



## The Traveller Movement

Resource for London

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### **Traveller Movement submission to London Assembly Economy Committee consultation on the role of the third sector in employment and skills programmes**

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#### **The Traveller Movement**

The Traveller Movement (TM) is a leading national charity, working in partnership with the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities, service providers and policy makers challenging discrimination and promoting inclusion.

#### **Key Questions**

##### **Are there particular characteristics in London which help or hinder third sector involvement in delivering employment and skills programmes?**

The small number of third sector organizations working with Gypsies, Travellers and Roma (GTR) in London are geographically dispersed and have limited capacity when it comes to delivering employment and skills programmes. However, the need for such programmes within the GTR communities is great, as evidenced by [ONS 2011 census data on Gypsies and Irish Travellers](#) which found that Gypsies and Irish Travellers had the highest proportion of any group with no qualifications and the highest rates of economic inactivity.

In most cases GTR third sector organisations in London do have the community outreach, contacts and skills to engage the communities, however they are not always in a position to avail of significant funding streams such as the ESF (often distributed via match-funding arrangements with national organizations) to make this a reality. Key reasons for this are similar to those outlined in the consultation document:

- time-consuming processes for third sector organisations to express interest in, and bid for, sub-contracts and burdensome procurement and monitoring requirements;
- a reported focus on price over value;
- large contract sizes, lack of access to capital, limited financial capability and capacity to manage risk;
- collaborating with larger organisations represents a challenge as agreements can disadvantage smaller GTR organisations; taking advantage of expertise and resources for little to no financial return

## **How do central and local government's policies affect the third sector's involvement in employment and skills programmes?**

The Traveller Movement worked with London Council's to ensure that Gypsies and Travellers were included in the London Enterprise Panel report on its [European Structural and Investment Funds Strategy](#). However, it's worth noting that the organizations input and work in this area was not funded. There is a need for government to ensure greater financial support for smaller GTR third sector organisations to input into policy development. This work is crucial as it ensures that some of the most marginalized groups in London are included in relevant strategies such as the ESIF.

We are concerned that whilst Gypsies and Travellers may be highlighted as groups requiring 'intensive support' in guiding documents such as the LEP ESIF strategy, in reality, targeted funding for these groups may never materialize in that it never reaches organisations working with them on the ground.

We are also concerned about programmes such as the *The Work Programme* which require payment by result. For many third sector organizations working with Gypsies, Travellers and Roma this may represent too great a risk for conducting work in this area. This is especially true when you consider that GTR experience particularly poor education, skills and employment outcomes, resulting in such programmes being more likely to have lower success rates, even when they are conducting hugely beneficial work for the communities in question. There is a significant danger that a payment by results approach could potentially act as a deterrent to organizations working with these communities.

## **How could the Mayor, central and London government ensure a diverse supply chain for employment and support programmes in the capital, which includes the third sector?**

The Mayor, central and London government need to ensure that GTR organizations (and other organisations working with groups experiencing similar poor outcomes and marginalization) are part of the consultation process and have the capacity to meaningfully contribute.

It may not always be the case that GTR third sector organizations can deliver employment and skills programmes on their own due to skills and resource issues. However, GTR third sector organisations can play an essential role as brokers between larger organizations and the GTR communities in delivering these programmes. In this sense the GTR third sector's expertise in community engagement, outreach and mentoring needs to be appropriately resourced. We recommend that the responsible bodies develop a brokerage model for small third sector organisation (including GTR) and larger providers that ensures larger organization delivering programmes budget for smaller third sector organisations time and resources.