

GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



NATIONAL AGENCY FOR ROMA

Presentation of the National Agency for Roma

The National Agency for Roma (NAR) is a specialized body of central public administration, with legal personality, subordinated to the Government and coordinated by the General Secretariat of the Government.

NAR was set up in 2004 through Governmental Ordinance no 78/2004, approved by Law no 7/2005 and is organized and operates according to Governmental Decision no 1703/2004, amended and supplemented.

NAR initiates, participates and promotes activities, projects and sectoral programs to improve the situation of Roma people, in cooperation with institutions and nongovernmental organizations.

The main object of activity of NAR is to ensure the complementarities of various public policies for Roma people.

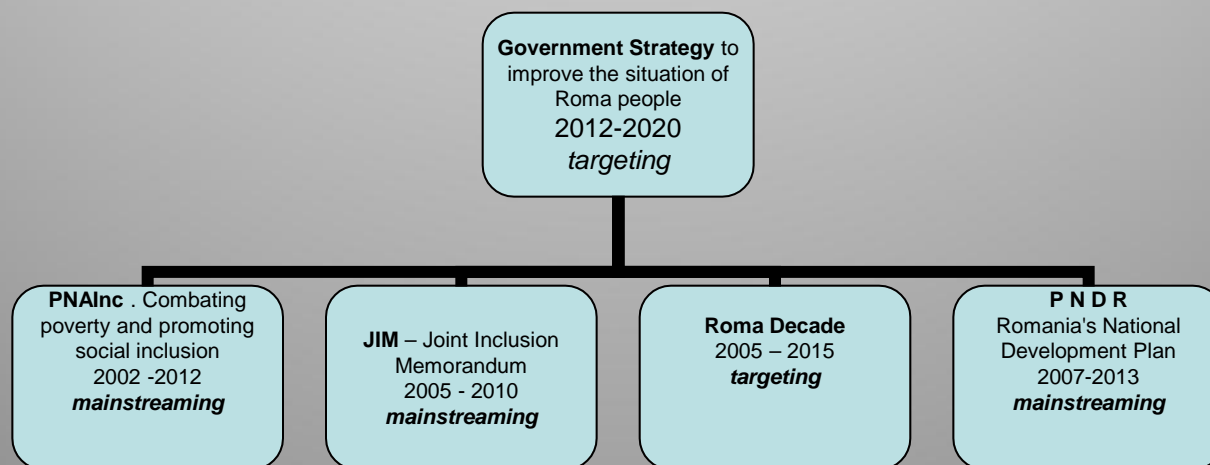
National Agency for Roma is based on two concepts: transparency and integrated programs.

Public policies for the Roma minority in Romania

Generally all national and European public policies that included the Roma minority, developed during 2001-2007, whether focused (targeting) or integrating (mainstreaming) were developed for long-term (10 years).

The strategies for Roma minority include guidelines in the following areas: **education, health, vocational education and employment, housing and infrastructure, accompanied by measures to combat discrimination and promote gender equality.**

The action plans for implementing the strategies are developed for the short term (4 years).



Social inclusion policy of the Government of Romania

- it is based on a proactive approach
- aims at **increasing the overall standard of living** of the population and stimulating earnings from employment by facilitating employment and promoting inclusive policies with addressability to all vulnerable groups: Roma minority, disabled people, women, street children, 18 years old young people leaving state protection institutions, elderly people.

The **main programming documents on Roma inclusion** are:

- **at national level** – The Strategy of the Government of Romania for the Inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020, enacted by the Government Decision No. 1221/2011
- **at European level** - Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Roma Inclusion Strategy

- on December 14, 2011 was published the **Government Decision No. 1221/2011 approving the Strategy of the Government of Romania for the Inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020**
- the Strategy was elaborated by the NAR's experts with the consultations of the civil society and others ministries having specific responsibilities in this field.
- the Strategy is the first document developed by our country in accordance with the requirements of EU Framework Strategy for Roma
- the **main differences** in relation to the old Strategy are **responsibility and financing**: the activities scheduled in the document will be committed and supported by the ministries responsible, concurrently with the use of European financial instruments and, where appropriate, by attracting other funds from other donors or government loan agreements.

Roma Inclusion Strategy

Specificity of the new Strategy lies in carry on affirmative provisions regarding non-discrimination and quality education in education field; prevention provisions in health, and vocational trainings and counseling services in employment

Directions for action:

Education

-Employment

-Health

-Housing and small infrastucture

-Culture

-Social infrastructure - Child protection

- Justice and public order

- Community administration and development

Monitoring mechanism

Financial resources allocated to the measures included in the public policies for Roma people

During the period 1999-2010 have been allocated pre and post accession funds, reimbursable and non reimbursable funds (grants), totalling **157.3 million Euros**, as follows:

- **134.4 million Euros** grants, out of which:
 - **118.1 million Euros** EU funds (**87.88%**);
 - **16.3 million Euros** from the state budget funds (**12.12%**).
- **22.9 million euro** reimbursable funds from BIRD.

Pre-accession funds

During the period 1999 – 2008

- **298 projects** budgeted with **38.6 million Euros**, out of which **35.1 million Euros** from PHARE funds and **3.5 million Euro** as national contributions.

State Budget

- **20 projects** with a budget of **0,065 million Euros** from RAXI fund;
- **13 projects** with a budget of **0,085 million Euros** from counterpart fund;
- **45 projects** with a budget of **3.4 million Euros** from the Government contribution.

PHARE grant:

- **220 projects** with a budget of **35.1 million Euros** from PHARE funds in 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004-2006.

Reimbursable funds. Social Inclusion Programme (SIP)

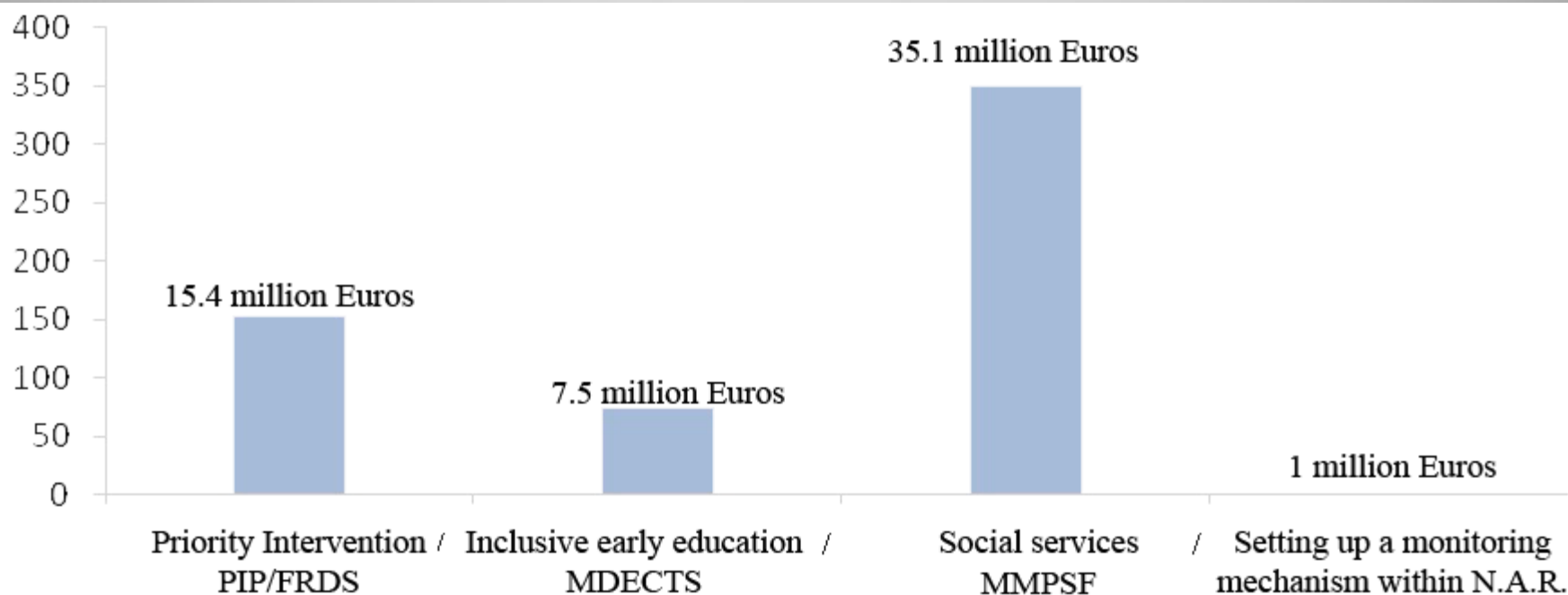
On July 4, 2006 was signed the Memorandum for a loan from the **BIRD**, with a budget of **59 million Euros** in order to finance exclusively the project on social inclusion of vulnerable groups and disadvantaged communities.

Implementing SIP through **133 projects** with a budget of **22.9 million Euros**, as follows:

- **106 projects** with a budget of **15.4 million Euros** for the development and infrastructure improvements, implemented by Romanian Social Development Fund;
- **27 projects** with a budget of **7.5 million Euros** for the construction and rehabilitation of kindergartens for children, implemented by The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

SIP was implemented in Romania until 2011

Reimbursable funds. Social Inclusion Programme (SIP)



ESF projects implemented by NAR

National Agency for Roma implemented **6 strategic projects** at national level: these have an implementation period of **3 years** and a total value over **22.2 million Euros**, out of which over **EUR 18.6 million** contributions from the European Union and **3.6 million Euro** national contributions.

PA2 – “Linking lifelong learning and labour market, preventing and correcting early school leaving” have been contracted **2 projects** totalling over **6.4 million Euros**, of which **5.2 million Euros** representing EU contribution and **1.2 million Euros** representing national contribution.

PA6 - Promoting social inclusion, **4 projects** have been contracted with an amount of **15.8 million Euros**, out of which **12.2 million Euros** representing EU contribution and **3.6 million Euros** representing national contribution.

Strategic projects are implemented in **541 communities**.

Initial number of beneficiaries - over 37,000 people (70% represented by Roma people, meaning more than 25,000 Roma people)

Final results of the six ESF projects

63,738 people (in regard to 37,000 people initially scheduled within the financing contracts, and 70% represented by Roma people), benefited from project activities as follows:

2,300 scholarship students;

- 1415 students beneficiaries of the "school after school" programme;
- 4,000 students beneficiaries of the "second chance" programme;
- 6,413 qualified persons, of which 1,724 persons employed;
- 1,547 people have completed training courses;
- 49,610 people receiving counseling, vocational guidance and information, of which 9,015 students;
- 102 social enterprises created and 1,100 new jobs created.

ANR as partner within ESF projects

In the same time, NAR is/was a partner in the implementation of other four projects, two in education and two in social inclusion, together with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, municipalities, NGOs and transnational partners from Greece, Portugal and Hungary:

-Equality through difference. Roma women's access on the labor market

-Social inclusion of Roma women

-Fem.RRom.Improvement of roma women access on the labor market and supporting social economy: promoting and developing of integrated services by creating women cooperatives, ensuring the access to education and developing of occupancy specialized and personalized services

- Education, our chance for a better future!

Technical Working Group

At NAR initiative and with the support of the European Commission, during the SOP HRD Monitoring Committee meeting of 22 October 2009, it has decided to set up a Technical Working Group to support access of Roma people to the operations financed by European Social Fund through SOPHRD.

One of the main tasks of the Working Group refers to gather and analyze information on the 102 projects focused on Roma people, on order **to identify the number of Roma beneficiaries of projects financed by the ESF and to check their sustainability, as well as the problems that Roma communities are facing.**

Preliminary analysis was presented to the European Commission on 1 March 2012 and the final report was presented to the HRD Monitoring Committee in May 2012.

NAR solutions for a better use of EU funds

Development of a European strategy for solving problems of Roma ethnic citizens.

Introduction of a key area dedicated to Roma people in each Operational Programme, which supports activities for the integration of this vulnerable group.

Funding integrated projects at local level including the main areas of social inclusion of Roma people:

- Jobs;
- Education;
- Housing;
- Health.

ANR as partner within ERDF projects

Since October 2012, ANR is a partner in the project **Effective Programmes for the Active Integration/Inclusion of the Roma in South-East Europe - PAIRS**, funded by the South East Europe Transnational Cooperation Programme. The project lead partner is Hungarian Maltese Charity Service and will run for 24 months.

Overall aim is to reduce the exclusion of Roma in South-East Europe by exploring and capitalising on successful practices of civil organisations/local actors and facilitating the transcription of lessons learned from these approaches into the future policies/programmes to be implemented by national/regional decision makers.

Specific objectives:

- 1) to elaborate/adopt methods and improve existing good practices and programmes which are effective in reaching target groups and ensure the long term integration of the Roma population to be used by civil society organisations and public administrations;
- 2) to demonstrate the added value and evidence of transnationally explored bottom up activities and to facilitate the streamlining of the lessons learned from these methods and initiatives to European and national programming for a better governance of Roma integration issues.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

In the **Regional Operational Program (ROP)** haven't been provided special allocation of funds for the Roma people, but they are able to submit projects for housing rehabilitation or to improve social infrastructure.

Within the **ROP Monitoring Committee** in the autumn of 2011 year, **NAR** required analysis of possibility to reallocate funds for housing for Roma, as a result of the amendment to Art. 7 of the Regulation on the ERDF and following the elaboration of the guidelines for its implementation by the European Commission.

European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

Roma people can use support from **European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development** through the National Rural Development Programme (NRDP) for projects concerning infrastructure. According to available data regarding the number of approved projects, the financial allocations have been overcome and a reallocation of funds would be appropriate.

Agriculture represents one of the main interest area of NAR for the next period.

Provisions in Education field

- public education system provides annually **special places for Roma pupils and students, starting from elementary school until university level**
- at NAR initiative a Governmental Decision regarding the approval of extra school figures for university education, school year 2010-2011, was adopted in 2010 : according to this, **30 Ph.D. scholarships and 10 Master's scholarships** were allocated to **Roma' higher education graduates**. The fellows also benefit from **material support and from trainings within European institutions, through** a strategic structural project “Building and implementing an innovative interdisciplinary doctoral program related to Roma issues”, financed through ESF – OPHRD 2007-2013 and implemented by NAR in partnership with the National School of Political and Administrative Studies. The value of the program is 5 mil Euros.

Provisions in Health field

Roma health mediators

- represents a positive practice for Romania. Therefore, at present, the Council of Europe replicated this in 24 states.
- Roma health mediators have been employed by the Romanian state since 2002

European Training Program for Roma Mediators – ROMED

- implemented by the Council of Europe
- In 2011 NAR was asked to become partner in the implementation of ROMED programme in Romania, as National Focal Point
- NAR shared its experiences in Serbia, Ukraine, France, Moldova etc.

Health – a multisectoral approach within the projects financed by National Agency for Roma

- NAR funded different campaigns on Health information, education and awareness

NAR has signed a Memorandum of cooperation with the Association Sastipen on order to support health mediation program

NAR, a partner of Scholarship program for Roma students in medicine and pharmacology in Romania

Provisions in Housing field

-according to Governmental Decision No. 1237 of 2008, the central administration, in close partnership with local administration started a **pilot programme of social housing for Roma low-income in Romania**. The goal is to build 301 houses in 11 localities (of 11 counties, selected from all the 8 development regions of Romania); the houses contain 2 and 3 rooms

- **Romanian Social Development Fund** - aims to boost social inclusion and to reduce poverty by improving living conditions for at least 116 Roma communities.

The project values 17.7 million Euro, plus the contribution of financed local communities - approx. 1 million Euro.

Curent stage of implementation:

-133 Roma communities received grants of up to 150,000 Euro for integrated projects, designed to contribute to social inclusion, to develop and improve the community infrastructure (roads, sewage, water system, housing conditions, environment etc) and to increase the access to social services (education, health, counseling, employment mediation etc)

- 85 of integrated projects out of the granted ones have been finalized

- 3 communities got support to access other funds (EU, national programs)

Provisions in Employment field

- “Job markets for Roma people” programme
- the Mobile Assistance Unit – help for the local authorities to elaborate and implement social inclusion projects focused on Roma
- increasing Roma participation to the labor market by the European Social Fund

Provisions in Culture field

NAR financially supports **an innovative cultural event**: the first performance in Romani language of a play theatre –”*One stormy night*”, written by one of the greatest Romanian playwrights, Ion Luca Caragiale.

The novelty of the project is the fact that the **whole cast are Roma professional actors, also the technical team.**

The aim of the project is to promote and to rise the intercultural dialog between the Roma minority and the majority, **to promote ethnical tolerance and the mutual respect**, the modernization of **attitudes and of mentalities** throughout the theatre.

Provisions in Migration field

NAR and the International Organization for Migration - Mission in Romania are further strengthening their partnership by signing a **Memorandum of Cooperation** on November 29th, 2012.

Activities and areas of cooperation include:

- Development and projects implementation, including research, reporting and publication of materials on migration, Roma health, labor mobility and other relevant topics of mutual interest for Romania
- Participation in projects, activities and publications, including technical contributions and involving technical experts in counseling and / or workshops and short-term missions
- Common contribution to third party projects, activities and publications

NAR as financing body

According to its attributions, NAR organizes every year application calls on order to sustain projects aiming at supporting Roma minority.

The program aims to stimulate Roma active participation in economic, social, educational, cultural and political life, through organizing, implementing and monitoring activities in line with the **Strategy of the Government of Romania for the Inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020.**

The eligible fields are:

- Education;
- Health;
- Culture;
- Community development

NAR objectives for the next period

- to implement the Strategy of the Government of Romania for the inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020 with funding from the state budget, EU financial instruments and other funding sources;
- to establish an entity to plan, manage and monitor Roma issue from the point of view of EU funds;
- to insert a key area of intervention for Roma and a special allocation in each Operational Programme, which supports activities for Roma inclusion;
- to promote integrated projects for Roma people in key areas that are largely deficient (housing, health, education, employment) for the period 2014 -2020.