution responsible for respiratory and cardiovascular diseases – risk factors in COVID19

\* [Ethnicity and clinical outcomes in COVID-19: A systematic review and meta-analysis - EClinicalMedicine \(thelancet.com\)](https://www.thelancet.com)

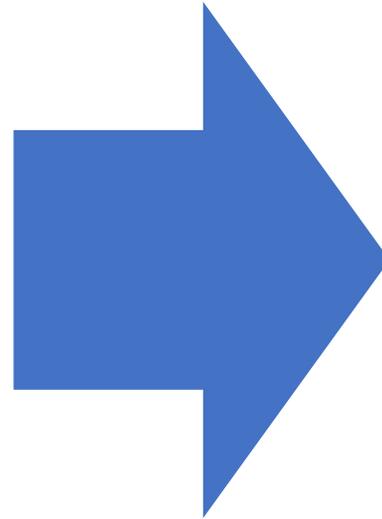
# EPHA response to COVID19

Raising awareness about the correlation between health inequalities and vulnerability to COVID19-[position statement](#) released in April 2020

Ensuring equal access to COVID19 vaccines for vulnerable groups, including Roma: [Vaccine Equity Campaign](#)

Strengthening policy mobilisation to advance health equity: the role of the revised [European Charter for Health Equity](#)

Mobilising Roma and pro-Roma public health communities to promote a holistic and comprehensive response to COVID19 and its impact on Roma health



Health equity is an essential factor for advancing Roma equality, inclusion and participation

# European Charter for Health Equity-mobilising policy makers in COVID19 and beyond



COVID-19 has highlighted and exacerbated gaps and limitations in health protection and prevention in Europe.

Ethnic minorities, Roma, migrants and people with a migrant background, homeless people, disabled persons, prisoners, LGBTIQ+ are disproportionately affected by poor health and experience inequalities in accessing basic rights and services.

On Human Rights Day 2020, the European Public Health Alliance launched the revised European Charter on Health Equity to improve health and well-being for all and prevent unfair and avoidable health inequalities.

FIND OUT MORE

european public health alliance

Launched in 2010 following the European Year against Poverty, revised in 2020 for its ten anniversary

- investing in healthy and sustainable communities.
- prioritising investment in social, health and human rights protection focusing on the most vulnerable across all parts of society
- ensuring equal access to health coverage and quality healthcare and prevention
- working collaboratively to promote holistic and targeted policies targeted to vulnerable, socially excluded and marginalised communities.
- implementing targeted actions to mitigate the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable

ephia



## The Roma Health Network at a glance

A public health community addressing social and environmental determinants of health

Values: transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, respect, joint ownership, social justice and equity in the decision-making process, including social investment and political commitment



## Reinforcing Roma and pro-Roma public health communities to mitigate the COVID19 impact on Roma health

- 👉 Encourage cooperation beyond the healthcare sector to close the health gap between Roma and non-Roma through European and national advocacy, policy development, joint initiatives, capacity building and political and social empowerment
- 🗉 Create space for policy dialogue and civil society cross-sectorial cooperation to develop mainstream and Roma-specific policies to improve Roma health
- 📢 Promote sustainable and holistic initiatives at European and national level for reducing health inequalities throughout synergies between key policies, including public health, social policies, environment, agriculture, human rights protection
- 🗉 Address social and environmental determinants of health responsible for health inequalities to better analyse the health of Roma communities

## Join the Roma Health Network!

Organisations and individuals interested in working together to achieving social justice for Roma through a holistic approach towards Roma health including equal treatment in strategic areas such as healthcare and prevention, education, housing, environment, employment and gender equality are welcome to apply to join the network

[TERMS OF REFERENCE](#) ↻

[ONLINE APPLICATION FORM](#) ↻

Thank you for attention!

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<https://epha.org/>

<https://epha.org/roma-health-network/>

<https://epha.org/european-charter-on-health-equity/>

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