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BASIC INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION OF THE ROMA MINORITY

Please provide any updated data, including where possible disaggregated data (by age, sex, etc.), collected in 2013, concerning:

- *Estimated total number and proportion of the Roma population in the country;*
- *Number of Roma living under the poverty line and the proportion to the overall population living under the poverty line.*

Roma are a specific ethnic group that live in the territory of Albania since XIV century. During the centuries they have managed to preserve their language, tradition and culture. Historically the relations between the Albanians and Roma have been cold ones, but in difference from many other European countries, there have been no conflicts or racial persecutions among them. During the post-socialist transition period – due to the collapse and closure of public enterprises, their specific professional character, low level of education, they passed from having a relative level of wellbeing to an extreme poverty. Actually they are the most poor and marginalized ethnic group in Albania.

According to the Census 2011 conducted by INSTAT, the number of Roma registered in the Albanian territory, is 8300 inhabitants. The recent study by UNICEF, “Mapping services for Roma children”, the number of Roma who live in Albania is about 15 thousand, while

Compared to some other countries of East and Central Europe as FYR of Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovak Republic, Serbia, Montenegro, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, the percentage of Roma compared to the total population in Albania is lower.

As a result of higher birth rates, the Roma community is younger than the general population in Albania. The average age of the Roma community is 25.6 years old. The survey data show that in 2011, 33.9 percent of Roma population is under 14 years old, while according to the Population Census of 2001, for the general population in Albania this figure is 29.3 percent. On the other hand, only 4.1 percent of the Roma population is more than 65 years old, while for the general population this figure is 7.5 percent.

Based on the 2012 Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), 14.3% of Albanians lived below the poverty line of approximately 50 USD (4,900 Albanian Lek) per capita per month. . There are no specific data indicating the percentage of Roma population living in absolute poverty or extreme, anyhow the studies have showed that their poverty level is almost twice higher than the Albanians. This created a vicious circle that reproduces illiteracy and low education level between the Roma which deepens even more their marginalization in the society.

The incomes of Roma families usually come from employment in low-skilled jobs, often in the non-formal sector. The empirical data show that the main drivers even of the internal migration process are unemployment, low income and poverty. According to the UNICEF study, almost half of the surveyed Roma are unemployed and this unemployment is long term. They usually work in the informal sector, where the trade of used clothes, casual jobs, music,



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collection of cans and begging are the main sources of their incomes. In the last years the income sources of many Roma families from trading used clothes have been reduced or exhausted due to the demand decrease and competition increase. As a consequence there is a shift of informal work sources from the trade of used clothes to the collection of scrap metal and cans. Currently 42 percent of the Roma work on their collection. The reduction of incomes entails the increase of poverty level for specific groups and strata. Almost 78% of Roma families are categorized in the “very poor” group. Meanwhile, the increasing number of Roma involved in collecting scrap metal and cans increases competition, and in the conditions of limited sources, it reduces the income of Roma families. In these conditions many Roma choose to migrate to other cities where the competition is lower.

Actually, the internal migration is a coping mechanism, perhaps the most important in facing poverty. On one hand migration helps the Roma to survive for a short term period but on the other hand, it has negative consequences for Roma families and especially for their children. It affects the children’s education, health and economic security. Under these conditions their employment opportunities will continue to be limited to unqualified jobs, with high uncertainty and low income.

1. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR ROMA INCLUSION

- *Please describe (if any) changes in 2013 in the participation of Roma in decision-making processes/arrangements and public administration structures.*
- *Please describe how and to what extent you have been cooperating with Roma civil society organizations, including the Decade Focal Point in your country, regarding the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of your Decade Action Plan or National Roma Integration Strategy.*
- *Please describe briefly the process of monitoring and evaluation of policies targeted towards Roma. How do you measure the impact of these policies (through field visits, surveys, independent evaluations etc.)?*
- *What is the total amount and percentage of the 2013 national budget dedicated to the implementation of the Decade Action Plan or National Roma Integration Strategy in your country?*
- *What kinds of funding sources (local, national and international) are considered for the implementation of the Decade National Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy in 2014?*
- *What has been done to ensure that EU Funds will be allocated for Roma inclusion in the 2014-2020 periods? Please estimate the budget of planned measures in the context of the*



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Decade Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy for 2014-2020 (please indicate which of the 4 key areas, or which other area, is planned to benefit from the referred funding) from EU funds, national funds, and other sources.

