



**REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA -  
PROGRESS REPORT FOR 2010  
ON THE “INTERNATIONAL  
DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION  
2005-2015”  
INITIATIVE  
prepared by NCCEII**



## Strategic documents:

- the Framework Programme for Integration of the Roma into Bulgarian Society 2010-2020, adopted in May 2010 and
- the National Action Plan for the “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”, and also on a
- number of sector-specific strategic and operational documents, or parts thereof, relating to the integration of the Roma.
- Data on ethnicity are collected only on the principle of **voluntary self-determination** and in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Personal Data Protection Act and the Protection from Discrimination Act, which are synchronized with European legislation.



## Priority and financing



- ◆ The state has defined **six priorities**: education, health, housing, employment, culture, protection from discrimination and creation of conditions for equal opportunities.
- ◆ Implementation of activities under the National Action Plan /NAP/ on the “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” Initiative is ensured with funds from the **budgets of individual ministries** and organizations for 2010, from the **Operative Programmes**, from other **European and international programmes and projects**

The actions on the separate priority areas will be carried out by two mutual complementarity approaches:

- ◆ Integrating the rights, needs and problems of the Roma in general governmental and sectoral policies (mainstreaming).
- ◆ Promoting positive actions to overcome various forms of inequality in all sectors of society.(targeting)

### **Model for allocation of management responsibilities:**

- ◆ Special attention is being paid to improving the model for distribution of management responsibilities between executive authorities; improvement of coordination mechanisms with civil society structures; including municipalities in the implementation of policies for Roma integration;

# PRIORITY “EDUCATION”

In Bulgaria, access to education is free.



Strategy for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities was updated.

- Activities in consulting the schools in drawing up annual plans for implementation of the Strategy were initiated and supported .
- Project: “Full-day Organization of Elementary Training” is implemented. 94 proposals for a total ( BGN 800,000) -the system needs a full-day organization of elementary training (and according to the employer’s assesement targeted to the support of educational integration of children and students from ethnic minorities in accordance with the needs of regional specifics).
- Programme “Youth in Action” 8 projects (EUR 139,545)
- Project: “Supporting the institutionalization of the desegregation process in Bulgaria” (300,000 eu)



## PRIORITY “EDUCATION”:



Strategy for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities was updated.

The Center for Educational Integration of Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities, 79 projects worth BGN 576,148.96, were funded under the four priority programmes:

- “Ensuring equal access to quality education for children and students from ethnic minorities”,
- “Preserving and developing the cultural identity of children and pupils from ethnic minorities”,
- “Creating conditions for successful socialization of children and young people from ethnic minorities” and
- “Supporting the process of turning cultural diversity into a source and a factor for mutual understanding and moral development of children and creating an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance and understanding”.

## **PRIORITY “HEALTH CARE”:**

**Health Strategy for Disadvantaged Persons from Ethnic Minorities. Implementing programs:**

**The main risk factors for Roma health have been identified as:**

- ◆ **Mass unemployment, the consequence of which is that only a small part of the Roma population is health insured;**
- ◆ **Poverty and thus inability to pay health insurance contributions and to buy medicines;**
- ◆ **Poor nutrition;**
- ◆ **Lack of basic sanitary conditions;**
- ◆ **Bureaucracy of the medical system and direct or indirect discrimination;**
- ◆ **Lack of medical/ health prevention activities;**
- ◆ **Low educational level, including health education.**

### **Activities:**

- **Numerous activities on prevention among the Roma population: screening and early diagnosis of cancer, cardiovascular and hereditary diseases, conducting free medical examinations, performing laboratory tests etc., incl. mobile offices**
- **Emergency immunization in relation to the epidemic of measles.**
- **Implementing: "Improving the Control of Tuberculosis in Bulgaria(BGN 5563780): activities among the 12 largest Roma communities.**

# PRIORITY “HEALTH CARE”:

- Implementing “Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS”(1054616 bgn.):  
**as a good practice : creation of eight health and social services-activities under the programme among the 10 largest Roma communities**
- **as a good practice: successful operation of health mediators** – preventing unwanted and early pregnancy, about the dangers of early pregnancy for both the mother and the baby, and the dangers of consanguineous and early marriage; about the importance of and motivation for regular immunization; about ways of preventing common infectious and non-infectious diseases, support to registration

