



# Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti Within the OSCE Area

*Renewed Commitments,  
Continued Challenges*

Status Report 2013

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# ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ECHR	European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ERRC	European Roma Rights Centre
EU	European Union
ERDF	European Regional Development Funds
ESF	European Social Fund (European Union)
FRA	EU Fundamental Rights Agency
HCNM	OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities
HDIM	Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ODIHR	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
OMIK	OSCE Mission in Kosovo
SPMU	OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency



# FOREWORD

Since its adoption in 2003, the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area has provided the blueprint for OSCE participating States, institutions and field missions in addressing the marginalization, discrimination and, sometimes, hostility and violence that Roma communities and individuals face. This report, published ten years after the Action Plan's adoption, is the second such effort to review and assess the progress made in following that blueprint.

As with the first Status Report, published in 2008, the purpose of this report is to highlight what has been achieved, where challenges persist in realizing the objectives contained in the Action Plan, and why this is the case. In doing this, it draws upon the responses by OSCE participating States to an ODIHR questionnaire. The response to the questionnaire this time was significantly greater, both in the number of countries responding and the amount of information provided, than for the first report, providing a fuller picture of the initiatives by participating States to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti.

This information has been supplemented by data provided by European Union Member States in documents submitted to the European Commission in relation to the Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, by information gathered by ODIHR from other sources, including OSCE field offices and institutions, as well as by information submitted by civil society organizations.

As you will read in the following pages, although a number of actors have become more involved in the elaboration and implementation of policies targeted at improving their situation, Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area continue to face critical problems. These problems — and the efforts by participating States to address them — are an important focus of Status Report. Just as, and perhaps more important, are the priority areas and recommendations identified in relation to them. There are recommendations for combatting hate crimes and discrimination against Roma and Sinti, improving housing, ensuring their access to adequate health care and enhancing their participation in public and political life.

In particular, while there has been a significant increase in funding targeted to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area, it is clear that there

has to be better monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes generated in order to ensure these funds are being put to the most effective use possible. As for specific areas of focus, ensuring that Roma children are guaranteed an equal opportunity to gain a quality education and combatting the multiple forms of discrimination faced by Roma women and girls will not only greatly boost economic, social and political opportunities for individual Roma, but also the integration of Roma communities in general.

For Nicolae Gheorghe, a prominent human rights activist and former ODIHR Adviser on Roma and Sinti issues, battling the discrimination faced by Roma and promoting policies to provide them with equal opportunities was a life's work. His death in August of this year was a great loss for both the Roma community and for the OSCE family. Gheorghe was the main architect of the OSCE Action Plan, and it is my hope that this Status Report is worthy of his memory, and helps further the cause for which he so tirelessly worked.

*Ambassador Janez Lenarčič  
Director, OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions  
and Human Rights (ODIHR)*





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For nearly two decades the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has been tasked with assisting participating States in meeting their human-dimension commitments related to Roma and Sinti communities. The OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, adopted in 2003, has formed the foundation for the Office's work in helping States implement these commitments.

The 2003 Action Plan is a comprehensive policy document, addressing key areas and recommending action by participating States, in areas such as combating racism and anti-discrimination, ensuring equal access and opportunities for Roma and Sinti in the area of education, employment, housing and health services, enhancing Roma participation in public life, and assisting Roma in crisis and post-crisis situations. Further, it underlines that Roma and Sinti women should be systematically mainstreamed in all relevant Roma policies and be able to participate on equal basis with men.

In 2008 ODIHR produced its first comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Action Plan with its first Status Report, which led to the adoption of two further Ministerial Council Decisions recognizing the need to enhance efforts in this area. The first, adopted in Helsinki in 2008, emphasizes the need to ensure equal access to education, including early education, for Roma and Sinti children. Adopted in Athens in 2009, the second urges participating States to strengthen their efforts in promoting tolerance and combating prejudices against Roma and Sinti, in order to prevent their social exclusion and marginalization.

Coming on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Action Plan, this second Status Report analyses developments over the last five years to provide an assessment of the progress by participating States in implementing Action Plan commitments. This assessment is particularly important against a backdrop of dramatic changes in the overall context in which Roma policy implementation takes place since the release of the first report.

The assessment of events during this review period clearly shows that Roma and Sinti policies have become standardized in many OSCE participating States. Increasingly, local authorities are engaged in developing

local level action plans and implementing initiatives. In addition, more funding for Roma and Sinti programmes has been made available, especially by the European Union (EU) through its assistance programmes for implementing integration strategies and action plans for its Member States or for countries aspiring to EU accession. The adoption of the Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies by the European Council in 2011 was the most recent step in the process of strengthening the EU agenda on Roma.

Despite this example of *visible progress*, the assessment also identifies *negative trends* that are deepening the gaps between the situation of Roma and Sinti and general populations, especially in the areas of housing, employment and access to social services.

This overall context has been influenced most of all by the effects resulting from two significant events — EU enlargement and the global financial crisis — both of which have had a major impact on the situation of Roma and Sinti.

Triggered by the 2007 enlargement of the EU, changes to Roma and Sinti policy throughout Europe have taken place during this reporting period. The global financial crisis and its economic fallout have exacerbated the difficult situation of Roma and Sinti communities, with heightened economic insecurity within majority populations exacerbating xenophobia, including anti-Roma sentiment.

Fleeing discrimination and poverty at home and seeking security and new economic and social opportunities abroad, Roma and Sinti have joined those migrating, for the most part, from the new EU Member States to older ones. This Roma and Sinti migration has further stirred up anti-Roma feelings and prejudices in a number of participating States, fuelling the mobilization of populist parties and extreme-right movements against them.

Underscoring the importance of this periodic review, ODIHR received 41 responses to the questionnaire it sent to participating States, and many of the replies contain a great deal of information. Some participating States provided complete data about all the programmes and projects undertaken, including annual expenditures. In addition, ODIHR has made use of information provided by EU Member States in the documents submitted to the European Commission as part of the EU

Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies in 2011. While these documents define the goals and objectives of each country's future Roma Strategies, they also include information about recently implemented policy measures.

While the data provided by the participating States in these two manners represent the primary source for the review and assessment presented here, they have been supplemented with information gathered by ODIHR from other sources or provided by OSCE field offices or other OSCE institutions. The questionnaire was also distributed to civil society organizations, seven of which replied.

This report follows the structure of the first, with some modifications. Part I elaborates on the context and new developments in the area of Roma policy and implementation since 2008, with special attention to the consolidation of EU Roma programmes. Part II, the core of the report, provides thorough analysis of the situation in the review period, based largely on data from participating States' replies to the ODIHR questionnaire. Each thematic chapter starts with an analysis of continuing challenges and emerging trends, followed by a presentation of action by participating States and of priority areas and recommendations. Part III elaborates on the OSCE's role in implementation of the Action Plan and reviews ODIHR's activities in this area. The report assesses implementation of each area of the Action Plan using the categories of *positive change*, *visible progress*, *breakthrough*, *no change* and *negative trend*. While there are examples where *visible progress* has been achieved, none of the improvements during the review period amounted to a *breakthrough*.