Based on the Opinion of the European Commission for Albania, one of the key priorities is that Albania takes concrete steps to reinforce the protection of human rights, notably for women, children and persons belonging to minorities, and to effectively implement anti-discrimination policies. Furthermore, the aim is to prevent social exclusion and to develop social inclusion policies/measures for the most vulnerable, notably the Roma population, inter alia, and other minorities.

The progress report 2013 for Albania stated that there has been uneven progress in the area of social inclusion and there has been some progress in poverty reduction; however, pockets of persistent poverty remain in some areas. Little progress has been made in the concrete implementation of the Strategy for the improvement of the living conditions of the Roma minority and the action plan of “Decade of Roma Inclusion”.

Roma issues is one of the priorities for the new government and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, as part of its mission coordinates crosscutting policies for the Roma community and monitors programs at national level in areas including education, health, housing and employment. Likewise, addressing the situation of the Roma community in Albania, remains the task of relevant ministries and local government, considering that the issue of integration of this community is quite complex and requires joint and well-coordinated interventions.

MSWY will continue to follow a right based approach in designing and implementing strategies, programs and plans for Roma and Egyptian communities. Albania has ratified and signed a number of International conventions on human rights and other key important instruments and documents. It is crucial that all these instruments are properly and intentionally translated into local realities and into actions driven by a rights based and inclusive approach.

The Strategy on Roma Decade and the new draft strategy on Social Inclusion and Social Protection will serve as a basis in developing a new Plan of Action for Roma and Egyptian communities (2014- 2020) within the framework of the SI &SP strategy planned to be finalized by end of 2014.

The new National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014 – 2020 priority is to promote social inclusion and territorial cohesion. The strategy notes the training and employment of women and men in marginalized and disadvantaged, including Roma and persons with disabilities.

In this context , MSWY in cooperation with European Commission organized a seminar on "Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities -New challenges in social development of Albania" on 20-21st February 2014. During the following weeks, were drafted the recommendations from this workshop in consultation with all stakeholders contributing for



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Roma issues. Recommendations will be delineated in a concrete action plan with measures, activities, budgets and defined responsibilities.

The plan will outline actions that need to be undertaken by the state institutions in order to provide better services to R/E populations relying on the principles of a) availability; b) accessibility and c) affordability.

Alongside MSWY's continuous efforts to mainstream Roma and Egyptian issues into the policy and legislation framework, special attention will be given to these communities through targeted action that are of limited duration and especially at the local and national level to overcome discrimination and achieve integration.

MSWY will continue to promote direct participation of Roma and Egyptian communities and civil society in the process of strategy development, implementation, and evaluation; and development of long-term partnerships. MSWY will continue to promote rights, civility, equity and respect.

A new generation of young well-educated Roma and Egyptian activists is emerging. MSWY will continue to promote and develop approaches to focus on the youth groups, to ensure their participation in policy dialogue.

Extensive attention will be focused on dissemination of information and on building a stronger awareness on gender equality, the risks of early marriage, the benefits of longer years of education and professional training as well as protection mechanisms against domestic and gender-based violence. Following are some recommendations that will be delineated in a concrete action plan:

General Recommendations

- 1- Public Policies Strengthening
- 2- Empowering National Structures
- 3- - Empower Regional and Local Capacities on social inclusion and social intervention plans for Roma and Egyptian
- 4- Clear Monitoring and Evaluation Framework /Strengthened Statistics and Research
- 5- Budgeting / Funding

Specific Recommendations

- 1- Civic Registration
- 2- Social Protection
- 3- Education
- 4- Employment and VET
- 5- Social Housing
- 6- Health
- 7- Culture