The main activities in 2010 were focused on prevention among the Roma population, screening and early diagnosis of cancer, cardiovascular and hereditary diseases, conducting free medical examinations, performing laboratory tests etc., including using mobile units delivered under Phare projects. Advocacy training for Roma students in medical universities-the project is part of the program for supporting the education of Roma in Medical Universities in Eastern Europe “Roma Leadership in Health”

The project “Informed and Healthy” is also being implemented under Operational Programme “Human Resources”, targeting persons with specific health risks and vulnerable persons from different ethnic groups.

**106 health mediators from Roma origin from 57 municipalities**





## PRIORITY “HOUSING”:



### National programme: “Improving the Living Conditions of the Roma in Bulgaria”

- Improving the current and building new technical infrastructure, which were used to improve sewage networks, rehabilitate street water mains, build household sanitation, etc.(bgn7600)

### Operational Programme “Regional Development 2007-2013”:

- “Support for the provision of appropriate and cost-effective educational, social and cultural infrastructure, contributing to the development of sustainable urban areas” and
- “Support to ensure adequate and cost-effective educational infrastructure, contributing to sustainable local development” were implemented in 2010.

A key criterion for project approval was regard for the needs of disadvantaged groups, including the Roma. Projects of 86 municipalities of urban areas and 178 smaller municipalities were supported.



## PRIORITY “EMPLOYMENT”:



- ◆ 17,958 persons were covered in the implementation of the measure on increasing the competitiveness of the Roma in the labour market:
- ◆ National Programme “From Social Assistance to Employment” (BGN 908,000), including 5 767 unemployed
- ◆ National Programme “Activate the Inactive” (BGN 325,000) At the end of 2010, under programme 91 labour mediators of Roma origin were working at 69 local Labour Directorates:
- ◆ **As a good practice - labour mediators.** As a result of the successful operation of 10,098 inactive persons were motivated and have registered as job seekers in the Labour Offices, and 1 529 са устроени на работа
- ◆ **As a good practice: special job fairs** aimed at the Roma with the aim of facilitating their access to information and supporting the employment of unemployed Roma population- започналите работа лица е 411

# PRIORITY “PROTECTION FROM DISCRIMINATION AND CREATION OF EQUAL CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES”:

- ◆ Ministry of Interior, with training on: “Human rights and ability to work with representatives of Roma communities”, “Identifying public order and security problems in local Roma communities”, “Traditions, customs and culture of Roma communities”, “Use of a problem-oriented approach to ensure order and security in Roma communities”, etc. The study of topics involves solving specific cases of practical aspect relevant to work in a multicultural environment.
- ◆ Commission on Protection from Discrimination has reported a number of decisions on legal proceedings relating to alleged discriminatory practices along ethnic lines, which confirms the sustainability of incentive measures and equality policies.



## PRIORITY “CULTURE”



In 2010, as in previous years, opportunities were provided for the development and promotion of Roma culture and identity, by supporting the celebration of important cultural events and the organization of ethnic festivals. Joint projects of municipalities and community centers were implemented, aimed at including the Roma in the overall cultural life of the respective areas. Efforts to restore the Roma Theatre continue.



# Migration



Free movement and migration of Bulgarian citizens, including citizens of Roma origin are moderate in nature. Returnees of Roma origin who have failed to integrate on the labour market in other countries of the European Union and are unable to meet their basic living needs in the country receive support under the Social Assistance Act in Bulgaria. Bulgaria does not generate statistics on migration of Roma from Bulgaria by ethnic principle, but by unofficial data, there is an increased presence of our citizen's in the following countries: Greece, Spain, Germany, Great Britain, to a lesser extent France, Italy, Belgium and Scandinavia.

# Suggestions for improvement

- ◆ To ensure the budget for the programme
- ◆ Using the opportunities, which have been afforded by the Operational programmes to the maximum, through coordinative, complex, intersectoral approach between the different operational programmes.
- ◆ Improvement of progress surveillance system on the basis of precise indicator system (complex)
- ◆ Development of a communication strategy (More attention should be paid on communication)



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION !**