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### 1. INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND FUNDING FOR ROMA INCLUSION

*Please describe (if any) changes in 2014 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 2014 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 2015?*

- The Council for the Improvement of Roma Status and Implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion was formed in June 2013. The Council receives administrative and technical support from the Office for Human and Minority Rights. In the course of 2014, there was a change to the Council's composition. Namely, in July 2014, the Government of the Republic of Serbia appointed the new Council assembly, which consists of 22 members, of which 7 are members of the Roma national minority (4 representatives of the ROCD). The State Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy is the Chairman of the Council.
- The Office for Human and Minority Rights of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in partnership with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, and with support from Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Open Society Foundations from Budapest and Belgrade, drafted the Initial Study for the development of a new Strategy for Roma Inclusion compatible with the Europe 2020 Strategy, in which the reasons and grounds for the development of the new strategic document are explained. The process of developing the Initial Study included local governments and civil society organisations as active participants. Consultative meetings with representatives of State and Provincial authorities, independent institutions and civil society organisations were held to this effect throughout Serbia and AP Vojvodina.



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- The Office for Human and Minority Rights and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, with support from Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) instrument of European Commission organised the Workshop on Policies of Roma Inclusion on 27 October 2014.

The workshop was aimed at the processes of development, adopting and implementation of Roma inclusion strategies in European Union member states, stating good practice examples regarding the implementation and the existing challenges. Additionally, examples of Roma inclusion in Serbia from the perspective of civil society organisations were presented at the meeting, including the development process of the baselines for the new Roma inclusion strategy, which is to refer to the period from 2015.

- The European Integration Office (SEIO), the Office for Human and Minority Rights (OHMR) and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (SIPRU) of the Government of the Republic of Serbia started the initiative to establish mechanisms for holding regular coordination meetings on Roma advancement projects.

The aim of the initiative is for all relevant project users, donors and project implementation teams to contribute to a more effective and efficient use of funds from the budget and donations by exchanging information on the implemented and planned activities regularly, which would provide significant support to the process of improving the status of Roma men and women in the Republic of Serbia.

The initiative is currently developing a unique conceptual tool, which will allow a clear overview of both current and planned activities implemented within the framework of the projects dealing with Roma advancement, divided into categories of importance to active Roma inclusion: housing, employment, education, social welfare. The tool is being developed so as to facilitate the monitoring of project implementation, improve coordination of activities and provide a relevant information base for planning and programming of future interventions. At the same time, the development of a database for Roma advancement projects in the ISDACON information system will be considered by the initiative. The first meeting was held in June 2014.

- In July 2014, the Office for Human and Minority Rights announced the call for submission of CSO projects aimed at the improvement of Roma position and status in the Republic of Serbia. The budget was set at 20,006,400.00 dinars. Projects proposals were submitted by a total of 130 associations, of which 24 projects received funding. The associations started implementing projects in November, striving to achieve the following:
  - A more efficient implementation of the existing strategic documents relative to the position and status of Roma population in Serbia, by providing relevant reports and surveys



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- Improving quality of life for Roma population by creating and promoting integral local services/service centres/programmes
  - Encouraging positive action by the wider community towards the representatives of Roma population, as a socially vulnerable population
  - Programmes targeted towards the better inclusion of Roma women and young members of Roma population.
- The OSCE Mission to Serbia and the Swedish International Development Agency, as part of technical support to the Office for Human and Minority Rights regarding the implementation of the Strategy for Improvement of Roma Status in the Republic of Serbia, issued the call for submission of CSO projects aimed at improving the position and status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia. In the course of 2014, the OSCE Mission to Serbia concluded agreements with executive partners of 12 civil society organisations, whose projects were selected in 2013 within the small grants allocation programme and followed the implementation of these projects, from which 700 direct users benefited through activities regarding gender equality, employment, education, healthcare, employment for young people and women, local inclusion policies and the media and informing. The budget for these 12 projects was set at 148,000 euros.
  - Regarding the culture, in accordance with the Culture Law, the Sector for Contemporary Art and Creative Industries, implements the cultural policies through annual competitions. The reinforcement of professional capacities (professionalization), institutionalisation and preservation of the Romani linguistic and cultural identity are some of the priorities of the national minority art competitions. The competition was intended for co-financing of projects in the field of national minority art, for the period of 2014, and was open from 21 December 2013 to 21 January 2014 and closed at the beginning of March 2014. Unlike in previous years, this time the budget for Roma minority projects was doubled (2,255,000.00 dinars), and there was an increase in the number of projects dealing with the young, or implemented by members of the younger population. With the aim of including the minorities in the decision making regarding the matters of relevance to them, one member of the expert panel for this competition was a Romani artist.

The 2014 funds from the budget of the RS designated for the Decade of Roma amounted to 5,000,000.00 (five million dinars) and were allocated through public calls to 25 projects in the field of public information, whereas 13 art projects were co-financed.

- The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration secures funding to encourage local governments to implement measures and activities aimed at solving the issue of migrants. In 2014, the Commissariat drew 20,000,000.00 RSD from the budget to finance local government projects. 15,000,000.00 dinars from these funds will be used to implement



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measures and activities aimed at reintegrating the returnees under the Readmission Agreements, 3,000,000.00 RSD to improve tolerance to individuals seeking asylum in the Republic of Serbia and 2,000,000.00 RSD to provide support to local governments in solving the issue of migrants.

Funds totalling 15,000,000.00 RSD were allocated to the municipalities of Novi Pazar, Kikinda and Zrenjanin, which have large numbers of returnees in need of improvement of housing conditions by distributing building material. The value of each project stands at 3,300,000.00 RSD while local government units (LGU) participate with 10% i.e. 330,000.00 RSD. Vršac is the fourth LGU receiving a part of these funds in the amount of 5,000,000.00 RSD for the construction of prefabricated houses. By providing the site and infrastructure, the city of Vršac participated in this project with 2,627,000.00 RSD. In this manner, the most vulnerable returnees who lack housing or have inadequate housing will be taken care of.

- Regarding funding for project implementation proposed on the basis of local action plans, implementation is in progress for Support to the Implementation of Strategies for IDPs, Refugees and Returnees under the Readmission Agreements, receiving funding from IPA programme totalling 1.7 million euros. These projects provide funds for housing and economic empowerment of the above mentioned categories of persons, as part of support to local action plans. From a total of 16 municipalities that received funding to implement these activities, the municipalities of Tutin, Novi Pazar, Zrenjanin, Vršac and Čukarica applied for funding to improve living conditions for returnees under the Readmission Agreements. These projects are in the implementation phase.
- In the course of the reporting period, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (CRM) issued three public calls receiving funding from the budget, through which the following Roma organisations and associations received funds for projects concerning the reintegration of returnees under the Readmission Agreements, and Roma population belonging to the IDP population group:
  - EHO – Field support to returnees – determining requirements and providing free legal aid, received funding in the amount of 210,000 RSD
  - Braničevo District Roma Association – My Idea is my Chance for Success, received funding in the amount of 210,000 dinars
  - Guiding Star Roma Association – Assistance to Roma Children, Returnees and IDPs in Education System, received funding in the amount of 210,000 RSD
  - Bujanovac Organisation for Development and Democracy – Informative Support to Roma IDPs and Returnees, received funding in the amount of 210,000 RSD