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Until now concerning the abovementioned areas have been accomplished some interventions. Roma communities have benefited mostly by United Nations funded and implemented projects. Worth to be mentioned is the ongoing project “Empowering the Vulnerable Minority Communities of Albania” that counts to USD 2.75 million. The project is implemented through the expertise and know-how of participating UN agencies, with the goal to improve the access of Roma and Egyptians to socio-economic, civic rights and human security. This project will enable the preparation of Community Development Plans; the implementation of community development projects in partnership with local government; access to public services through civil registration; community policing; the establishing and strengthening the network of Roma Mediators in the areas of health, education, and child protection; facilitating vocational training and employment.

Also the UNDP Albania is acting as implementing body for an EU/IPA 2011 funded project in supporting Roma Minorities. This project with a budget of Euro 1.5 million, is aiming at enhancing social inclusion of this vulnerable communities.

Swiss Cooperation Office in Albania is also active in promoting Roma inclusion and empowerment. With a new commitment of Euro 1.5 million, Switzerland is implementing, during the last three years the “Alternated Education and Vocational Training (Cefa)” project, that will contribute to further enhancement of the social inclusion of Roma minority through education, empowering the community and promoting the Roma minority rights.

Together with the above actions, the implementation of the IPA 2014 project (for which we are currently working), will provide a significant contribution to the improvement of the living conditions of vulnerable groups in some cities .

Overall objective:

To ensure that the rights of disadvantaged individuals and groups are equally ensured through legislation, inclusive policies, employment and special interventions.

Specific objective:

To address the conditions of poverty reproduction and build systematic practices for sustainable integration of R/E community.

Increase availability, accessibility and affordability of public and social services for disadvantaged R/E communities having regard to relevant profiling, systemic statistics, and innovative and/or effective regional practices.

Results:

- 1- Improved participatory local planning process in two municipalities and priority development interventions implemented.
- 2- Enhanced participation of disadvantaged and long-term unemployed R/E in all six government job-promotion programs.
- 3- Developed and implemented integrated approaches for Social Protection program with other programs such as Employment and VET/Social Housing etc
- 4- Increased access of R/E people in education ensured through implementation of inclusive education policies and piloting of innovative approaches



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5- Continued capacity building for R/E civil society is ensured capacity of civil society organizations to participate in national and local policy making and monitoring increased.

2. EDUCATION

- *Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented at national or local level to support Roma education in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: improving early childhood education and care, reducing early school leaving, encouraging Roma participation in secondary and tertiary education, desegregation measures, inclusive education, teacher training etc.*
- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of the measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

Regarding education, policies of the Ministry of Education and Sports have focused on the provision of comprehensive education, without discrimination against anyone on the benefit of quality educational services for students especially Roma and Egyptian communities.

Ministry of Education and Sports, on the implementation of its policies and objectives for improving the educational situation of this community, has undertaken legislative, administrative and institutional reforms in the areas that ensure the inclusion of Roma children and youth .

To provide opportunities and define responsibilities for the academic year 2013-2014 the instructions of the Minister of Education and Sports were also drafted:

- a. No. 29, dated 08.02.2013, "On the procedures of attendance of basic education with part-time.
- b. No. 31, dated 08.02.2013 "On the procedures of attendance of basic education for students who have not attended at least two classes of basic education.
- c. Order no. 344 , dated 19 . 08.2013 "Establishing unit for psycho – social service”

Currently 87 % of Roma children are educated in basic education with the ultimate objective of education for all Roma children. The number of Roma children who are part of the university education system for 2013-2014 is 4219 total, whilst in 2012-2013 this number was 4095.

Registration of Roma children in the first school grade continues, even though they are not provided with a birth certificate during the first month of the school year.

Roma children in compulsory education receive free textbooks in school where they are enrolled.



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For identifying and attracting the marginalized children and to increase confidence at the school and minimize school drop out, in the summer holidays in 2013 , 11 Regional Education Directorates and 7 Education Offices , in collaboration with UNICEF and other associations were opened and operated 60 summer camps , where from a total of 2,677 children , 722 were Roma and Egyptians .

In establishing friendly schools for every student , through cross-institutional cooperation : integrated approach was piloted with "food in school" in the school " Naim Frasheri" in Korca , in school year 2012-2013 was supported with 335 grants/ food quota for Roma and Egyptian students. By DCM no. 665, dated 08.07.2013, this will continue for the academic year 2013-2014

Regional Education Directorates/Education Offices, during 2013 have trained 563 teachers to advise parents of Roma and have carried out 442 campaigns with the participation of over 1,500 Roma parents.

In respect of the cultures within the school and the harmonization of the interests of students, school directorates in collaboration with children, parents and the community have planned perennial intercultural activities with children and parents Roma and non-Roma . During 2013 in 96 schools are organized 602 intercultural activities with the participation of over 4800 students.

RED /EOs , in schools and classes attended by Roma children , have appointed experienced teachers , dedicated to work and maintaining communication ethics . From 939 teachers working with Roma students, 798 of them are highly educated and 141 middle-level educated in teaching with over 20 years of work. In schools of the Roma and Egyptian community are operating 63 boards where are represented 98 Roma and Egyptian parents.

For attendance and progress of students in the learning process, are set up and function support groups near schools with the participation of the teacher, psychologist, school board, student government and members of the Roma community.

Pursuant to the recommendations of the "Seminar on awareness for the inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities, within Albania's EU integration", MES, has developed an action plan with the guidance of the Minister of Education and Sports, for school year 2013-2014 , in Secondary Education, charging with the responsibility of all RED / EO for the timely implementation of activities outlined in this plan, which is scheduled with the respective budget. In this framework, the focus is not only on the continuity of the activities carried out so far, but also starting new initiatives for the future the experience, therefore:

In the agreement made between associations and school directorates, approved by RED / EO and MES, nearby schools is organized differentiated labor and supplementary lessons with students with delays and difficulties in learning.



DECADE OF
ROMA
INCLUSION
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3. EMPLOYMENT

- *Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support Roma employment in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan or the National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: tailored job search assistance, first work experience programs, targeted activation measures, measures supporting self-employment and entrepreneurship, measures promoting employment of qualified Roma civil servants, eliminating barriers, including discrimination, to entering the labor market, etc.*
- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth has taken concrete initiatives for policy incentives and facilities for Roma, with the aim of promoting their employment and training, formation and their integration into the labor market.

This policy has always been a priority in the implementation of the objectives of the National Strategy "For the improvement of the living conditions of the Roma minority."

In connection with the inclusion of unemployed job seekers, the Roma community in active employment programs during 2013, employment promotion programs and vocational training , informed as follows :

Indicators of vocational training

An active policy priorities of the program MMSR is vocational training and retraining for unemployed job seekers, Implemented through subsidiary institutions as the National Employment Service . The state provides financial support for all unemployed job seekers, who included in the training courses offered in 10 Regional Directorates of Public Vocational Training , which are located in the main cities of the country as Vlora, Shkodra, Tirana (2), Durres, Elbasan, Korca, Gjirokastra, Fier and a mobile center for Northeast area .

During 2013 were trained in various professions courses as (nationwide) 200 unemployed Roma . These courses are required in the labor market, namely, the formation characteristics in these centers are:

- The courses have a duration of 2-6 months .
- 7000 -8500 people are trained on average per year, of which 54 % are young.
- Training made trades occupations belong : Repairman and maintenance of vehicles , household electrical appliances , electrical grid , heating - cooling systems , solar panels , plumbing , tailor ; professions tourism hotel as cook , confectioner , waiter , bartender and construction occupations like bricklayer , welder , Cradlers tile , wood working , Plastering ,



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Reinforcing iron worker .

Indicators of unemployment

9439 unemployed job seekers Roma and Egyptians are enrolled during the year 2013 near employment offices, who have benefited from the advice and guidance of the staff of employment services , as well as the awareness and the pursuit of their professional training professional courses in the Regional Public Vocational Training. Divided by gender, this figure is 50 % female and 50 % male .

Compared with a year ago is an increase in the number of unemployed Roma (10 %) in the regions of Tirana , Gjirokastra and Lezha . They are almost all educated up to 9 years old and belonging to all age groups, indicating that the cause of unemployment is the lack of education .

Employment indicators

During the implementation of employment promotion programs , priority was given specific categories of special groups and the difficulties as those entering for the first time in the labor market aged 18-25 years , long-term unemployed , Roma , persons with disabilities and those who receive social aid and unemployment benefits. These groups account for about 50 % of the total (960) of unemployed beneficiaries of these programs .

Employed by employment promotion programs, until the end of December 2013 resulting 9 unemployed Roma and Egyptian.

Currently implemented two programs , which have priority hiring unemployed workers from specific groups :

- Pursuant to the DCM no. 48 , dated 16.01.2008 " Program encouraging employment of unemployed workers in difficulty " . Under this program, employers who contract with a duration of one year unemployed difficulties may benefit (i) funding for a year , at 100 percent of the mandatory social insurance contributions of the employer , (ii) funding for four months , 100 per cent of the national minimum wage . Unemployed in trouble under this program are considered long-term unemployed , persons who receive economic assistance , persons who receive unemployment benefits , persons who enter for the first time in the labor market , aged 18-25 years , persons over 45 years , which does not have an education higher than secondary education or its equivalent , persons with disabilities and persons from the Roma community .

- Pursuant to the DCM no. 27 , dated 11.01.2012 , " On the incentive program for the employment of particular groups ." The program aims to promote Albanian leaders and managers make an effort to hire women unemployed jobseekers from specific groups . Through this program aims to support employers who hire unemployed women from specific



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groups. This support consists of funding the amount of liabilities Social Security and four national minimum wages. Women from special groups are:

- a) women for the long term unemployed (registered as unemployed job seekers of more than one year) ;
- b) women who benefit from programs of income support ;
- c) trafficked women ;
- d) women over 50 years ;
- d) Roma women ;
- f) women with disabilities ;
- 's) mother daughter ;
- h) divorced women with social problems ;
- f) Women who return from migration , with economic problems .

Drafting legal basis to encourage and facilitate professional training for Roma

Pursuant to Law no. 8872 , dated 29.03.2002 " On education and training in the Republic of Albania " , as amended , DCM no. 616 , dated 12.04.2002 " On the determination of the specific categories that benefit from the Law no. 8872 , dated 29.03.2002 " On education and training in the Republic of Albania " , the Minister Instruction no. 2222 dated 31.10.2002 " On Advice and vocational orientation " (item 6) , guides be given special attention to vocational training of persons from specific groups .

In Nr.286 Order dated 16.12.2013 " On tariffs of public vocational training system " , provided that the registration fees for unemployed job seekers registered in labor offices and want to pursue professions and vocational training , provided from Regional Directorates of Public Vocational Training, are free .



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4. HOUSING

- *Please list any mainstream or targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support housing for Roma (or housing of marginalized people, including Roma) in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan and the National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: eliminating spatial segregation and promoting desegregation, promoting non-discriminatory access to social housing, etc.*
- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

Improvement of the living standards of Roma and Egyptian communities is one of the issues in the focus of the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism and a priority to solve social problems and improve housing conditions for this community.

The efforts to mitigate social problems of the Roma community are coordinated through the Strategy "For the improvement of living conditions of the Roma and Egyptian communities", Action Plan of the strategy and recommendations of the Council of Europe. On this basis, the approved amendments to the law no. 9232, dated 13.05.2004 "On social programs of housing for residents of urban areas" (Primary law on housing) specify the conditions and criteria to treat through social housing programs, residents who are in need and have no opportunity to obtain housing through the mechanisms of the open market. The law has undergone some changes, the last in 2012 (Law no. 54, dated 10.05.2012 "On some additions and amendments to Law no. 9232, dated 30.05.2004 "On social housing programs" (Amendment").

