

National Agency for Roma - National Strategy for Improving Roma Condition Executive summary

EDUCATION:

- In 2007 the Ministry of Education adopted the Order **1540** which prohibits any form of segregation in the pre-university education system. Subsequently, the Ministry of Education, approved the Methodology for preventing and eliminating school segregation of Roma children. Furthermore, the Ministry issued an internal regulation outlining that schools and school inspectors must take action to identify and eliminate any segregation practices.
- *Social Inclusion Project (SIP)*

Social Inclusion Project seeks to improve the living conditions and to increase the social inclusion of Roma in four prioritised areas, inclusively education. SIP is financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and correspondingly co-financed by the Romanian Government For example, the component regarding Inclusive Early Childhood Education Program is financed with 6 mil euros and it will be implemented through a partnership between National Agency for Roma and the Ministry of Education. The program is targeting 120 of Roma communities that were selected in which kindergartens would be built or rehabilitated in order to ensure a good quality early education for Romani children.

- As the result of the implementation of the IDF GRANT designed for sustaining the development of the institutional capacity for the development of a Roma social inclusion programmes such as preparation of draft policies in the four prioritized areas, a draft policy in education would be finalized recently.
- The Protocol of collaboration between OSI Roma Health Program, Roma Education Fund and NAR was signed last month in order to offer scholarships for Roma students that are applying for Medical Schools at academic and secondary school.

▪ EDUCATION OF ROMANI CHILDREN- THE WAY TO A GUARANTEED EMPLOYMENT

It is a trans-national project which it would be implemented during 2008-2011 by NAR in partnership with Roma Education Fund, Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, Resources Centre for Roma Communities and Pakiv Association from Romania.

The main objective of this project is to increase the level of education of Romani children in the rural and urban area for developing human resources, which later will participate on the flexible and modern labour market as the result of the improved quality of education and reduction of the school abandon.

Specifically, the expected results of the project are the following:

- Equal access to education of 1200 Roma pupils from VII and VIII grade which are most exposed to the early abandon of school. The result will be achieved by offering additional education preparation for passing the national tests.
- 600 Roma students from grade VII will continue their studies in the secondary stage as the result of the mentorship, personnel development, orientation and guidance activities
- Retention of 750 Roma students in the 9th grade in the secondary school by facilitating their adaptation to the new educational environment.
- Preparation of 450 students of Arts and Crafts School to gain access to labour market throughout scholarships programs for excellence in studies.
- Preparation of 2400 Roma adults who early abandoned school to benefit of programs such as "Second Chance" which have as aim to support Roma adults to gain access to labour market by ensuring them basic education.

▪ SCHOOL A CHANCE FOR EVERYONE

The project proposes several measures to prevent the early abandon of school of vulnerable groups in 20 counties of Romania. This trans-national project would be implemented in partnership with International Association Step by Step and also Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, the Centre for Education and Personal Development- Step by Step and Agency for Community Development "Together". The activities implemented during 2008-2011 would contribute:

- To improve participation of Roma children, poor and disabled children at primary and secondary level.
- To diminish school abandon

- To realise a collaboration and networking mechanisms among the actors implicated in educational issues

EMPLOYMENT

A protocol signed between the National Agency for Employment (NAE) and the National Agency for Roma in 2005 established the framework to implement joint actions to improve the employment situation of Roma. In August 2005, the National Agency for Employment in cooperation with the National Agency for Roma and with the support of local authorities initiated and conducted the “**Employment Caravan for Roma**” with the purpose to inform Roma ethnics about their rights and duties, as well as about the services they can benefit in order to become employed. Following the organization of job markets, the number of Roma ethnic employed was as follows: 1129 in 2005; 1,116 in 2006 and 1,187 in 2007.

In March 2008, NAR successfully applied for three employment projects to European Social Fund, projects that are targeting the increasing of Roma participation on the labour market.

1. THE PARTICIPATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS TO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY.

This project would be implemented during 2008-2011 by NAR in collaboration with 8 partners¹, namely several governmental bodies and NGOs which have expertise on the situation of vulnerable groups. The main goal of the project is the empowerment of the vulnerable groups to be included on the labour market by developing their professional, vocational and entrepreneurial skills.

The target groups of this project are the following vulnerable groups:

- 9800 of Roma people which suffer social exclusion from all social services, such as education, health care and housing
- 7000 detained people or who recently were/would be released from detention
- 1200 drug addictive people who are following recovery treatments.
- 1000 women who suffered domestic violence

¹ National Anti-Drugs Agency, National Agency for Family Protection, National Administration of Penitentiaries, The Foundation of Penal Justice Reform, Association of Romanian Group for Defending Human Rights, Association Towards Europe Targoviste, Foundation for Social Development of Roma-Ramses and Transcena Association.

- 1000 young people which left the institutional system for child protection

2. TOGETHER ON LABOUR MARKET

The project is a pilot and trans-national project and it will be implemented in 8 localities in partnership with Fundacion Secretariado Gitano from Spain during the period 2008-2010. In the following period 2010-2013 the project would be multiplied at national level. The target group are 6770 Roma people between 16-64 years old and Roma young people between 14 and 16 years old.

The main object of this project is to promote social inclusion of Roma people in the employment area at national level by implementation of ACCEDER model in Romania, which was a best practice program funded by European Social Fund and implemented in Spain during 2000-2006.

3. FOR A BETTER LIFE

The main objective is to increase the participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market and to promote the social inclusion of Roma by developing the structures and specific activities of the social economy by means of Regional Centres of Human Resources for Social Economy. This project would be implemented during 2008-2011 in partnership with Fondazione Brodolini and Conform S.R.L. from Italy and National Organization for Disabled People from Romania

The project would target the professional and personal development of vulnerable groups throughout vocational training in order to facilitate their insertion on the labour market. At the same time their self-esteem would be enhanced as the result of mentorship actions.

The target groups are 1000 of Roma people, 800 persons with minimum income and 200 disabled people. Moreover, 50% of the target groups are representing women and 15% people between 55-64 years old.

HEALTH CARE

- **National Conference of Health Mediators**

National Agency for Roma in collaboration with Public Health Ministry organized two national conferences which were attended by 350 health mediators in order to create an institutional framework for changing information and expertise in the Roma health care area.

Specifically, between 12th and 13th November 2007 at the first National Conference of Health Mediators there were discussed the role of health mediators in monitoring cases of discrimination in hospitals, such segregation of Romani women in hospitals, and methods of institutional intervention in cases of discrimination in health area. In February 2008, the second meeting of National Conference of Health Mediators had as main theme the Impact of Public Policies in the Health Area on Roma Communities.

- NAR held several discussions with Ministry of Public Health for creating the Order of the health mediators and changing the

HOUSING

- NAR already finalized the draft on the inclusive public policy on housing. This draft was presented during a meeting with Mr. Laszlo Borbely, the Minister of Housing.
- During 2007 National Agency for Roma initiated partnerships with institutions and NGO's regarding community development programmes in 8 following communities: **Cetatea de Balta**, Alba Iulia county, **Brăhăsesti**, Galati county, **Pitesti**, Arges county, **Cuza Voda**, Constanta county, **Nistru**, Tautii Magherus, Maramures county, **Chitila** district from Bucharest, **Sector 4** from Bucharest and **Lipscani** area from Sector 1, Bucharest. Thus, on 12th July 2007 NAR hold a press conference for launching the 8 community development programmes regarding the improvement of infrastructure, such as housing, drinking water and sewage system, electricity and gas access.
- In February 2008 NAR signed the Framework Agreement on Housing with the Ministry of Housing in order to implement draft on the inclusive public policy on housing. According to this agreement on short term NAR and the ministry will implement from 2008 a pilot project which has as objective to build social houses for Roma people in 16 localities from 8 regions of Romania.

- Within SIP there were selected 48 Roma communities and other 40 will be selected in order to develop and improve their infrastructure (roads, electricity, sewage and drinking water system). (11,7 mil Euros)
- ID Programme:
 - It is implementing at this moment in all 8 regions of the country. There are implemented 58 projects in more than 400 localities for achieving the main goals of the programme Value is 3,3 mil Euros. It is regarding the ID papers for individuals and legal aspect of property.

IDF GRANT designed for sustaining the development of the institutional capacity for the development of a Roma social inclusion programmes such as preparation of draft policies in the four prioritized areas: educ, emply, health and housing. It is a grant funded by World Bank and co financed by Romanian government

Value 350 0000 \$

The result is the development of the institutional capacity- NAR obtained 25 mil euros funds from ESF. No baseline study...contracting company to

Cross cutting issues: gender, youth, anti-discrimination

1.Gender

- **National Strategy for Roma - all measures are targeting Roma women**
- **All the projects funded by ESF are targeting 50% Roma women**
- **National Conference of Roma Women.**

Between 16th -18th March 2008 took place the first national event organized by Romanian governmental institution for Romani women, namely *National Conference of Romani Women*. At this event more than 80 Romani women participated. They were from various fields of activity and of different age. Throughout this event NAR created an open forum for Romani women to analyze the impact of the existent public policies and additional programs developed and implemented in the area of gender equality and within the National Strategy for Improving the Situation of Roma adopted by G.D. 520/2004 and Roma Decade, instruments that have an important impact of Romani women situation.

1. Youth

- First National Roma Youth Conference

2. Anti-discrimination

- Stop Prejudice against Roma- campaign funded by PHARE program and implemented between 2007-2008 by General Secretary of Government and NAR. In May 2008 the campaign was awarded with the best ex competition social campaign by Civil Society Gala.
- In the period 2008-2009 the DOSTA campaign would be implemented by NAR. This campaign would be implemented with the collaboration of Council of Europe.