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- Family Strength association of Novi Sad – Stop Migrations, received funding in the amount of 170,000 RSD
  - Braničevo District Roma Association – Research on socio-economic position of the IDPs and returnees under the Readmission Agreements in Požarevac city area, received funding in the amount of 160,000 RSD
  - DAR Proactive Response Association – Profiles of returnees under the Readmission Agreements, received funding in the amount of 210,000 RSD
  - CERIB Citizen Care and Development Centre – Information centre for legal and other assistance, received funding in the amount of 260,000 RSD
  - Romano Alav Roma Women’s Association – Say No to Asylum, received funding in the amount of 160,000 RSD
  - Bujanovac Organisation for Development and Democracy – Registered and Empowered, received funding in the amount of 140,000 RSD.
- In the period between April and November 2014, the CRM used funds secured from the budget to issue six public calls for the improvement of living conditions for the IDPs:
    1. Assistance in the form of building material 83,382,500 RSD (funds allocated to 26 LGU)
    2. Income-generating activities in the amount of 41,270,000 RSD (funds allocated to 24 LGU)
    3. Purchasing rural households with the surrounding plot of land 43,985,000 RSD (funds allocated to 11 LGU)
    4. Assistance in the form of building material 44,488,750 RSD (funds allocated to 15 LGU)
    5. Assistance in the form of building material 83,487,500 RSD (funds allocated to 24 LGU)
    6. Income-generating activities in the amount of 46,977,200 RSD (funds allocated to 20 LGU)
  - It is estimated that 10% of the total IDP population are Roma nationality members. However, due to the extent of their vulnerability they receive assistance more frequently, and so up to 20% of these funds is targeted towards providing care for Roma nationality IDPs.
  - The CRM provided funding to shut down informal collective centres (in which there are large numbers of Roma nationality IDPs, and the city of Belgrade received 10,000,000 RSD for these purposes and implementation is in progress.



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- State administration internship programme for members of Roma national minority is conducted within the framework of Technical Support from the OHMR to the implementation of Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma in the RS, a project implemented by the OSCE Mission to Serbia, and financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The programme envisages intership for six (6) male or female Roma nationality members for the period of (6) months.
- Minority youth internship programme – in Serbian State institutions is conducted with help from the Embassy of Great Britain. The aim is to include the young Romani, Albanian and Bosnian national community members more actively in the public life and in the work of Serbian State institutions.

In the framework of this programme, until September 2014, four (4) Roma nationality members were accepted as interns, of which three (3) were Roma women.

- In October 2014, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Action Plan to the Strategy for prevention and protection against discrimination for the period of 2014-2018, which includes national minorities, and within which Roma are singled out as a particularly vulnerable population group.
- Project We Are Here Together – European Support for Roma Inclusion, worth 4.8 million euros, funded by the European Union and implemented by OSCE Mission to Serbia, supports the implementation of Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia. The project's most important partners are: the Office for Human and Minority Rights, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, NGO Praxis, Roma Education Fund, the European Integration Office of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit.
- In the framework of project European Support for Roma Inclusion, the Office for Human and Minority Rights will establish a system for collection and processing of analytical data about Roma status (hereinafter: the System). In the first half of 2015, the software and website will be developed allowing the local government to enter data by means of accounts and pre-defined questionnaires. Local government will collect data, in accordance with the questionnaire, from local institutions (healthcare institutions, national employment service, social work centres, and educational institutions). Unified data will be available on the website. One segment of the system will be updated by annual data



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entry, while local governments with mobile units will update their data on a monthly basis, in accordance with their operational plans. In the course of the first year, only local governments with local Roma coordinators will be included (53 local governments). All local Roma coordinators will have their electronic accounts and electronic access to the questionnaire.

- After the framework for mobile units had been defined in the Guidelines on improving inter-agency cooperation and exchange of information, adopted by the project Management Board on 28 March 2014, local governments adopted Assembly or Council decisions on the forming of mobile units, making them operational bodies of local governments. Adopting these decisions ensured the sustainability of mobile units given that they were formed under local government bylaws.

After mobile teams had been formed, the first training cycle for mobile units was organised in the fields of: operative planning, education, healthcare, social protection, employment and discrimination. After the first training session, all mobile units prepared their operative action plans for 2014, with help from their mentors. In the first two months of their existence, by 26 June 2014, mobile units achieved their first results by enrolling 509 Roma nationality children into pre-school. During November and December 2014, the second training cycle was delivered regarding business communication and reinforcement of teamwork. A special training session was delivered on personal identification documents, in cooperation with the Praxis. In the first half of 2015, software will be developed to unify mobile team data and facilitate their reporting to local and national institutions.

- The project supports the improvement of Roma status through six components - components 4 and 6 will be applied throughout Serbia, while components 1, 2 and 3 will be applied in 20 pilot municipalities: Bela Palanka, Bojnik, Bujanovac, Knjaževac, Koceljeva, Kovin, Kragujevac, Kruševac, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Odžaci, Palilula, Pančevo, Prokuplje, Smederevo, Sombor, Valjevo, Vranje, Žitorađa and Zvezdara), and component 5 will include Obrenovac, in addition to pilot municipalities.
  1. Access to fundamental rights – The project provides support to Roma to obtain personal identification documents, start using the healthcare and education services provided by social welfare.
  2. Forming of mobile units – The project encourages advanced cooperation and exchange of information between local institutions dealing with Roma social inclusion.



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3. Reinforcing the capacities of civil society organisations – By supporting and providing training for Romani and civil society organisations dealing with Roma integration, the project supports their active participation in the process of development and implementation of local action plans intended for the Roma population.
  4. Preventive programmes aiming to preclude school leaving - the project provides support to the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development in establishing and implementing programmes aimed at preventing school leaving in secondary schools throughout Serbia. Monthly scholarships for Roma students were secured, including mentor and peer support.
  5. Improvement of housing conditions – the project offers support to the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure in establishing an information system which is to enable monitoring and improvement of housing conditions in Roma settlements.
  6. Sustainable employment – With the aim of creating new possibilities for employment, companies with potential to employ Roma workers, Roma entrepreneurs included, will receive support in the form of equipment, mentorship and training.
- With support from OSCE Mission project team, the Office distributed the annual questionnaire to local governments and collected information in that manner. The basic purpose of the questionnaire is to initiate the process of cooperation between the Office and local governments, in the process of monitoring and reporting on Roma inclusion, by providing information that should be available to local governments.
  - The amount of 2014 national budget dedicated to the implementation of the Decade Action Plan or National Roma Integration Strategy in the Republic of Serbia is 432,056,000 dinars which amounts to 0.05% per cent of total national budget for this year. Donor funds intended for the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy amounted to 3,720,259 euros in 2014.

### 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 2014 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,*





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*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 2014 (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.*

- All formal and legal and administrative conditions were met for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia to establish mentoring and scholarship system for Roma high-school students, with technical support from OSCE Organisation for Security and Cooperation and from the Roma Education Fund (IPA 2012 Roma Social Inclusion). Clear criteria were set for scholarship awards to Roma high-school students, including the choice of mentors. A mentoring system was established by creating mentor job descriptions, descriptions of mentor status in secondary schools and changes to the key school performance fields referring to support for students and to their achievements, the ethos, education and learning, cooperation between the school and the local community, inclusive education. Ceremonial award of contracts took place in December 2014, and scholarships were awarded in January 2015, retroactively for the school year 2014/2015, and for 525 students. (The number of scholarship students was increased in relation to the planned as students from the flood-affected areas were taken into account).
- With the aim of further reinforcing the capacities of pedagogical assistants, the project provided technical assistance to the Ministry in implementing assistant training – 175 pedagogical assistants completed the accredited training modules in 2014, and by the end of the school year 2014/2015, they will receive certificates with 36 European credits from the University of Kragujevac and Centre for Lifelong Learning.
- Pedagogical assistant job posts were systematised under the Government Regulations published in the “RS Official Gazette” No 20/2011 the Regulation on supplement to the Regulation was published regarding the coefficient for calculation and payment of salaries to public service employees, and this amendment envisages a new job post titled pedagogical assistant. Apart from the Ordinance on pedagogical assistant training programme, in which scope of work and specific tasks are defined, the development of PA performance indicators is in process, which entails detailed job description and defining the criteria for introducing pedagogical assistants to LGU. Initial survey was conducted of current pedagogical assistants’ practice through group focus, questionnaires and structured conversations with pedagogical assistants in cooperation with the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit. The results of the survey will provide the basis for the development of indicators of PA performance.



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- Mobile units were formed in 20 municipalities in the territory of the Republic of Serbia, employing pedagogical assistants as well, thus reinforcing the current activities of assistants and institutions which employ them, relating to early childhood development for children from vulnerable population groups, regular and timely enrolling of Roma children into preparatory pre-school programme, elementary and secondary schools, easier access to local institutions and consistent application of laws and bylaws pertaining to education, healthcare and social welfare.
- In the course of 2014/2015, a study will be conducted to evaluate the feasibility of providing mentor and/or peer support to children in risk of secondary school leaving, in cooperation with the Office for Human and Minority Rights and the UNICEF. Based on the developed standards of education for the end of elementary school, for the end of the elementary school first cycle, on the standards for general education subjects in secondary education and standards for the end of the second and third cycles of adult education, we provided a permanent support system for children belonging to vulnerable population groups, referring to the development of programmes in which education standards may be adapted and changed in accordance with the children's individual needs and capacities, so as to secure optimal progress, monitoring of achievements with the application of appropriate work methods.

Including parents of children belonging to vulnerable groups into parents' councils is provided for by legal procedure – the Law on the Foundations of Education System and the Elementary School Law. Municipal parents' councils in pilot municipalities are founded at the initiative of the non-governmental sector, in cooperation with the MESTD.

- Third phase implementation began for the Common Project, implemented by the UNICEF and Red Cross, with support from Swiss Development Agency. The project will be implemented by 2017, and its basic aim is to improve pre-school education accessibility and inclusion of children belonging to vulnerable population groups, focusing on Roma children.
- The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development prepared systematic support for the founding of Inclusive Education Units, job descriptions and sector-wide cooperation on all levels of education.
- 369 secondary school students registered for their desired professional courses thanks to affirmative action. This school year 2014/15, scholarships were secured from the RS budget for members of Roma national minority for 324 secondary school students, 84 university students, including 36 student loans. Scholarships for secondary school students amounted to 5,400 dinars, and scholarships for university students amounted to 8,400 dinars. Tracking the achievements of students through the mentorship system and through the work of school inclusion units, whose work is monitored by School Administrations based on a special Official Letter from the Minister of Education and the Department for School Administration, expert pedagogical supervision and secondary education and upbringing. 75 university



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students were granted access to dormitory capacities and some 20 secondary school students received accommodation in secondary school students' dormitories, in the second round, under special conditions for students belonging to vulnerable population groups.

- Within the cooperation between the Ministry of Education, Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation, education institutions, UNICEF and the non-governmental sector, activities are continued on the implementation of project *Kindergarten without borders*, which includes: on the national level – amendments and supplements to secondary legislation for special and specific programmes for children of 3-5 years of age (especially for children from vulnerable social groups), inclusivity analysis in pre-school education for children of 3-5 years of age, development of the accreditation programme based on the analysis of programme development in other countries, on the local level – verifying if the current 4-hour programmes can be treated as experiment programmes and if their effects can be monitored, the development of new programmes (thematic and family service), and by all this an increase in the inclusion of children of 3-5 years of age, inclusion of parents, adaptation of the premises.
- On the national level and on the level of School, Administration measures are taken, based on the available results of research performed by the UNICEF, the educational institution system and civil society organisations, to analyse reasons for early school leaving, pre-emptive measures are taken and curricular and extracurricular activities are implemented through the system of educational support for children belonging to vulnerable population groups under the Law on the Foundations of Education System and the Elementary School Law.
- An IPA 2013 project was developed and approved, concerning social inclusion and reduction of poverty in socially vulnerable groups. The state of affairs and reasons for early school leaving will be ascertained between sectors, a set of measures will be prepared which will be piloted by local institutions and groundwork will be done for systematic solutions in the fields of education, healthcare and social welfare.
- In cooperation with the UNICEF, the SIPRU performed an analysis of the situation of support measures for impoverished children, and packages of measures that could contribute to greater support to the education of Roma children were developed on local government level and on school level. Piloting of measures is in progress, particularly focused on children from Roma families.
- In the second half of 2014, data was published from the latest MICS survey performed by the UNICEF which will provide basis to develop revised local action plans accompanied by a set of measures particularly referring to the situation in families belonging to vulnerable population groups in the fields that still show negative trend and unsatisfactory results.



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- In the framework of Tempus project – Equal Access for All: strengthening the social dimension for a stronger European Higher Education Area (EQUI-ED), 50 secondary school students from Serbia, members of underrepresented groups (students from villages, Roma nationality students, students without parental care, students from single parent families and students from lower socio-economic status households) took free preparatory courses and enrolled into faculties of the Universities of Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš and Novi Pazar, with help from their mentors.
- Since the end of 2014, the Draft Ordinance on identifying forms of discrimination in education has been under review. It has been forwarded for harmonisation to all Sectors of the Ministry, and currently suggestions are being collected from the non-governmental sector and legal institutions.

### 3. EMPLOYMENT

*Please list any mainstream and targeted policy measures that were designed and implemented to support Roma employment in 2014 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 labour market, etc.*

*Please describe to the extent possible the impact of measures your government implemented in 2014 (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 National Employment Strategy for the period of 2011-2020 (*RS Official Gazette, No 37/2011, hereinafter: the Strategy*) is the strategic framework for the employment policy, which defines the fundamental aim of the employment policy in the Republic of Serbia by 2020 – setting up an efficient, steady and sustainable employment growth rate and a complete harmonisation of employment policy, and of labour market institutions, with the Acquis. Priority activities will be targeted towards increasing employment rates by investments in human capital and towards greater social inclusion.
- The 2014 National Employment Action Plan (*RS Official Gazette, No 118/13*), defines the aims of the 2014 employment policy, targeted towards:



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- the improvement of conditions on the labour market and advancement of labour market institutions,
  - encouraging employment and social inclusion of the hard-to-employ, development of social entrepreneurship and support to regional and local employment policy ,
  - improving workforce quality and investing in human capital.
- Moreover, categories of the hard-to-employ were defined (persons who find employment more difficultly due to their health conditions, insufficient or inappropriate education, social and demographic characteristics, lack of regional or professional harmonisation of supply and demand on the labour market or due to other objective circumstances). The measures of active employment policy directed towards improving their employability were also defined. The category of the hard-to-employ includes: Roma, refugees and internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, rural population (particularly the landless rural population and rural population of Southeast Serbia), persons with no qualifications/education, and women, young people (of 15–24 years of age) and the elderly (of 50–64 years of age), and the long-term unemployed persons, single parents, recipients of social welfare payments, children without parental care, human trafficking victims and the like.