The law has been amended beside other issued, extending the field of application not only in urban but also rural areas. This also serves the Roma families that previously could not be addressed by this law, due to their location in different municipalities of the country,

Beneficiaries' selection criteria have changed and are evaluated based on:

- Housing Conditions
- Family Conditions
- Social Conditions
- Economic Status



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The law determines that based on these criteria Municipal Councils approve the scoring system for beneficiaries.

Roma community is a beneficiary of all social housing programs, such as:

Program of rental for social housing which is implemented in 8 municipalities;

- Program of low-cost housing including

a. Soft Lending;

b. Homes purchased in the open market in cities where the cost of housing is lower.

The law also creates opportunities for Roma families to benefit from specific programs targeting the families based on their income. These programs are:

- **Bonus for housing** with Municipal Council approval and covers no more than 50% of the minimum rent of the dwelling on the open market.
- **Subsidized rent** for rented social housing in the ownership of the municipality. Subsidy to the rent is applied in those cases where the rent of the residence occupies more than 25% of net family income. Subsidy measures are adopted by municipal councils. (Clarification- if the family receives welfare benefits, rent will be subsidized 100%).
- **Loan interest subsidy** to families which affords the soft loan conditions. 0% interest is paid by the renting families in the former properties of expropriated subjects and 3% interest is paid by the beneficiary families through applications to the municipality.

Of all these programs and aid beneficiaries and Roma families have priority in selection.

In addition to the above, is also legally adopted a specific program that addresses only the Roma community, the program "Small Grants", which addresses the problems of improving housing conditions for this community. (Improvement of housing, equipment with sanitary facilities, improvement of infrastructure, etc...)

Another problem for the housing of Roma families, among others, are families which through the Normative Act No. 3 dated 03.01.2013 "On the release of the rightful owners of housing for homeless people, living in residences owned by former expropriated subjects ", are required to evacuate the apartment where they live as renting subjects to the former subjects of expropriated property from the former communist system. To this purpose are made the changes in the Order of the Minister pursuant to the Normative Act by qualified renters that



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families would not be drawn out of the apartment without first creating the opportunity to shelter.

Related to the Ombudsman's recommendations, the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism, on recommendation 5, of the Council of Europe and the Road Map, has evaluated these recommendations adding Point 8.5 to the Road Map, which stipulated improved coordination with municipalities to promote inclusion of 5% of Roma families in all housing programs. Furthermore, in paragraph 11.4 MUDT has defined the assessment of the recommendations of the Ombudsman with a view to reflecting them in the Strategy of Housing, which is in draft preparation, as well as the law on housing.

Statistics for the housing of Roma families from housing programs are as follows:

- Through the project "Construction of Social Housing for Rental" from the reports of the municipalities, are sheltered in Elbasan 10 Roma families from 96 apartments, in Fier 3 Roma families from 96 apartments and in Berat 1 Roma families which has left the apartment due to life style, and 20 Egyptian families from 48 apartments in total. Other municipalities have not yet distributed social housing rent.
- For housing through soft loans we do not have data from municipalities on the number of Roma families who were beneficiaries of housing.
- To implement the program, "Small Grant " , in the MUDT budget for 2014 was approved the fund of 30,000,000 ALL, with the aim of improving living conditions for the Roma community from which will benefit about 40 Roma families . Currently we are waiting for the delivering of projects by municipalities. At this point, Municipality of Lushnja has submitted the project.



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6. HEALTH

- *Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support the improvement of health care services for the Roma population in 2013 with a special focus on the goals and implementation of the Decade National Action Plan/National Roma Integration Strategy (if applicable). Please include measures such as: ensuring equal access to quality healthcare, ensuring basic social security coverage and comprehensive health services to Roma, preventive measures such as medical check-ups, prenatal and postnatal care and family planning, targeted health awareness campaigns, etc.*
- *Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2013 (including quantitative and descriptive data). For the purpose of peer to peer learning, kindly consider to include also measures with negative impact on Roma inclusion and explain the process to minimize such negative impact.*

The Ministry of Health through the Institute of Public Health in the districts of Kukes , Shkodra and Durres has finalized promotional activities with Roma population related to child care, nutrition, immunization, family planning. Initially took place the identification and coverage of immunization services for marginalized groups/at risk in each district (Roma population in rural areas).

Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNDP and local Roma organizations such as Amarodrom, Romani Baxt Association, have created a database of areas inhabited by the Roma community (map of areas with Roma community) across the country.

Following this initiative and based on the location map of the Roma community, the Ministry of Health has collected a set of data from districts health centers on the inclusion of these communities in basic health services provided.

This information sent by Regional Directorates of Health/Directorates of Public Health, according to the map of settlements Roma population, is based on the following quantitative indicators :

- The number of Roma in the region
- How many of them are registered at the general practitioner
- How many of them pay a financial contribution for health insurance (i.e. have a health record)
- The number of women who are pregnant
- The number of children aged 0-1 years
- The number of children aged 1-5 years
- The number of children aged 5-14
- How many are vaccinated
- The number of adults
- Health centers - which are closer to their homes



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Regional Directorates of Health/Directorates of Public Health - in Tirana , Berat , Kuçove, Pogradec , Lezha , Shkodra , Fier , Elbasan , Korca , Gjirokastra , in cooperation with several NGOs and Roma associations offer various services which includes health care .

Services provided by primary health care personnel consist of trainings in the area of HIV prevention, through peer educators in the community, promotion of voluntary counseling and testing, distribution of condoms and training of health personnel working in areas where the Roma community resides. During 2013, 120 employees of health centers were trained.

Ministry of Health with UNICEF continues to support the implementation of the project "Home visits for promoting health of Roma children in Tirana and Durres". During the second half of year 2013 were conducted 94 home visits in Durres and 24 home visits in Tirana. Evaluations were conducted for 120 children aged 0-6 years 120 and 72 mothers were contacted.

Ministry of Health and the organization Center for Community Health and Welfare with the support of UNICEF prepared the manual for conduct of home visits and checklists that are filled in every visit of Roma child .

Ministry of Health in the implementation of an Order of the Minister of October 2013 hosted by RHA of Tirana , health service near the Roma community placed in the Shishtfina area in Tirana .

In addition, MOH in February 2014, supported the proposal of Vodafone Albania Foundation, to include the Roma community in its project for basic health care or early health care through the utilization of telemedicine techniques

To this aims of this initiative, were provided the map of Roma community locations and health centers closer to them.



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7. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

- *Please list any measures that were designed to support the fight against anti-Roma discrimination and racism. Please describe to the extent possible the impact of these measures (including quantitative and descriptive data).*
- *Please list any measures that were designed to support gender equality between Roma women and men. Please describe to the extent possible the impact of these measures (including quantitative and descriptive data).*

Discrimination on grounds of race

Protection of minorities is guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and the laws that provide the respect for their rights, which regulate specific areas of life, also clearly reveal the importance of the Albanian state has given the last years at racial discrimination. In framework of the five priorities of the European Commission to Albania, improvement of legislation and policies on minorities is one of the measures that our country has projected to receive, in accordance with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of Minority Rights Council of Europe.

The institutional framework for the protection of the rights of Roma and Egyptians in Albania is wide. Recognition of these institutions is important to the realization of the protection of their rights. Each institution has its own responsibility, but the cooperation and coordination between them is essential to providing the best possible results in the commitments undertaken. E.g.: For the implementation of strategic documents that have been approved in the country, is required cooperation and coordination of actions between central and local government.

The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination has had and continues having regard to the improvement of standards, due to protection and respect of the rights of Roma and Egyptians. The Commissioner also realized during 2013 open days, which enable meetings with community members. Roma and Egyptians problems occur in areas of life such as housing, education, employment, goods and services. Also, Roma children have been subject of complaints or ex-officio cases of discrimination and in these cases the Commissioner has proactive approach.



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Another problematic field that is identified is discrimination in education. Law "*On Protection from Discrimination*", provides specific tasks for the Ministry of Education¹ and expressly defines the issuing of bylaws from the Ministry of Education for the elimination of discrimination in education. Despite the Law "*On pre- university education*" and relevant by-laws facilitate the registration of Roma children in schools without birth certificate, there has been noticed a hesitation by the 9-year schools to enforce this rule. The Project "*second chance*" determines the opportunity of education, even when is not realized in a timely manner, however, in some cases the Commissioner has identified schools that have refused to admit pupils that belongs to these communities. Spurred by complaints of previous years, CPD has conducted a monitoring in 2013, to observe the registration Roma pupils in the 9 - year-old schools in Tirana. The Commissioner, after analysing the registration of Roma children in the 9-year-old schools, found that there wasn't tendency of segregation or concentration of Roma children in a single class.

Widespread is the situation of school dropout by Roma pupils. To guarantee the right of children and to ensure equal access, the Regional Education Directorate have the obligation to implement with priority the instruction of the Minister of Education and Science no. 29, date 08.02.2013 "*On the procedures of basic part-time education* " and the instruction no.31, date 08.02.2013, "*On the effective procedures of basic education for pupils who have not attended at least two classes of basic education.*"

Complaints claiming discrimination because of race

In 2013, 137 complaints have been handled and 12 cases in which race discrimination was claimed. It should be noted that individual complaints have been mainly taken during open days that the Commissioner has organized in various districts of the country. The organization of open days has been a component of awareness projects of the CPD, where the Roma community has been the focus and has been informed about the institution of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination, its powers and how an individual can complain before the institution of the Commissioner. Based on the information gathered in these meetings, the CPD has sent recommendations to the relevant institutions for the issues raised by this community.

Based on the complaints we note that the members of this community complain about discrimination in employment, housing, education and services.

In these cases, the review has been completed, but it should be noted that during 2013 their review and the complaints because of race, the investigation procedures for the following cases have been completed:

- in 4 cases a discrimination decision has been given,
- in 22 cases of the absence of discrimination has been found,
- in 2 cases recommendations for improvement have been given,
- in 4 cases a non-discrimination decision and recommendation to improve the situation have been given,



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- in 4 cases in collaboration with relevant institutions the target goal has been achieved,
- in 15 cases, the cases were not accepted due to non-competencies of the CPD and it has been recommended to the applicants to address to the relevant institutions,
- 2 cases were dismissed because the complainers have been inactive for a long period and the further consideration of the case has been impossible,
- 5 cases were withdrawn by complainers,
- about 91 cases are still being reviewed because they were presented during December 2013.

Also for 2013 with a number of complaints were presented because of race, which have not accepted for review, because they did not meet the criteria prescribed by the law "On protection from discrimination", but in these cases the Commissioner has suggested and recommended to the complainers to address to the competent institution. The CPD, in some cases, has provided assistance to the Roma and Egyptian communities, completing documentation for the benefit of economic assistance, for the registration of their children in school, enrolment in the registry of civil state, access to social housing, benefit from student fees, etc.

Gender equality

The National Strategy on Gender Equality, Reduction of Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence 2001-2015 (revised) and its Action Plan, Approved by DCM No. 573, dated 16.6.2011.

Drafting of the Strategy was supported by the Program "One UN – For Gender Equality in Albania". The vision enshrined in the Strategy is: "Aspire for a society where gender equality is respected and valued, learned, supported and encouraged, where gender-based violence of any form is not tolerated, but punished, where violence victims are supported and protected, and where equality in opportunities and treatment is a reality for all, irrespective of their gender". Eventually, four priorities were laid down:

- 1) Strengthen the institutional and legal mechanism;
- 2) Increase women's participation in decision-making;
- 3) Ensure economic empowerment of girls and women.
- 4) Reduced gender based violence

The approved Strategy is sensitive to the needs and rights of both genders, and seeks to address them through comprehensive action, keeping due account of the needs of certain categories of disadvantaged women due to disability, social origins, ethnicity or sexual orientation.