The unemployed persons from this category are given priority regarding inclusion in active employment policy measures, and at the same time, special employment programmes are implemented for certain categories.

- We emphasise that the measures and activities of importance to the implementation of *Roma Decade*, Strategy for Improvement of Roma Status in the Republic of Serbia, and the Action Plan thereof, have been taken into consideration for the development of the NEP, starting with 2010.
- Implementing active employment policy measures, i.e. inclusion of the unemployed (and of the hard-to-employ and of the unemployed belonging to particularly vulnerable population groups), is monitored annually through the Report on the implementation of the Agreement on the National Employment Service performance and through the Report on the implementation of the National Employment Action Plan.

### Registered Roma unemployment rates

- Registering persons with the NES, i.e. keeping records of workers and the content of those records are defined in the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance and in the Ordinance on the content and manner of keeping records of workers (RS Official Gazette, No 15/10). In accordance with the aforementioned ordinance, nationality or ethnicity are some of the personal data recorded based on a person's statement, and are not mandatory to provide.



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- Numbers of persons registered with the NES (including Roma) vary, as a result of constant fluctuation of people registering with the NES and deregistering (employment, registering, deregistering, removing from records under conditions prescribed by the law, change of residence...).
- If we consider the fluctuation in numbers of the unemployed Roma registered with the NES, starting from 2009 (when the NES first started registering unemployed Roma), we can notice a constant increase in the registered numbers of unemployed Roma, which points to an increase in motivation of Roma to be included in the workforce, and as a result of the activities targeted towards promoting active employment policy measures and raising awareness about the importance and advantages of employment and work.

### *Numbers of unemployed Roma registered with the NES*

Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
	on 31 December					
<i>Total</i>	13,416	15,867	19,398	20,342	22,102	21,791
<i>Women</i>	6,571	7,637	9,180	9,513	10,150	10,053

Source: National Employment Service

- According to the data from the National Employment Service, on 31 December 2014, the NES unemployment records included 21,791 members of Roma national minority, of which 10,053 were women.

From the aspect of education levels, most of the registered Roma men and women are unqualified workers, 19,420 persons, i.e. 89.12% of the total number recorded, followed by persons with completed secondary education – 2,283, and those with higher or high level of education 88 (0.40%).



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From the aspect age structure, most of them are persons of 30 to 50 years of age – 10,767 (49.41%), followed by persons with less than 30 years of age – 7,214, whereas persons with over 50 years of age are least present – 3,810.

From the total number of registered persons, 14,669 Roma nationality members belong to the category of long-term unemployed persons.

- Regarding Roma national minority representation in the 2014 active employment policy measures, the situation is as follows:

ACTIVE EMPLOYMENT POLICY MEASURES	Roma
	Total
Active job seekers – AJS 1	2,037
Job seeking club	19
Employment fairs	499
Self-efficiency training	6
Functional elementary adult education	701
Training for the labour market	36
Development of entrepreneurship (training and consultation)	483
Self-employment subsidies	51
Self-employment subsidies for persons with disabilities	3
Public works for persons with disabilities	48
Training for the labour market for persons with disabilities	7



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Internship	1
Subsidised salaries for employing persons with disabilities and no work experience	2

- Moreover, employment consulting services (employability assessment and development of individual employment plan) included 16,035 Roma men and women, and services of informing and consulting on the potential career development included 93 persons, and selection and classification included 77 persons.
- In 2014, 1,592 Roma nationality members recorded with the National Employment Service, found jobs. Representation of women in the total employment figures stands at 39.76%, young people of up to 30 years of age participate with 37.63%, and persons with more than 50 years of age with 12.5%. Furthermore, unqualified and low-skill workers found employment most frequently – 68.91%, followed by persons with secondary education level – 29.52%, but a mere 1.57% of persons with higher or high education.
- In the course of 2014, the RS budget, according to the data from the NES, projected funds in the total amount of 44,109,189.00 dinars for the implementation of financial programmes of the active employment policy for the included numbers of Roma men and women (for the inclusion of 701 person into the functional adult education programme, 36 persons into training for the labour market, 51 persons received self-employment subsidies, there were 3 self-employment subsidies for persons with disabilities, for the inclusion of 48 persons into the public works programme for persons with disabilities, 7 persons were included into labour market training for persons with disabilities, 1 person into internship programme and 2 persons received salary subsidies for employing persons with disabilities and no work experience).

Additionally, 53 agreements on technical cooperation were signed between the NES and local government units, with projected funds of 2,584,000.00 dinars, aimed at including 18 members of Roma national minority.

- The 2015 NEAP (*RS Official Gazette, No 101/14*), defines aims of employment policy for 2015, which will be targeted towards:
  - Improving conditions on the labour market and improving labour market institutions
  - Encouraging employment and social inclusion of the hard-to-employ and providing support for regional and local employment policies
  - Improving workforce quality and making investments in human capital.





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- An overall inclusion is planned for 129,540 unemployed persons into active employment policy programmes and measures. When it comes to including persons into active employment policy measures, priority is still given to the unemployed belonging to the hard-to-employ category. Additionally, special service packages were prepared for certain categories of the hard-to-employ.
- The 2015 National Employment Action Plan reaffirms that members of Roma national minority are a category of unemployed persons in need of support in the process of work and social activation, integration or reintegration into the labour market. The aforementioned document implements programmes and active employment policy measures targeted towards encouraging the employing of Roma (apart from their priority inclusion into all programmes and measures in the employment policy system).
- The private sector employers will be entitled to subsidies for employing the unemployed persons belonging to the hard-to-employ category in new job posts (Roma are one of the five hard-to-employ categories to which the subsidies apply).
- Integration of social welfare payment recipients into the labour market is a new measure of the active employment policy in 2015, and has the character of employment subsidisation. This measure is aimed at activating the unemployed persons who are recipients of social welfare payments, toward their work and social integration and decreased dependency on social welfare payments. The target group is comprised of the unemployed persons registered with the National Employment Service who are recipients of social welfare payments (among which there is a certain number of Roma).
- Organising motivational training with the aim of Roma activation and inclusion into programmes of additional education and training, encouraging entrepreneurship and Roma employment (including the issuing of special public calls).
- It should be noted that recruitment advertisements/public calls for implementation of active employment policy measures were issued by the National Employment Service on 27 March 2015, including a special public call for self-employment subsidies in 2015 intended for the unemployed belonging to Roma nationality.
- Active employment policy measures, whether targeted towards those in need of social welfare, persons who due to their educational status or age are not competitive on the labour market or towards other categories of persons who are more disadvantaged on the labour market than the general population, are based on the principle of affirmative action and are a means of preventing social deprivation.

Project and program activities implemented with monitoring or participation from the MLEVSP/  
NES



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- Programme of support to new jobs for Roma men and women (implemented by OSCE Mission to the Republic of Serbia), in the framework of the results of 6 Projects *We Are Here Together – European Support for Roma Inclusion*, envisages support to business operators/initiatives through: purchasing equipment, durable goods, machines, appliances, tools etc; providing professional support for improvement of business and training for the newly employed Roma men and women.
- After the process of mapping the good practice in the employment of Roma men and women, i.e. in the selection procedure, by the OSCE Mission Selection Committee, decision was made to grant support to 17 businesses/initiatives, which will result in employment for 70 Roma men and women. The tender procedure for equipment procurement was completed for 5 businesses/initiatives, and the preparation procedure is in progress for the documents necessary to sign contracts with the remaining selected initiatives, after which the procurement procedure will be initiated for new equipment and training of the newly employed persons.
- In the framework of project *Strengthening social cohesion on the labour market through support to marginalized and vulnerable groups*, that receives funding from the pre-accession EU funds, IPA 2008 programming period (implementation period 2 June 2014 – 16 January 2016), and is implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), in cooperation with other UN agencies and partners from the Republic of Serbia, one of the components refers to providing financial and professional (mentoring) support for self-employment of members of vulnerable population groups through small-scale grant schemes.
- Roma civil society organisations will have the key role in the course of the implementation of the activities, particularly during the part referring to informing and activating Roma men and women, so the call for participation in the Roma men and women employment support programme was transmitted through various networks of civil society organisations, some of which consist only of Roma organisation.
- In the previous period, a consultative meeting was held with the representatives of the HELP organisation, which currently implements 2 projects in the Republic of Serbia: *Poverty reduction and the improvement of employment possibilities for marginalized and vulnerable population groups in Serbia* and *Poverty reduction and improvement of employment possibilities for marginalised and vulnerable population groups, focusing on Roma women*, which primarily target the members of Roma national minority.
- Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy will continue implementing its policy of equal opportunities on the labour market, including the activities aimed at achieving intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth, as a basis for better living standards, followed by harmonising and integrating sector policies, and cooperation between relevant institutions



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and partners, on all levels, towards the full implementation of the relevant strategic framework.

### 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 2014 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 2014 (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.*

- Targeted public policy measures, which are designed and implemented in order to provide housing support to Roma, primarily relate to measures for improvement of housing conditions for Roma in Roma settlements. These measures are provided for by the Action Plan for the implementation of Strategy for Improvement of Roma Status in the Republic of Serbia for the period between 2012 and 2014 and in 2014, and are implemented in the framework of the 2012 National Programme for the Republic of Serbia, which is funded from the pre-accession assistance funds (IPA 2012).

Given that settlements in the Republic of Serbia in which Roma are the predominant population are mostly or completely substandard, or in other words lack infrastructure, are not regulated by urban planning, and contain a high percentage of inadequate housing, goal 7 of the National Strategy for Social Housing – Improved Housing Conditions for the Inhabitants of Substandard Settlements is achieved by the implementation of these measures.

The stated measures are implemented with technical assistance from OSCE by implementing activities in the framework of the project We Are Here Together (hereinafter: the Project), which includes other components important for social inclusion of the Roma population, apart from the housing component.

- Activities pertaining to the housing component of the Project refer to the advancement of the information base about the housing conditions in Roma settlements in Serbia, and to the



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development of urban planning and technical documentation for the construction of the communal infrastructure and improvement of residential buildings in selected Roma settlements.

- In 2014, activities were implemented concerning the establishment of spatial (GIS) database for the monitoring of substandard Roma settlements on the territory of the Republic of Serbia (hereinafter: GISRN). The following results were achieved:
  - Data was received from the Republic Geodetic Authority (hereinafter: RGA) for the purposes of creating a database and a draft contract on cooperation with the RGA regarding the future use and maintenance of the GISRN was made.
  - Based on a public call, the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities was selected for collecting data about the substandard settlements on the municipal level. Within this activity, a data collection questionnaire was formulated and 16 researchers were trained, who collected data in most municipalities by the end of 2014.
  - At the end of 2014, the Mapsoft Company from Belgrade was selected to create the GISRN and train the employees to use it.
- The second part of activities refers to preparations for improvement of housing conditions in substandard Roma settlements in 21 municipalities that participated in the Project: Sombor, Odžaci, Novi Sad, Kovin, Pančevo, Belgrade municipalities of Zvezdara and Palilula, Kruševac, Smederevo, Kragujevac, Valjevo, Koceljeva, Knjaževac, Bujanovac, Prokuplje, Leskovac, Vranje, Žitorađa, Bojnik and Bela Palanka. Within these activities, the following results were achieved:
  - A study about the existing models for the improvement of Roma housing was made, on the basis of which, after consultations with representatives of local governments and civil society organizations, 13 applicable housing models were selected. They are presented in the Housing Models for Substandard Roma Settlements: Guidelines for Units of Local Governments, Civil Society Organizations and Roma Community.
  - An ecumenical humanitarian organization, which was the partner chosen to make a detailed analysis of the conditions in substandard Roma settlements in the selected municipalities, identified 101 Roma settlements in 21 municipalities, out of which data was collected for 61 substandard Roma settlements. The data required to define proper measures for the improvement of conditions in those settlements was collected, which also entails the assessment of necessary funds to implement these measures. The collected data



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referred to the characteristics of the houses, the property-legal status of the land, the socio-economic profile of the households and the quality of the infrastructure.

- A detailed assessment of the conditions in the stated substandard settlements was made in October 2014 and the results were presented in regional workshops.
- Substandard Roma settlements in need of urban planning were identified in consultations and meetings with all the relevant participants from the pilot municipalities, heads of municipal councils, representatives of urban development departments, Roma coordinators, etc. so that the settlements may undergo spatial planning, followed by the improvement of individual buildings and their legalisation.
- Contracts were signed with selected local government units and drafting of urban planning for nine settlements was initiated. Contracts for the development of technical documentation for 2013 IPA funded infrastructure projects were also signed.

### 5. 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 2014 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 2014 (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.*

- Pursuant to Article 11 of the Law on Healthcare and Social Care for Health on the Republic Level, within the efforts to improve health and healthcare for the groups of population exposed to a higher risk of disease since 2008, the Ministry of Health supported the project of introduction of female health mediators in the RS healthcare system.
- The role of female health mediators is to keep records of the health condition of the inhabitants of informal settlements, to work with them on raising awareness about the necessity of vaccinating children, and about the importance of a proper diet and hygienic habits. Female health mediators should provide a better insight to healthcare institutions about the conditions in these settlements,



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and should point out to the inhabitants the importance of timely visits to a doctor. A female healthcare mediator is not a healthcare worker (doctor, nurse); she connects the healthcare system and the citizens of informal settlements.

- Permanent institutional mechanisms are required in order to get to grips with the problems of equality and availability of healthcare services to vulnerable and marginalized persons. In the short and medium term, plans are made that female health mediators continue their work in Roma community, while in the long term the mediators are expected to rely on their training and experience and to take over the outreach programmes for other vulnerable and socially marginalized groups in the community, to the extent permitted by the funds.
- According to the pilot scheme, the mediators are retained by the Ministry of Health, as employees on the project, and their fees are paid from the project fund of the Ministry of Health. This status of (temporary) employees is not in accordance with the long-run institutional role that mediators should have.
- The Ministry of Health is planning to incorporate Roma health mediators into the healthcare profession in the framework of the existing categorization of healthcare workers in the system of primary healthcare. Besides, the Ministry should create a new job post of the Inclusion Consultant for the vulnerable and socially marginalized groups with of the Ministry of Health, so as to coordinate and monitor the work of health mediators. The Ministry of Health has the capacity to complete the systematization of healthcare workers and the new Consultant, i.e. to define the relevant reference conditions, the normative order and coefficients (of salaries) while the development of the legal regulation necessary to define the required education level and the programme for continuation of professional development for the mediators would entail technical assistance. The Ministry of Health is also asking for assistance so as to facilitate the monitoring and field work in the remote Roma settlements by purchasing a new motor vehicle for the Consultant.
- The criteria for the deployment of female mediators should be defined and harmonised with the interested parties (health centres, Roma NGOs, etc.). The criteria should follow a consistent approach. The current proposal envisages deployment of female mediators in the communities with more than 1,000 Roma (while the number of Roma covered by one mediator must not exceed 3,000 people). This increases the number of mediators from 75 to 94.

### The programme for continuation of professional development

- The mediators have had a number of training sessions in the framework of the pilot scheme, and 20 out of 75 mediators use Council of Europe programme for training in elementary mediation skills. The Ministry of Health should, in cooperation with state educational



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institutions, create a programme of constant professional development as support to the envisaged future professional role of the female mediators.

- Women from marginalized communities or settlements often find it challenging to continue their schooling after elementary school. Since the mediators themselves come from such communities, it is planned that this training should provide them with the secondary school certificate (professional development through training), which would provide further formal schooling to the mediators and support their further personal and professional development. The Ministry is asking for technical assistance to develop and organize a programme for the continued professional development of mediators.

### Inter-sector approach and exchange of data

- Health mediators, pedagogical assistants, municipal coordinators, social workers and other representatives of the authorities regularly visit Roma settlements and collect data about the local conditions and the status of individuals and families. Coordination and exchange of data between services on the local level is limited and because of there is double data collecting and a deficit of data which would help to specify the necessary work and funds. For example, health mediators collect a lot of data during their regular visits to households such as detailed information about all school age children in Roma settlements. If this data was exchanged with the local elementary schools this would enable schools to establish which children are not registered for school, and this would enable the schools and local services to decide on appropriate intervention. There is a whole array of opportunities for connecting, which is of importance for the durability of this scheme, and exchange of data would be mutually beneficial for several services.
- It is envisaged that the exchange of data on certain Roma settlements among local services should take place in the framework of a single geographical data system, which would cover more than 600 settlements in Serbia. The exchange of certain data between State representatives, or between institutions should stay strictly confidential and should be regulated by the law. While on the one hand it would protect the confidentiality of personal data, the exchange system would simultaneously create a regularly updated base of statistical data about the status of certain settlements.
- This statistical and not personal data would be available to ministries, local governments, the civil society, academic public and donors in the form of a public interface built into the information system and aimed at facilitating the planning, realization and monitoring of the programme and of the action policy.



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- The starting point for the creation of the system of geographical data on informal settlements would be a map of their locations and assigning of a unique reference to each settlement. This unique reference would facilitate the collection and analysis of data, as well as field work and establishing the work done by the public services. Drawing such maps would help local governments to define the boundaries of the informal settlements and to stop their constant expansion.
- Technical assistance would be required to establish the potential spectrum and the institutional framework of the Geographical data system, such as drafting legislation to regulate the exchange of information among state institutions, and preparing and creation of the system, including the necessary computer hardware and software and training. Special technical assistance would be provided to local government coordinators i.e. municipality coordinators in creating the maps of unofficial Roma settlements. The existing level of coordination between sectors is limited, e.g. few female mediators take part in regular local interdepartmental meetings on Roma inclusion with colleagues from other public services and civil society.
- The Ministry of Health, in close cooperation with all interested parties, would rely on the present positive experiences in making the relevant coordination mechanisms in other municipalities. It is expected that the coordination mechanisms would contribute to the planning and implementation of the local action plans. Technical assistance would be necessary to assess interdepartmental coordination experience on local level so as to establish models of positive experiences and help transfer such models to where applicable.
- The Republic of Serbia has adopted a number of national and international legal recourses for the protection of human and minority rights, regarding the functioning of the local state services, e.g. the 2010 Anti-Discrimination Law. The application of the stated legal commitments will require changes to the way services are organized and provided, like the attitude to inter-sector cooperation and problems of accessibility and equality for the vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Heads of local public services have the leading role in creating the culture of organization and service providing and should have the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure that service providing takes place in compliance with human rights. That is why it is envisaged that key people should receive training as part of their constant professional development resulting in the acquisition of the knowledge of the basic principles of human and minority rights and their practical application in service providing. In that manner they will be able to appreciate the value and application of differences management in the public services work. For a more efficient coordination between sectors, it is necessary that local public services understand everybody's role and duties and that services cooperate closely, on the directorate level as well.





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With the aim of achieving this kind of mutual understanding and team building, training would be organized at the relevant target municipalities, together with the heads of local services such as healthcare, education, social service, the police and local government. Technical assistance would be necessary to create and perform a programme for such training and to create training manuals and multimedia material.

- In the period between 1/5/2008 and 31/5/2014, the following results were achieved by the programme Implementation of the Action Plan on Healthcare for Roma 1802, project 0006:
  - 37,502 first visits to families were made
  - During the first visits 140,408 citizens were processed and registered, 46,453 women, 43,201 men and 50,754 women
  - 221,166 visits were made to family members in need of assistance to obtain personal identification documents, healthcare insurance, inclusion in the healthcare system (OBGYN examinations for women, selecting the doctor, vaccinating children and selecting the paediatrician), to enrol children into school, to obtain various kinds of assistance, (one-time financial assistance, Red Cross aid, state child support, scholarships etc.)
  - 170,278 visits were made to the families or family members with the aim of delivering health education training through a planned conversation and 55,200 units of educational material about health were handed out (fliers, brochures, calendars of vaccination and practical materials, handkerchiefs, condoms, tooth pastes, brushes, etc.)
  - Health education training was performed in small groups, lectures and posters were distributed. 31,808 adults were included, of which:
    - lectures for 6,265 people
    - workshops for 25,153 people
    - posters for 230 people
  - There was a total of 460,125 visits to families, family members in need of assistance, and visits to implement health education training through planned conversations, lectures, workshops.
    - Personal identification documents and healthcare identification documents for 16,330 citizens
    - 28,803 selected a doctor
    - 30,018 children were vaccinated



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- 2,719 adults were vaccinated (tetanus shots)
  - The health of 4,500 pregnant women and women who had recently given birth was checked
  - Physical examination for 12,617 women
  - 11,177 women selected their gynaecologist
  - 1,144 mammography examinations were performed
  - Physical examinations for school enrolment were performed for 7,710 children and they were enrolled into schools.
- In 2014, female health mediators attended the following educational gatherings and were informed about the following subjects:
    - Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) instrument of European Commission
    - Introductory comments about the development, adoption and implementation of the strategies for including Roma men and women in the European Union member states
    - Gender aspects of national strategies and action plans for inclusion Roma men and women
    - Implementation of strategies for inclusion of Roma men and women in member states of the European Union, examples of good practice in implementation and main challenges
    - Implementation of the Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2009 to 2015 – lessons learnt and examples of good practice
    - Process of making initial bases for the Strategy for the Improvement of the Status of Roma Men and Women in the Republic of Serbia for the period between 2015 and 2020
    - Conclusions and annexes to the Strategy for Inclusion of Roma Men and Women in the Republic of Serbia for the period between 2015 and 2020.
  - The training of mobile teams for Roma inclusion – European Support to Roma Inclusion, worth 4.8 million Euros, financed by the European Union and implemented by OSCE Mission to Serbia.
- October 2014
- Personal identification documents - Praxis
  - Introduction to business communication



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- Communication skills
  - Internal communication in mobile teams
  - Way to advance internal communication
  - Business environment
  - Challenges in the business environment
  - External communications
  - Rules and significance of successful written correspondence
  - Teamwork
  - Challenges in teamwork
  - Leadership
  - Making team decisions
  - Operational planning of mobile team work – dilemmas and recommendations
  - Significance of quality reporting
  - Instructions for mobile teams' reporting to OSCE
  - Summary
  - Training evaluation
- 
- The training sessions for female health mediators were organized on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2014 in Belgrade and in Niš by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF with support from Association of Paediatricians of Serbia and Association for Public Health from Belgrade
  - Child's Health, all health aspects (physical, mental, emotional health and the social surroundings in which the child lives)
  - What are all the things that affect health – surroundings in which the child grows up
  - Early child development – foundations (the significance of the first years of life for brain development, risks and protective factors, sections of development)
  - What are all the things that affect early development (preconception period, pregnancy, establishing a connection between the mother and the child, support of the family)
  - Family and health and child development (a pleasant and stimulating atmosphere in the family, recognizing health and other needs of the child, healthcare – physical examinations, vaccination, implementation of the recommendations of healthcare workers)
  - Parents' behaviour and child development – stimulation and encouragement of child development through good organization of family activities within the family
  - How the healthcare system works, which services are available and why one should use them
  - In which way the Roma community helps its members in case of sickness and in which way the healthcare system may help
  - Arrested development and referral to health structures – a case study



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- Parenting: Functions and characteristics of the family: Giving support to parents for better understanding of their role and responsibility in the process of child development
- Parenting styles: Setting the rules, age differences in disciplining and upbringing, physical punishment
- Family functioning - relations between the parents and the children
- Principles and skills for communication with babies and children – introducing recommendations about child development for parents and guardians, distribution of material for work with families
- Learning through play/Significance and value for development, creating an environment for play
- The way that play changes as the child grows
- Social inclusion as a stimulus for development and health intervention
- Motivation of parents to enrol children in nursery school and school – which are the obstacles in the Roma community and the way that mediators overcome it.

Support to female health mediator, the Ministry of Health and the Institute for Public Health Čačak

December 2014

- Healthcare and health insurance
- Social and legal family protection
- Reproductive health
- Health of children and the young
- Infectious diseases and chronic non-infectious diseases
- Diet for children and pregnant women
- Communication and code of practice
- Family violence and human trafficking
- Role of health mediators in the local community
- Work organization for healthcare centres and role of health mediators in the healthcare system
- Entry into the registry of births and personal identification documents
- Health education
- Registration of visits of health care mediators and monthly reporting
- Anti-Discrimination Law
- Women's rights and Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human rights
- Historical and cultural heritage of the Roma



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### ➤ Communication skills

Tabular reports on the work of female health care mediators are currently used according to the approval of State Secretary Professor Berislav Vekić.

### 6. ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND GENDER EQUALITY

*Please list any measures that were designed to support the fight against 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)*

- On 30 October 2014, the Government of the Republic of Serbia formed the Coordination Body for Gender Equality tasked with examining all issues and coordinating between state administration bodies regarding gender equality, and with promoting gender equality in the Republic of Serbia. The Coordination Body is chaired by Zorana Mihajlović, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, and its membership is comprised of the relevant Ministers and State Secretaries, Secretary General of the Government and the President of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce.

The Expert Group of the Coordination Body is charged with specific tasks related to the current issues. Its members are senior representatives of relevant Ministries and institutions. The Expert Group may include other bodies and organisations in its work. At the Body's initial meeting, at the end of December 2014, Rules of Procedure of the Coordinating Body for Gender Equality were enacted and the Secretary of the Body was nominated, appointed by the Government on 31 December 2014. The Body operates in accordance with Article 10 of Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), ratified by The Republic of Serbia on 31 October 2013 (RS Official Gazette – International Treaties, No 12/13).

- In its session held on 15 April 2015, the Coordinating Body adopted its 2015 Action Plan. Apart from working to improve the legal and policy framework in the Republic of Serbia and to ensure compliance with international standards in preserving the principle of gender equality, and to empower women in the sphere of economics – the Action Plan envisages the activities referring to multi-sector cooperation between organisations and services combating violence against women.



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- Article 23 of the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Labour Law (RS Official Gazette, No 75/14), is supplemented by paragraph 2, which stipulates that if the plaintiff (the employee or the person entering employment relationship for the first time) proves to have an arguable discrimination case in the course of discrimination proceedings before the competent court, the burden of proof that the behaviour in question did not constitute discrimination is placed on the defendant.
- The above provisions of the Law are harmonised with EU directives and facilitate the protection of employees and job seekers before competent courts in cases of discrimination on any grounds, which means better protection for Roma.
- On 7 October 2013, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Policy issued a public call for submissions of draft projects for the improvement Roma women status in the Republic of Serbia, intended for the civil society organisations. The call was issued in accordance with the mandate and the annual work plan of the former Gender Equality Directorate, and in relation to the goals of the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Promoting Gender Equality (RS Official Gazette, No 15/09), the Action Plan thereof dated 2010 (RS Official Gazette, No 67/10) and the concluding observations of the UN Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (*CEDAW*) dated July 2013, during the second and third periodical reports delivered to this UN body by the Republic of Serbia. Project funding secured from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, i.e. the budget of the former Gender Equality Directorate, budgetary position 481.
- 60 draft projects were submitted within the deadline for the public call. The Commission, formed by the Ministry decision 119-01-205/2013-05, concluded that 52 projects met the requirements, and proceeded to examine and assess them. 5 selected projects received funding in the total amount of 1,979,958 dinars:
  - 1) Project of the Humane Team association from Belgrade, titled Equality for all (Reg.No. 1590-2) in the amount of 380,000 dinars
  - 2) Project Join to Hear, See and Know of the Academic Initiative Forum 10, Novi Pazar (Reg.No. 1590-38) in the amount of 500,000 dinars
  - 3) Project of Powerful Women Association of Sombor, titled Reinforcing the Capacities of a Roma Female NGO (Reg.No.1590-56) worth 258,358 dinars
  - 4) Project Hands of Friendship of the Roma Development Centre from Arandelovac (Reg.No. 1590 -16) in the amount of 395,600 dinars
  - 5) Project of the Prokuplje Roma Association titled Sexual Education for Roma Women (Reg.No. 1590-24) in the amount of 446,000 dinars.



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- The selected associations and organisations received payments in the amount of 611,820 dinars in December 2013, and the remaining 1,368,138 dinars on 17 January 2014.
- Project implementers were not obliged to submit periodical reports, only the final report. After the expiry of the implementation period, and examining the submitted documentation, it was ascertained that by the end of August 2014 (the deadline for reporting) only two reports were submitted, and those were the reports of the Human Team Association from Belgrade and Powerful Women from Sombor. In the meantime reports arrived from Academic Initiative Forum 10 and Prokuplje Roma Association (only Roma Development Centre from Aranđelovac failed to submit their report, and charges were instigated against them for failure to fulfil contractual obligations, on 30 December 2014). The results of the projects are as follows:
  - Project of the Powerful Women Association from Sombor was implemented between 22 January and 22 July 2014 Roma settlements on the entire territory of Sombor municipality. The Assistance Office operated within the project, and fieldwork was organised in Roma villages. The Project envisaged providing assistance primarily to Roma women, but to other inhabitants of Roma settlements as well, in the form of informing them on their rights to social and health benefits, and providing support in exercising these rights (for example, in acquiring health insurance identification cards and other documents), writing petitions, complaints, and business plans.
  - Project of the Humane Team from Belgrade was implemented between December 2013 and February 2014 in eight towns, in which survey was conducted as to the status of Roma population, especially of Roma women. Activities were accompanied by a media presentation with the aim of pointing to their problem which was the goal of the project.
  - Academic Initiative Forum 10 implemented their project in six municipalities (Novi Pazar, Sjenica, Tutin, Nova Varoš, Prijepolje and Priboj) with the aim of identifying key problems of Roma women in these municipalities, presenting them to the public (documentary film, campaign, public discussions, meetings) gathering and encouraging all local participants to act toward solving those problems.
  - Prokuplje Roma Association dedicated their project to improving the health condition of Roma population, especially of women and children by promoting healthy lifestyles. The project's special goal was to raise the levels of health culture of young Roma women of 15 to 30 years of age. Project was implemented in Roma settlements of Mala Guba and Džungla in Prokuplje. The project activities included 30 Roma women.



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- Apart from the above mentioned, the Ternipe Roma women association from Pirot received donations for activities in 2014 of about one million dinars to implement project Young Roma Women Combating Human Trafficking. The project applied to the municipalities of: Pirot, Vranje, Leskovac, Surdulica and Bujanovac. Several thousand flyers were distributed containing information regarding human trafficking, workshops were organised, street and media actions and teams were formed for the purposes of peer education.
- According to the 2011 census data, there are 257 867 persons living in Niš, of which 51 per cent are women (30 per cent of women are Roma, women from rural areas, single mothers and women with disabilities). Apart from the safe house for victims of violence against women, the City Centre for Social Work of Niš organised activities with violent offenders against women, and provided an SOS telephone line in Serbian and Romani languages intended for victims of violence against women and domestic violence.
- On 4 March 2014, the State Prosecutorial Council initiated cooperation with the Judicial Academy on joint training sessions for holders of public prosecution office and judges, regarding anti-discrimination and violence against women, including women from the marginalised population groups, including Roma women. In this regard, and in accordance with Article 9 of the Law on Judges (RS Official Gazette, No 116/08, 58/09 – CC Decision, 104/09, 101/10, 8/12 – CC Decision, 121/12, 124/12 – CC Decision 101/13) judges have the right to professional development and training, conducted pursuant to Article 5 of the Law on the Judicial Academy (RS Official Gazette, No 104/09 and 32/14 – CC Decision).

In accordance with the aforementioned, the Judicial Academy developed programmes of basic and continuous training and organised seminars for courts of general jurisdiction and misdemeanour courts, in cooperation with the *UNWomen*.

- As part of this training, special attention was given to the *CEDAW* Committee general recommendations, to the discrimination against women and stereotyping (of Roma men and women). A judicial practice survey was conducted, guidelines were issued containing: statistics, good practice examples (guidelines for efficient case resolution), domestic and international legal framework. Judges of courts of appeal and of the Supreme Court of Cassation and of the Ombudsman in the Republic of Serbia delivered lectures.
- In the final year of this cycle, the Judicial Academy, with support from the *UNDP* and in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy prepared and conducted comprehensive training in two parts: 1) general, basic level with theoretical concepts and legal framework, and 2) the criminal and civil part.

Concerning this, special training sessions for judges and prosecutors were delivered, titled Women Who Killed their Abusers and, on that occasion, cooperation was established with centres for social work of the Republic of Serbia so that in addition to criminal sanctions, the





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practice of sending abusers for psycho-social treatment may be established. In February 2014, the next series of training sessions commenced. The sessions referred to the Law on Prevention of Harassment at Work (mobbing) (RS Official Gazette, No 36/10) and were intended for judges of the Higher Court in Belgrade.

### 7. THE DECADE IN A REVIEW

*Approaching the end of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 initiative, we would appreciate your reflection on its overall implementation in your country. Therefore, please kindly consider to list up to five principal achievements and five shortcomings in the design and implementation of the Decade National Action Plans/National Roma Integration Strategies.*

*Such achievements and shortcomings might include policy design, policy implementation, budgeting, specific institutionalized practices, monitoring and evaluation processes, cooperation with key stakeholders. Please be as specific as possible.*

- Having in mind that the employment policy segment is just one of the 13 fields of intervention of the strategic framework for the improvement of Roma status in the RS, and the fact that improvement indicators of the labour market primarily depend on the economic and investment environment, i.e. on creating new jobs, we are pointing out the 5 basic challenges with which we are faced when dealing with the integration of Roma national minority into the labour market:
  - High percentage of unqualified or low-skilled Roma workers
  - High percentage of early school dropouts and lack of necessary qualifications, skills and knowledge for better competitiveness on the labour market
  - Difficult access to better paid jobs
  - High percentage of grey economy workers
  - Significant levels of dependence on social welfare payments.



## PROGRESS REPORT 2014

- When speaking about achievements, what is definitely of key importance is the establishing and strengthening of interdepartmental cooperation between relevant institutions, cooperation between the Government sector and Roma civil society organisations, strengthening the capacity of local government units to understand the local market needs, and a more significant influx of financial and expert assistance through program and project activities. Furthermore, the Law on the RS 2015 Budget, allocates significantly larger funds for active employment policy measures in the amount of 2.8 billion dinars (in 2014 allocated funds amounted to 600 million dinars), which has a direct influence on the type and inclusion of the unemployed persons into measures of active employment policy (including Roma men and women).
- In the following period, it is necessary to reinforce the existing mechanisms of cooperation aiming at a consistent, synchronised and continuous implementation of a new strategic framework, i.e. the Decade after 2015.

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**Signed by Deputy Director  
of the Office for Human and Minority Rights**

др Драгољуб Ацковић