### For Roma, with Roma: comprehensive Roma strategies

The first Status Report detected serious problems with regard to effective implementation, funding mechanisms, political will and measurement of progress. During the period under review in this report, participating States achieved a stage at which Roma policy is becoming standardized, filters down to the local level, and is generally better funded. The increased EU funding for implementation of Roma strategies and action plans, especially in new EU member States or countries aiming at EU accession, represents a significant development, and constitutes *visible progress*.

During the review period, there has been *no change* in the quality of data about Roma and Sinti gathered by the participating States. International organizations

and civil society continue to insist on data collection and baseline studies as a key to ensuring effective policy design, evaluation and monitoring, and measurement of progress. As the collection of ethnically disaggregated data runs against general policy in many participating States, the data made available or cited by governments are often fragmentary and difficult to aggregate and compare.

Measuring implementation is difficult due to a continued absence of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. While most participating States monitor spending or programme beneficiaries, they do not collect data to assess programme outcomes. There are very few independent studies, state audits or reports that monitor and assess the outcomes of Roma integration measures.

During the last five years, a significant number of participating States have stepped up their activities, including introducing new policies and measures to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti. There are now more policies, institutions and financial instruments available to tackle the broad range of problems facing many Roma and Sinti populations. The level of funding, as well as the structures of programmes and prioritization of goals and projects, vary from country to country. Increased funding does not necessarily translate into better results, with the lack of monitoring mechanisms mentioned above making it difficult sometimes to determine what the results have been.

The responses to the ODIHR questionnaire revealed that local authorities are key structures in the implementation of Roma policy measures. In some areas, such as education and housing, they are the main agents for implementation. At the same time, however, some local authorities have resisted implementing national policy, and national governments and civil society have had, in some cases, to work to overcome local obstacles, whether the result of lack of interest in or active opposition to assisting Roma communities.

### Combating racism and discrimination

#### *Legislation and law enforcement*

In the replies to the ODIHR questionnaire, participating States reported extensively on anti-discrimination legislation adopted or amended during the review period, as well as on the work of existing or newly-established anti-discrimination and equality bodies. As in the 2008 report these legislative improvements continue to constitute a *positive change*.

### *Hate crimes and incidents against Roma and Sinti, Roma and police*

Despite these positive changes, the review period has been dominated by *negative trends*, including a disturbing number of hate crimes against Roma, the use of extremist anti-Roma rhetoric, and continuing reports of police ill-treatment.

The underlying root causes that fuel these developments are twofold. On the one hand, EU enlargement, coupled with Roma marginalization, have led many Roma individuals and families to seek better conditions and opportunities elsewhere through migration, sometimes generating negative reactions in destination countries or areas. At the same time, ongoing economic difficulties in many OSCE participating States already noted have sometimes led to the scapegoating of Roma by disaffected segments of majority populations. In their replies to the questionnaire, only a few participating States reported on hate crimes in which the victims were specifically Roma.

Far-right political parties in some participating States have also scapegoated Roma in difficult economic conditions to promote or capitalize on anti-Roma sentiment among majority communities. These parties — and, in some instances, mainstream parties as well — have used anti-Roma rhetoric, including that of “Gypsy criminality”. These same negative stereotypes of Roma also persist in some media.

A number of the governmental responses to the questionnaire provided information on police activities and projects initiated and implemented to improve the protection for Roma communities. At the same time, civil society groups have reported a significant number of cases where police in participating States have used excessive force or ill-treated Roma, particularly in the course of evictions or in conducting stop-and-search actions in informal settlements. Practices such as extensive racial profiling, denial of rights to Roma following arrest or while in custody, police failure to respond effectively to aid Roma victims of crime, including racist violence, combined with a lack of means and knowledge by Roma to gain redress continued also to be challenges during this reporting period. A factor that continues to hinder efforts in this area is the tensions that have often existed between Roma and the police caused, in part, by a lack of mutual understanding and mistrust, along with low representation of Roma and Sinti on police forces.

### Addressing socio-economic issues

#### *Housing and living conditions*

A *positive change* is evident in this area for the current review period, both in terms of reporting on housing initiatives and on the funding made available for improving the housing conditions of Roma. Some countries have achieved *visible progress* in this regard. At the same time, the housing situation for Roma in many participating States continues to be characterized by a lack of secure tenure and access to basic infrastructure, discrimination in social-housing schemes, residential segregation, high vulnerability to forced eviction, and conditions that pose health risks.

Only a few countries have mapped the spatially separate settlements of marginalized communities or identified the number of so-called informal settlements lacking adequate infrastructure. This may also be hampering the implementation of national policy commitments.

With regard to forced evictions, these typically lead to even worse living conditions, perpetuating the vulnerability and marginalization of Roma communities. Some major steps need to be taken with regard to regularizing the status of many Roma settlements that are currently illegal. This is an often-repeated recommendation on which there has been insufficient action.

Improving this situation may also require sufficient funding and subsidization policies for social housing for some time into the future. Social housing legislation for vulnerable groups, to establish long-term support mechanisms to alter their living conditions, is a prerequisite.

#### *Health care*

In spite of the increase in the number of projects and programmes in this area, *no change* has been achieved in reversing the negative health trends in Roma communities. Concern remains about instances of discrimination in access to health services and dire health conditions, especially for Roma immigrants.

Expanding Roma health mediator programmes is the most widespread and effective way of improving the health status of Roma and Sinti, and the broad application of this approach and the institutionalization of these programmes in several participating States constitutes *visible progress*. Roma health mediators, the majority of whom are women, have become an important community resource working to facilitate access to health care services among Roma.

Illiteracy, low education levels, marginalization, poverty and social exclusion continue, however, to result in poor health outcomes for Roma. Discrimination and a lack of personal identification, including birth certificates, make it particularly difficult for Roma to access health services. The provision of equitable, universal access to health care services — regardless of the ability to pay — should be a priority in order to reduce health inequities among disadvantaged communities.

Roma in some instances, continue to suffer from diseases — most commonly tuberculosis — associated with poor sanitary living conditions. The incidence of such diseases provides vivid evidence of the hazardous health conditions many Roma face.

Education, starting from early childhood, is crucial to addressing and overcoming some of the negative practices that continue to affect Roma girls in a number of Roma communities, such as early marriage and pregnancy. Efforts by Roma women themselves to challenge these practices should be especially supported by governments.

There needs to be an understanding of the need for continuity in health care efforts in order to achieve sustainable results. Budgetary shortages in this area could be offset through the increased use of Structural Funds in the EU Member States and other support funding in those countries aiming at EU accession.

### *Unemployment and economic issues*

Initiatives and efforts undertaken by participating States to increase employability and provide jobs and income opportunities to Roma represent a *positive change* during this reporting period. The Roma employment programmes undertaken by participating States, especially through subsidizing health mediator, school mediator and assistant positions, as well as various Roma experts employed in public offices, have contributed significantly to this *positive change*. Systematizing these programmes and officially recognizing these positions within public administrations would bolster this progress.

When compounded by a lack of skills on the part of many Roma, discriminatory practices on the labour market continue to be a determining factor in Roma employment. In this context, initiatives and efforts undertaken by participating States to increase employability and provide jobs and income opportunities to Roma should be considered a *positive change*. At the same time, however, it should be noted that these initiatives, including public works programmes, have been unable

to reduce, in a significant way, the level of unemployment among this population.

### **Improving access to education**

From a policy perspective, education for Roma has, compared to other areas, received a great deal of attention from international organizations and national governments. All of this indicates *visible progress* in making education a priority in policy to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti in many states.

During the review period, governments continued to employ good practices for promoting the inclusion of Roma and Sinti in early education. Scholarship programmes at different levels of education also became a more common practice during the review period, along with affirmative action measures, such as quotas at universities for Roma students.

Key challenges have not yet been overcome, and there has been *no change* in increasing access to quality education for Roma and Sinti children. The improper channeling of Roma and Sinti children into “special” education remains a problem in some instances, and residential segregation leads to Roma segregation in schools. A number of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) during the review period highlight this challenge.

The children in such schools often receive substandard education, discouraging them from continuing their schooling, something that might further entrench attitudes within Roma communities placing a low value on formal education. The ECtHR judgments should be used to guide state reforms in this area.

Various forms of Roma mediation programmes have, to some extent, served the purpose of preventing Roma children from dropping out of school, raising Roma children’s attendance rates, and contributing to inclusive education practices, as well as offering job opportunities to Roma. In most participating States, a rise in the percentage of Roma children attending primary school was reportedly observed after the creation of mediation programmes, although a rise in school achievement has been considered “modest” by independent assessments.

The poor educational outcomes of Roma children need to be urgently addressed. Roma children’s educational progress and achievement should be in the spotlight for both Roma parents and their children’s teachers. Programmes to promote and ensure the attendance by Roma students at all levels of compulsory education should be in place. These could even be strengthened to

encourage Roma and Sinti children toward academic achievement and progress.

### Enhancing participation in public and political life

While the level of Roma participation in public and political life and their representation in elected bodies is similar to the previous assessment period, a *positive change* can be observed in several participating States where amendments or new legislation have been introduced to raise these, especially at the municipal level. Similarly, the establishment of Roma minority councils in some countries as key advisory bodies representing Roma interests, legitimized through direct Roma voting, has been a new development in this period.

The June 2011 European Council Decision on the Framework for Roma National Strategies provided a new impetus. The EU requested the establishment of a Point of Contact in each Member State for Roma Strategy implementation and, as a result, governments have not only nominated such representatives, but have also established consultation mechanisms or working groups where there previously were none. In some participating States where these mechanisms had existed, they have been strengthened.

Deficiencies identified in the previous status report continue, as Roma continue to be disadvantaged in political participation, due at least in part to their low levels of education. Mainstream political parties appeared even less interested in launching or promoting Roma candidates during this review period than in the five years preceding it.

Local administrations now often possess the competence and public policy instruments to address Roma social problems, sometimes exceeding those of higher levels of government. It is crucial, therefore, that further efforts are made to stimulate the involvement of local authorities in the Roma inclusion process and Roma representatives in local administration.

To that end, concrete efforts by participating States need to be undertaken to protect and enhance the right of Roma and Sinti women and men to participate as voters and candidates in local and national elections; to address the on-going challenges that render Roma communities especially vulnerable to vote-buying and vote manipulation; to address the lack of capacity of Roma elected representatives at the national and local levels through targeted programmes; to enhance government consultation mechanisms, allowing for partnerships with Roma civil society organizations as a measure of

good governance; and to provide specialized training to Roma working in public administration and on minority councils.

### Crises and post crisis situations

The developments during the current review period with regard to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the post-conflict Western Balkan region indicate signs of *visible progress*. The region's governments have adopted Roma strategies and action plans and institutionalized programmes in the areas of health and education. OSCE Missions have been involved in working on those strategies and have monitored their implementation.

Roma political representation and participation has been enhanced and security for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities has improved. Lead-contaminated camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been closed and programmes to improve the living conditions in refugee camps are in place. Across the Western Balkans region, long-term solutions for IDPs and refugees, especially for those who live in informal settlements are still needed to provide adequate housing solutions for refugees and IDPs.

After more than a decade of displacement, return to their place of origin is no longer an option for many IDPs and refugees. In this regard, more attention needs to be paid by participating States to measures to remove the obstacles to property repossession and to gaining civil registration documents that are negatively impacting the return process. The Zagreb Declaration, to which participants from the Western Balkan region agreed in 2011, needs to be followed up by firm action and enhanced bilateral co-operation to resolve still-open cases of undocumented Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and reduce their risk of statelessness.



## PART I

# Introduction

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### Background

The Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, adopted in Maastricht in 2003, defines key policy areas, particularly in combating racism and discrimination; ensuring equal access and opportunities for Roma and Sinti in education, employment, housing and health services; enhancing public participation; and assisting Roma and Sinti in crisis and post-crisis situations.<sup>1</sup>

ODIHR, through its Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues, is mandated to assist participating States in implementing the Action Plan, to review periodically the situation of Roma and Sinti, and to recommend action, often in co-operation with other OSCE partners, to improve this situation.<sup>2</sup>

This is the second ODIHR Status Report to assess the implementation of the Action Plan. This report examines the progress made, well as challenges and trends that have surfaced or intensified during the past five years as they affect Roma and Sinti policy and its implementation by the participating States.

Roma and Sinti communities are found throughout the OSCE region, but predominantly in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Largely settled, Roma and Sinti are one of the largest minorities in Europe. Lacking a territory of their own, these communities nevertheless share some common cultural, linguistic and ethnic ties. Subject to overwhelming discrimination in all spheres of public life, Roma and Sinti have been largely excluded from wider society. Such discrimination is widespread, and it affects the ability of Roma and Sinti populations to gain access to social services on equal terms and to enjoy the same economic opportunities as others, thereby creating large disparities in comparison with majority populations.<sup>3</sup>

Aside from Roma and Sinti, there are other minority groups living within the OSCE area who face many of the same challenges related to discrimination and exclusion, such as Ljuli in Central Asia and the Travellers in Ireland and the United Kingdom. Based on these commonalities, ODIHR works to support the improvement of the situation for these groups as well.

### Methodology

The methodology and structure of this second Status Report follow those of the first report, published in 2008, with only a few minor changes in the subchapters of the first section.

This report does not attempt to systematically review the situation in particular countries in detail. It does, however, reflect on current developments and trends and on the implementation of commitments, providing examples from participating States.

The qualitative categories of *breakthrough*, *visible progress*, *positive change*, *no change* and *negative trends* are utilized for this purpose, as they were in the first report.<sup>4</sup> The conclusions of the first Status Report form a reference point for this one, and developments over the last five years are examined in order to assess the progress and achievements made by participating States from that point.

The thematic structure of this report follows that of the OSCE Action Plan and, in the areas of education and combating discrimination, as underlined in two subsequent OSCE Ministerial Council Decisions related to Roma and Sinti: “Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Implement the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area”,<sup>5</sup> adopted in 2008 in Helsinki, and “Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Ensure Roma

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1 OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision No. 3/03, “Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti in OSCE Area”, Maastricht, 1-2 December 2003, < [www.osce.org/odihr/17554](http://www.osce.org/odihr/17554) >.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 27, par. 129.

3 See the statistics in Appendix VIII of this report.

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4 *Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti in OSCE Area, Status Report 2008*, (Warsaw: OSCE/ODIHR, 2008), <http://www.osce.org/odihr/33500>.

5 OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision No. 6/08, “Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Implement the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area”, Helsinki, 5 December 2008, <http://www.osce.org/mc/35488>.

and Sinti Sustainable Integration”,<sup>6</sup> adopted in 2009 in Athens.

Like the first, this report draws upon replies from participating States to an ODIHR questionnaire. ODIHR received more replies to the questionnaire for this report, with 40 of the 57 OSCE participating States responding (19 of the then 56 participating States provided substantial input for the first).<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, there was significantly greater detail provided about programmes and projects in place in many of the replies used for this report. Much of this information has been included in the body of this report, to provide a better understanding of the focuses and specific elements of efforts by participating States to implement the Action Plan.

While the data provided by the participating States represents the primary source for the review and assessment presented here, these data have been supplemented with information gathered by ODIHR from other sources or provided by OSCE field offices or other OSCE institutions.<sup>8</sup> The questionnaire was also distributed to civil society organizations, seven of which replied.<sup>9</sup>

Information gathered during a consultation meeting with civil society representatives and academics focusing on Roma issues, in Warsaw in May 2013, as well as at a meeting of Roma focal points from OSCE field operations to assess Roma strategy implementation in the

Western Balkans and Moldova,<sup>10</sup> in Belgrade in February 2013, has also been used in the preparation of this assessment.

The content of this Status Report also includes information provided by EU Member States in the documents submitted to the European Commission in response to the European Council’s request regarding the Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies.<sup>11</sup> ODIHR has also accessed other relevant sources of information produced during the review period, whether by international organizations, civil society or academia, in reports, surveys or studies.<sup>12</sup>

Each Section of Part II of this Status Report starts with a summary of continuing challenges and emerging trends during the period covered, and then an analysis of the data provided in participating States’ replies to the questionnaire, supplemented with information from the other sources listed above. Each chapter concludes with priority areas for action and recommendations.

## Context

Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area continue to face critical problems. During the last five years, a significant number of actors have stepped up their activities, including searching for better policies and approaches to improving conditions on the ground, as envisaged in the 2003 Action Plan. This overall context has been influenced most of all by the effects resulting from two significant events — EU enlargement and the global financial crisis — both of which have had a major impact on the situation of Roma and Sinti.

6 OSCE Ministerial Council, Decision No. 8/09, “Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Ensure Roma and Sinti Sustainable Integration”, Athens, 2 December 2009, <<http://www.osce.org/cio/40707>>.

7 Responses were received this time from Albania, Andorra, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, the Holy See, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

8 ODIHR searched governmental websites related to Roma and used field assessment reports, Human Dimension meeting statements and reports received from civil society. For example, in 2010, the OSCE Mission to Skopje and Ministry of Labor and Social Policy published the first country specific Status Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area, <<http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/?ItemID=6FC822BBA79A61429117F41943673AE4>>.

9 ODIHR received replies from following organizations: Amalipe; European Centre for Minority Issues; Balkan Sunflowers Kosovo; European Roma Rights Center; Hungarian Helsinki Committee; the Serbian legal aid organization PRAXIS; and the Kosovo Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Documentation Center.

10 Each year, ODIHR holds consultations with Roma Focal Points from OSCE field operations. These consultations provide an overview of both activities and the status of implementation. As part of their tasking, the field operations often produced assessment reports on Roma policies in the subject countries. Likewise, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU) realized several activities with regard to Roma and Sinti, both separately and jointly with ODIHR.

11 EC Communication “An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020”, European Commission, EUCO 23/11 of 23 and 24 June 2011, <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0173:FIN:EN:PDF>>.

12 In particular, ODIHR uses data from the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) surveys; World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) research studies, EU-commissioned studies or reports, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance ECRI and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities reports; Open Society Institute /Roma Decade reports; European Court of Human Rights judgments on Roma cases; civil society reports; academic studies, etc.



Triggered by the 2007 enlargement of the EU, changes to Roma and Sinti policy throughout Europe have taken place during this reporting period. The global financial crisis and its economic fallout have exacerbated the difficult situation of Roma and Sinti communities, with heightened economic insecurity within majority populations exacerbating xenophobia, including anti-Roma sentiment.<sup>13</sup>

Fleeing discrimination and poverty at home and seeking security and new economic and social opportunities abroad, Roma and Sinti have joined those migrating, for the most part, from the new EU Member States to older ones. This Roma and Sinti migration has further stirred up anti-Roma feelings and prejudices in a number of participating States,<sup>14</sup> fuelling the mobilization of populist parties and extreme-right movements against them.<sup>15</sup>

These contextual factors resulted in greater attention being focused on the situation of Roma and Sinti by international organizations. During the reporting period, the EU has emerged as the main supranational actor shaping Roma policy.<sup>16</sup>

EU Roma policy took shape through two unprecedented awareness-raising Roma Summits (the first in 2008 in Brussels, followed by another in Cordoba in 2010); through the adoption of the “10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion”;<sup>17</sup> through the establishment of the EU Platform for Roma Inclusion<sup>18</sup> and

of the Task Force on Roma<sup>19</sup> at the European Commission; and, finally, through the adoption of the European Council conclusions on the Framework for National Roma Strategies.<sup>20</sup>

That Framework now commits all EU Member States to develop targeted policies to systematically tackle the socio-economic exclusion of and discrimination against Roma people throughout the EU. The EU is not only playing the lead role in creating the normative framework for Roma policy, but is also becoming the major donor to Roma programmes, inside the EU, in the pre-accession countries and beyond.

The OSCE Action Plan politically binds all 57 participating States, irrespective of whether they are EU member states or countries, primarily in the Western Balkans, hoping to accede to the EU. The EU Member States and the countries of the Western Balkans, however, provide the main focus of review and focus in this current report — a result of the fact that most of the initiatives and developments related to Roma and Sinti have occurred in these countries, and that they are home to the majority of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE area.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, there are 12 countries with larger Roma populations taking part in the Decade for Roma Inclusion from 2005 to 2015.<sup>22</sup>

ODIHR recognizes, however, that there are different contextual issues beyond this space and works generally with all participating States to support the better integration of Roma and Sinti.

13 See for example, joint conference on Roma migration organized with Fundamental Rights Agency and Council of Europe 9 and 10 November 2009 in Vienna; <<http://fra.europa.eu/en/press-release/2010/joint-conference-concerning-roma-migration-and-freedom>>.

14 Van Baar, Huub “Europe’s Romaphobia: problematization, securitization, nomadization,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29(2), 2011, p. 204.

15 Stewart, Michael (ed.), *The ‘Gypsy Menace’: Populism and the new Anti-Gypsy Politics* (London: Hurst, 2010); Horia Barbulescu, “Constructing the Roma People as a Societal Threat: the Roma Expulsion from France,” *European Journal of Science and Technology*, Vo. 8, Supplement 1, pp. 279-289.

16 Vermeersch, Peter, “Reframing the Roma: EU Initiatives and the Politics of Reinterpretation,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 38(8), 2012, p. 1195–1212.

17 Under the Czech European Council Presidency in 2009, <[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Documents/2011\\_10\\_Common\\_Basic\\_Principles\\_Roma\\_Inclusion.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/Resources/Documents/2011_10_Common_Basic_Principles_Roma_Inclusion.pdf)>.

18 The idea of a European Roma platform emerged at the 1st European Roma summit in Brussels in September 2008. The first meeting of the Roma Platform took place in Prague on 24 April 2009, more at: <[http://www.efc.be/programmemes\\_services/resources/Documents/2012\\_Factsheet\\_RomaInclusion\\_revisedEDITED.pdf](http://www.efc.be/programmemes_services/resources/Documents/2012_Factsheet_RomaInclusion_revisedEDITED.pdf)>.

19 In September 2010, the European Commission established an internal Task Force to assess Member States’ use of EU funding with regard to the social and economic integration of Roma.

20 EU Framework, *op. cit.*, note 11; see also: European Commission: “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions: Steps Forward in Implementing National Roma Integration Strategies”, 26 June 2013, Brussels, <[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/com\\_2013\\_454\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/com_2013_454_en.pdf)>.

21 See the UNDP/World Bank/EC regional Roma survey 2011, <<http://europeandcis.undp.org/data/show/D69F01FE-F203-1EE9-B45121B12A557E1B>>.

22 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain, also Norway, Slovenia and the United States have observer status. For more see: <[www.romadecade.org/](http://www.romadecade.org/)>.



## PART II

# Implementation of the Action Plan

### 1. FOR ROMA, WITH ROMA: COMPREHENSIVE ROMA STRATEGIES

#### Availability and use of data

Although attention has been drawn to the need for better collection of reliable and comprehensive data, there is still a shortage of official data available about Roma and Sinti populations across the OSCE necessary for the design of effective policies. There has been, however, an increase in the amount of data available at the inter-governmental and civil society levels.

In particular, the EU's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) is tasked with monitoring and supplying data on Roma and Sinti within Europe.<sup>23</sup> FRA is also working on developing indicators and methodologies for the collection of comparable data to enable the measurement of progress in EU Member States' policies related to Roma and Sinti.<sup>24</sup>

The ODIHR questionnaire asked the participating States to list their major achievements during the review period. Twenty-nine<sup>25</sup> of the respondents listed specific achievements, while the remainder did not, even though they provided replies to other questions. Twenty<sup>26</sup> listed the development or adoption of national Roma strategies

or programmes as their main achievement (eight<sup>27</sup> listed policy documents of this kind as their sole achievement); nine<sup>28</sup> governments listed progress in education as an achievement. These replies illustrate the importance placed by respondents on the adoption of comprehensive policy documents and attention to education as a priority area. Among those listing achievements, four<sup>29</sup> participating States indicated progress in four or more areas.

“4. Each national policy or implementation strategy should: (1) respond to the real problems, needs and priorities of Roma and Sinti communities; (2) be comprehensive; (3) introduce a balanced and sustainable approach to combining human rights goals with social policies; and (4) maximize Roma ownership of the policies that affect them. At the same time, national policies or implementation strategies should be adapted and implemented according to the specific needs of Roma and Sinti populations in particular situations in participating States. Implementation strategies should also include mechanisms to ensure that national policies are implemented at the local level.”

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter II

#### General overview and assessment

During the current review period, a majority of responding participating States reached a stage at which Roma policy has become standardized; this is trickling down to the local level, together with significant funding for Roma integration made available by governments and, especially, by the EU in Member States and those countries hoping to accede. These are signs of *visible progress*.

At the same time, some key challenges identified in the first report remain. The major challenge continues to be the absence of robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the outcomes of implemented measures or projects. Independent research or state audits and evaluations to monitor and assess the outcomes

23 “Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the regions National Roma Integration Strategies: a first step in the implementation of the EU Framework”, 21 May 2012, Brussels, < <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2012:0226:FIN:EN:PDF>>.

24 “Country thematic studies on the situation of Roma”, EU Fundamental Rights Agency website, June 2013, <<http://fra.europa.eu/en/country-data/2013/country-thematic-studies-situation-roma>>.

25 Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

26 Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Moldova, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

27 Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Italy, Moldova, Norway, Slovakia, Sweden and Ukraine. On 11 September 2013, the Government of Ukraine adopted the Action Plan to implement the Strategy for the protection and integration of the Roma national minority into Ukrainian society.

28 Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia and Spain.

29 Belgium, Hungary, Serbia and Spain.

of measures to promote Roma inclusion are also lacking. Ensuring the availability of such assessments is key to the success of the renewed commitments underpinning the recent efforts of the international community and participating States.

### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

In the majority of participating States, there are state bodies, in various forms and with various competencies, to co-ordinate, directly implement and/or monitor and evaluate Roma policies and measures. Roma and Sinti political representatives, civil society leaders and experts are often part of these bodies or mechanisms at different levels (central, regional and municipal), although most often with only an advisory role. Some participating States have created co-ordination and advisory bodies with a large number of personnel, both Roma and non-Roma.

The key factor here appears to be whether the policy implementation targets Roma and, as part of this approach, funds are earmarked specifically for this purpose, rather than providing funding within a larger, inclusive policy framework broadly targeting disadvantaged or socially excluded categories of people, including Roma. Where the latter is the case, funding for Roma is not earmarked as such; general measures for these categories are supported with specific, but mainstreamed, budgets. Here some governments follow one of the key EU Ten Common Basic Principles for Roma Integration — explicit but not exclusive targeting.<sup>30</sup> In these cases, it is hard to estimate what funding has gone towards Roma integration and what outcomes have been generated.

The 2008 report concluded that political will is manifested, to a large extent, in the level of funding made available for the implementation of Roma strategies or programmes. Implementation was deemed to have suffered because insufficient funding was provided in a number of participating States.<sup>31</sup>

The situation changed over the current review period. Governments have provided more information on programmes and projects implemented, along with detailed data on their funding. Of the participating States that

provided substantial replies to at least some of the questions, most provided some data on funding, projects, beneficiaries or outcomes, and 25<sup>32</sup> participating States indicated, to various degrees, the amount of funding made available for the implementation of Roma strategies. Several governments indicated programmes and projects that have been realized or supported without indicating the level of funding, while others listed local-level projects and the funding provided for them.<sup>33</sup>

Participating States such as Spain, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia and Poland provided detailed data on spending and on outcomes. In several cases, governments provided detailed information about particular activities (e.g., Ukraine on health or Romania on employment projects). Countries such as the United Kingdom and Ireland, due to a focus primarily on Traveller communities, indicated their spending on caravan sites or pitches,<sup>34</sup> whereas other countries (such as Bosnia and Herzegovina) mainly indicated their expenditures on housing for Roma.

As already mentioned, the fact that some participating States report only funding devoted to the general category of disadvantaged or socially excluded persons, poses a special challenge when it comes to quantifying how Roma have benefited or determining how many Roma were among the beneficiaries. Hungary follows this approach.

The OSCE Action Plan stresses that “implementation strategies should also include mechanisms to ensure that national policies are implemented at the local level” (Chapter II Paragraph 4). There was *visible progress* in this area during the review period, although some key shortcomings still remain. Responses to the ODIHR questionnaire reveal that local authorities are key structures tasked with implementing Roma policy measures; in fact, in some areas, they are the main agents for implementation (such as in education, housing and public works). The bulk of Roma and Sinti programme funds have been directed to local administrations, and local authorities were almost entirely responsible for the implementation of minority policies.

30 Vademecum, “The 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion”, European Commission Roma Portal, <<http://ec.europa.eu/roma>>; for more see “What works for Roma inclusion in the EU. Policies and model approaches”, European Union, 2012, <[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/whatworksfor\\_romanclusion\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/whatworksfor_romanclusion_en.pdf)>.

31 2008 Status Report, *op. cit.*, note 4, p.20.

32 Albania, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

33 The table in Appendix 5 illustrates the funding sources of money used by the participating States to implement Roma strategies and programmes.

34 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the United Kingdom Delegation to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, received 27 February 2013

Efforts in a number of participating States to create local action plans (initiatives often supported by, civil society) also point to the importance attached to that level of governance.<sup>35</sup> For example, the Agency for Social Inclusion in the Czech Republic has been tasked with providing assistance to municipalities in drafting and adopting local action plans.<sup>36</sup> Roma experts in municipal governments in Hungary, Romania and Serbia have worked toward the same objective. In Hungary where some local authorities have opposed the development of local equal opportunity actions plans (which include Roma as a target group) the central government has conditioned local receipt of EU Structural Fund monies on implementation of these plans as an incentive. Thanks to the Roma Minority Self-Government system and an agreement reached between this body and the central government, local Roma representatives have had a share in local decision-making regarding policy implementation.<sup>37</sup>

The question is no longer whether local-level implementation is relevant to reaching the objectives of the national strategies, but whether enough political will is being generated to ensure the effective implementation of the concrete measures inscribed in local action plans. There are a number of examples that demonstrate that this is not yet the case.

Some local authorities have resisted the implementation of proactive policy measures for Roma; this is most often in municipalities run by administrations from far-right parties. In EU Member States that are the most common destinations for Roma immigrants and asylum seekers (such as Italy, France, the United Kingdom and Germany), local authorities have called on central governments to introduce measures to restrict the influx of foreign-born Roma.<sup>38</sup> Given current economic conditions, they have cited the budgetary implications of handling their arrival.

35 Guy, Will, André Liebich, and Elena Marushiakova "Improving the tools for the social inclusion and non-discrimination of Roma in the EU", Report for the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, 2010, p. 50 and Open Society Foundations "Making the Most of EU Funds" programme, <<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/making-most-eu-funds-roma>>.

36 See "Agency for Social Integration in Roma Localities", The Office of the Government of the Czech Republic Department for Social Integration in Roma Communities, Prague, 2011, <[www.socilani-zaclenovani.cz](http://www.socilani-zaclenovani.cz)>.

37 For more information see Section 5 on Housing and Living Conditions.

38 For more information see Section 1, subsection on Local-Level Implementation.

Central governments and intergovernmental and civil society organizations have tried to overcome these obstacles with initiatives to promote the implementation of social inclusion measures, by offering more assistance, including through EU Structural Funds, or conditioning access to such funding on the adoption of proactive Roma policy action plans. The Council of Europe<sup>39</sup> and the Open Society Institute<sup>40</sup> have, for example, provided awards for municipalities that implement such measures.

### Action by Participating States

There has been *visible progress* with regard to the number of reported strategies or programmes for Roma and Sinti integration developed and adopted during the review period. This may be a result of the EU Council conclusions on the Framework for National Roma Strategies.

Roma integration strategies are, by definition, not set up or designed as "one-size-fits-all" strategies. As already noted, some governments implement measures to benefit Roma within the framework of broader policies designed to benefit marginalized or disadvantaged groups.<sup>41</sup> The strategy documents submitted to the Commission reveal differences with regard to the status of policy documents,<sup>42</sup> the chosen approaches (whether targeting Roma only, mainstreaming or, most commonly, combining mainstreaming with targeted measures), the governing concepts (whether involving categories of disadvantaged, socially excluded people, including disadvantaged Roma populations, or a Roma

39 "European Diplomas of the Council of Europe: 26 municipalities rewarded in 2013", Council of Europe website, 27 June 2013, <[http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/NewsManager/EMB\\_NewsManager-View.asp?ID=8907&L=2](http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/NewsManager/EMB_NewsManager-View.asp?ID=8907&L=2)>.

40 "Mayors Making the Most of EU Funds for Roma Inclusion", Open Society Foundations website, 8 November 2012, <<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/making-most-eu-funds-roma>>.

41 EU Framework, *op. cit.*, note 11; the European Council points to the need for "national approaches to Roma inclusion that should be tailored to the specific circumstances and needs on the ground, including by adopting or continuing to pursue policies that address marginalized and disadvantaged groups, such as Roma, in a broader context", p. 5.

42 The main difference is whether such policy is adopted as governmental decrees or resolutions, or adopted by parliaments. Only Bulgaria, Slovenia and Hungary have managed to pass such documents through Parliament.

minority-rights approach or, most often, a mixture of the two),<sup>43</sup> and the structure (whether complex and comprehensive or simple, with few priority areas).<sup>44</sup>

In Spain, the government has implemented an approach toward the Roma minority based both on mainstreamed programmes and on targeted measures that respond to the specific needs of the Roma minority. At the same time, while ensuring funding for strategy implementation, the government allows civil society organizations to be the main implementers of targeted Roma policy measures, while the mainstream policies are developed by the various levels of public administration (national, regional and local). A key implementer is the NGO Fundación Secretariado Gitano (FSG), an organization that has managed the EU-funded ACCEDER project for Roma since the year 2000.<sup>45</sup> The FSG provides complete data on the projects realized and their outcomes.

In Romania, the approach to Roma strategy implementation involves a mixture of general programmes run and supported by the budgets of particular ministries, combined with specific measures co-ordinated by the Roma National Agency. The Agency is a key player in implementation and as a decision-making body that also runs projects for Roma. The Romanian government reported, for example, that there were 40,581 Roma beneficiaries of the more than 71 projects funded through the ESF in Romania. These were implemented by various actors, including public institutions, such as Regional Employment Agencies, the National Agency for Roma, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, and by more than 40 civil society and private sector actors, among them several Roma NGOs. The Romanian response did not include information on the amount of funding spent, however,<sup>46</sup> but information available on the website of the Managing Authority for the European Social Fund, indicated that 121.3 million euros were devoted to programmes specifically targeting Roma within

the frameworks of 43 earmarked projects during the five year reporting period.<sup>47</sup>

The Romanian government also listed some outcomes of its policy measures targeting Roma, such as the number of Roma who are employed either as experts or as civil servants in various offices and institutions (Roma mediators, Roma experts in mayors' offices, Roma school inspectors and Roma advisors in ministries); the number of places at universities reserved for Roma students; and the number of teachers of the Romani language employed in schools.

Hungary's model involves both mainstream programmes that are inclusive of Roma and specifically targeted measures. The state works with one major Roma partner, the national-level Roma Minority Self-Government. Most of the social inclusion and anti-poverty measures listed in the Hungarian response are large, EU-supported programmes for broad categories of disadvantaged or socially excluded people, including Roma. At the same time, the Hungarian authorities outline the Roma policy measures that have been targeted for this community and implemented through special agreement between the government and the national-level Roma Minority Self-Government. This Self-Government is a large institutionalized structure of elected Roma representatives employed in municipal offices, and acts as a main stakeholder, a decision-making partner and an implementer of Roma policy measures.

In Poland, there are three different budgets in use, each one linked to a different ministry and operating according to its own guidelines. They all, however, work toward targeted policies and use earmarked budgets. The programme<sup>48</sup> run by the Ministry of Administration and Digitalization, used nearly 14 million euros from the Prime Minister's reserve fund for Roma strategy implementation between 2012 and 2014. Local and municipal authorities are the main implementers of the Programme, with 66 percent of the funds or task

43 The Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia utilize a mixture of policies toward both socially excluded and minority groups in general and ones with a Roma specific focus.

44 Romania and Hungary are examples of countries that have complex policy documents, as opposed to the United Kingdom or Austria, which use streamlined documents.

45 With a budget of approximately 20 million euros yearly (since 2008 Spain has spent about 100 Million euros).

46 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of Romania to International Organizations in Vienna, received 20 March 2013.

47 Full information on these projects and the implementing institutions or organizations can be found at <<http://www.fseromania.ro/index.php/implementeaza/lista-beneficiari>>; the combined funding for Roma projects and for projects in which Roma are one of the target groups is estimated at 250 million euros in the financial period 2008 -2013 in Romania.

48 In its response to the ODIHR questionnaire, Poland discussed its 2004-2015 Programme, in which the Government declared PLN 100 million would be made available for 10 years of implementation; by now, approximately 85 million zloty have been spent, 4,793 tasks were implemented (34 per cent) by civil society groups, including Roma ones.

implementation allocated to these during the review period,<sup>49</sup> while the remaining 34 per cent of the funds were used by civil society groups, both Roma and non-Roma, and other actors (often universities). Currently, 40 Roma organizations are recipients of some funding for the implementation of the Programme's tasks. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for managing EU Structural Funds; for the 2007-2013 programming period, 22 million euros were earmarked for Roma policy implementation by the ministry. Most of the funding in Poland has gone to programmes on education and housing. The Polish response acknowledges that "it is impossible to evaluate" the outcomes of the projects implemented.<sup>50</sup>

The responses from those 26 participating States that reported funding earmarked expressly for improving the situation of Roma and Sinti indicated that this funding totals 816.6 million euros.<sup>51</sup> As already mentioned, this doesn't include funding for programmes more broadly targeted to help disadvantaged or marginalized groups, and the inclusion of the Roma-related portions of these funds would push that figure much higher. Funding in this area, much of it in the form of EU Structural Fund money, represents a *positive change*.

### Priority Areas and Recommendations

As noted, most participating States have arrived at a stage where Roma policy has been standardized, and filters down to the local level, together with support and funding. The replies from participating States reveal significant involvement of Roma civil society, as well as Roma within state structures, in the development and implementation of Roma policy.

The key priority is, therefore, to ensure effective policy implementation to produce tangible outcomes. Analysis of the participating States' replies indicates that there is more funding now available for the implementation of various Roma policy measures and projects. How these funds are used to achieve the intended outcomes is crucial. Robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, along with the use of data and indicators, are necessary.

These should become standard practice for any implementation process.

At present, there is little in the way of independent research, state audits or reports monitoring and assessing the outcomes of projects to integrate Roma. Governments must build on previous efforts by taking stock of what worked and what did not, and of what lessons can be learned to maintain a cycle of improvement.

If current projects are ineffective or mismanaged, that could have a negative impact on future programmes and funding. There should also be a focus on ensuring that central-level commitments correspond to commitments at the regional or local levels.

49 For the pilot programme in 2001-2003 this ratio was even higher: 98 per cent of funds were directed to local and municipal authorities.

50 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire, from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations Office and International Organizations in Vienna, 2013, received 28 February, 2013.

51 See the table in Appendix V.

## 2. COMBATING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

#### Hate crimes and incidents against Roma

Racism and discrimination continued to be an underlying cause of the marginalization of Roma and Sinti during the reporting period for this report. As noted in the Introduction, this has occurred against the back-

“[Recommended action by participating States:] Adopt and implement effective anti-discrimination legislation to combat racial and ethnic discrimination in all fields, including, inter alia, access to housing, citizenship and residence, education, employment, health and social services.”

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter III

drop of ongoing economic difficulties in many OSCE participating States, which have sometimes led to the scapegoating of Roma by disaffected segments of majority populations. While information and reporting available from civil society and media sources suggest that there has been a rise in such incidents, the official data available from participating States is insufficient to make such a determination.

Only a few<sup>52</sup> participating States provided data for the reporting period on hate-motivated crimes in which the victims were Roma. Most of the participating States replied either that no such data (i.e., disaggregated by ethnicity) are collected, or that no such crimes were reported or registered.<sup>53</sup>

The Czech Republic’s reply stated that police statistics do not record the ethnicity of victims, but the crime registration system does have a special category for crimes motivated by ethnic intolerance or hostility.<sup>54</sup> In 2012,

52 Croatia, Czech Republic, Poland and Finland. Slovakia also provided data although not ethnically disaggregated.

53 The OSCE’s “Hate Crime in the OSCE Region, Incident and Response Annual Report for 2011” stressed that official monitoring of crimes and incidents motivated by bias against Roma and Sinti is limited among OSCE participating States. In 2011, 13 participating States reported collecting such data; however only Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Serbia provided information on specific cases and Sweden provided general figures; for more, see <[http://tandis.odihhr.pl/hcr2011/pdf/Section\\_7.2\\_CRIMES\\_AND\\_INCIDENTS.pdf](http://tandis.odihhr.pl/hcr2011/pdf/Section_7.2_CRIMES_AND_INCIDENTS.pdf)>. The same report for 2012 will be available in November 2013.

54 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the OSCE in Vienna, received 8 of March 2013.

there were 52 recorded crimes motivated by hostility toward Roma, a drop from 69 such crimes recorded in the previous year (2011).<sup>55</sup>

In Croatia, in May 2011, the government adopted its Rules of Procedure on Hate Crime Cases. In 2011, there was one ethnically motivated hate crime against a member of the Roma national minority recorded, while in 2010 there had been five such instances. All of these cases were solved and criminal charges have been filed against the suspects.<sup>56</sup>

The limited reporting of data by participating States’ on hate-motivated crimes can be supplemented by that of civil society. According to Amnesty International, from January 2008 to July 2012 more than 120 violent attacks against Roma people and Roma property took place in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Bulgaria, involving shootings, stabbings and arson attacks.<sup>57</sup> The European Roma Rights Centre, based on media and NGO reports, has documented 61 attacks against Roma and/or their property between January 2008 and September 2012 in Hungary alone, resulting in six deaths (including two of minors) and leaving dozens injured, including ten cases in which the victims were left in critical condition.<sup>58</sup> The perpetrators were sentenced to life imprisonment in August 2013 and the Hungarian government has announced its intention to provide compensation to the survivors.<sup>59</sup> Using the same sources, the European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) reported that, from January 2008 to June 2012, 47 attacks were reported against Roma and/or their property in the Czech Republic, leading to the deaths of at least five Roma and the injury of 22 others.<sup>60</sup> The ERRC reported that, in Slovakia during the same period, there were 16 such attacks, leading to the deaths of five Roma

55 *Ibid.*

56 Response to ODIHR questionnaire from Permanent Mission of the Republic of Croatia to the OSCE, UN and International Organizations in Vienna, received 7 May 2013.

57 “Wake-up call for a giant: The EU must end discrimination against Roma” *Amnesty International*, 4 April 2013, <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/news/wake-call-giant-eu-must-end-discrimination-against-roma-2013-04-04>>.

58 “Attacks against Roma in Hungary: January 2008-September 2012”, *European Roma Rights Centre*, 1 October 2012, <<http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/attacks-list-in-hungary.pdf>>.

59 Comments and updates to the Hungarian response to ODIHR, received 16 October 2013.

60 “Attacks against Roma in the Czech Republic: January 2008-July 2012” *European Roma Rights Centre*, 31 July 2012, <<http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/attacks-list-in-czech-republic.pdf>>.



and leaving ten, including two minors, injured.<sup>61</sup> In Bulgaria, in the period between September 2011 and July 2012, the ERRC reported 14 attacks against Roma and/or their property, resulting in three deaths and injuring at least 22 people, including a pregnant woman and two minors.<sup>62</sup> Attacks against Roma have also been reported in Western Europe (e.g., in France, Ireland and Italy).<sup>63</sup>

### Anti-Roma political discourse

Far-right political parties in some participating States have scapegoated Roma in difficult economic conditions to promote or capitalize on anti-Roma sentiment among majority communities. These parties — and, in some instances, mainstream parties as well — have used anti-Roma rhetoric, including that of “Gypsy criminality”. These same negative stereotypes of Roma also persist in some media.<sup>64</sup>

Anti-Roma protests or marches, often with the clear intent to intimidate Roma communities, have been a high-profile manifestation of this tendency during the reporting period. The Jobbik party in Hungary,<sup>65</sup> the Northern League in Italy,<sup>66</sup> the Workers’ Party for Social Justice (DSSS) in the Czech Republic,<sup>67</sup> the Attaka party

“[Recommended action by participating States:] Encourage the media to show positive aspects and present a balanced portrayal of Roma life, refrain from stereotyping Roma and Sinti people and avoid inciting tension between various ethnic groups.”

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter III

in Bulgaria<sup>68</sup> and the “Our Slovakia” People’s Party<sup>69</sup> are among the most visible parties that have used such rhetoric. Mainstream parties, for example in France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland, have also resorted to rhetoric against Roma immigrants, increasingly categorizing them as “public security”, “public order” or “public health” risks, or linking Roma immigration to human trafficking and exploitation, especially of women and children.<sup>70</sup>

In media discourse, including in mainstream media, Roma immigration is often equated primarily with trafficking in human beings and the exploitation of Roma women and children for begging and prostitution, as well as creating added burdens for welfare systems. All of this reinforces negative stereotypes about Roma

### Police and Roma

The police have a duty to protect all members of the public, and a number of the governmental responses to the questionnaire provided information on police activities and projects initiated and implemented to improve the protection for Roma communities. In many

61 “Attacks against Roma in the Slovakia: January 2008- July2012”, European Roma Rights Centre, 31 July 2012, <<http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/attacks-list-in-slovakia.pdf>>.

62 “Attacks against Roma in Bulgaria: September 2011- July 2012”, European Roma Rights Centre, 31 July 2012, <<http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/attacks-list-in-bulgaria.pdf>>.

63 Amnesty International, Briefing, “Human Rights on the margins: Roma in Europe”, <[https://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc\\_21165.pdf](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc_21165.pdf)>

64 For example see: Jamie Bartlett, Jonathan Birdwell, Péter Krekó, Jack Benfield, Gabor Gyori, “Populism in Europe: Hungary”, DEMOS, 2102, p. 25.

65 For more see, “Addressing Violence, Promoting Integration Field Assessment of Violent Incidents against Roma in Hungary: Key Developments, Findings and Recommendations”, ODIHR 15 June 2010, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/68545>>.

66 “Report by Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, following his visit to Italy from 26 to 27 May 2011”, the Council of Europe, 7 September 2011, <<https://wcd.coe.int/wcd/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1826921>> .

67 ECRI report on the Czech Republic (fourth monitoring cycle), the Council of Europe, 15 September 2009, <[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/country-by-country/czech\\_republic/CZE-CbC-IV-2009-030-ENG.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/country-by-country/czech_republic/CZE-CbC-IV-2009-030-ENG.pdf)>; and “Czech mayor fights crime by collectively blaming Roma” *romea.cz*, , 27 November, 2010, <<http://www.romea.cz/en/news/czech/czech-mayor-fights-crime-by-collectively-blaming-roma>>.

68 Civil Society in Action Association, “Analytical Report: The Kautnitsa Impact on Bulgarian Presidential and Local Elections 2011 - Transition from Social Populism towards National Populism”, Sofia 2012.

69 According to the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Slovakia, the Supreme Court has justified hateful and degrading speech against the Roma minority, thereby legitimizing the view that Roma are inferior and that their dignity is of less importance than that of other citizens. Campaign leaflets reading “With your trust, I can do away with unfair favouritism, and not only for Gypsy parasites” were distributed before the regional elections in 2009 by the leader of the far-right People’s Party – Our Slovakia, Marian Kotleba, when he ran as an independent candidate for the head of the Banská Bystrica District. According to the Supreme Court’s opinion, the distribution of these leaflets with this text did not amount to the offense of defamation based on nationality, race or belief; see “NGO accuses Supreme Court of legitimizing Roma humiliation”, *spectator.sme.sk*, 14 May 2013, <[http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/50039/10/ngo\\_accuses\\_supreme\\_court\\_of\\_legitimising\\_roma\\_humiliation.html](http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/50039/10/ngo_accuses_supreme_court_of_legitimising_roma_humiliation.html)>.

70 Sergio Carrera, “Shifting Responsibilities for EU Roma Citizens”, CPES Paper, 6 June 2013, p.10-11, <<http://www.ceps.eu/book/shifting-responsibilities-eu-roma-citizens-2010-french-affair-roma-evictions-and-expulsions-con>>.

instances, the police in participating States where anti-Roma marches have occurred provided protection to Roma and Sinti communities and prevented possible escalations leading to violence against them.

At the same time, civil society groups have reported a significant number of cases where police in participating States have used excessive force or ill-treated Roma, particularly in the course of evictions or in conducting stop-and-search actions in informal settlements. Practices such as extensive racial profiling, denial of rights to

The Action Plan recommends the development of “policies: (1) to improve relations between Roma and Sinti communities and the police, so as to prevent police abuse and violence against Roma and Sinti people; and (2) to improve trust and confidence in the police among Roma and Sinti people” (Art. 28).

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter III

Roma following arrest or while in custody, police failure to respond effectively to aid Roma victims of crime, including racist violence, combined with a lack of means and knowledge by Roma to challenge and gain redress continued also to be challenges during this reporting period.

A factor that continues to hinder efforts in this area is the tensions that have often existed between Roma and the police caused, in part, by a lack of mutual understanding and mistrust, along with low representation of Roma and Sinti on police forces.

### Action by Participating States

In their replies to the ODIHR questionnaire, participating States reported in detail on anti-discrimination legislation adopted or amended during the review period that would have a positive effect on the situation of Roma and Sinti. In a number of cases, EU Member States followed up on a formal request to transpose the EU Race Directive. The introduction or strengthening of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation was also reported by a number of participating States that are not EU members.

In May 2011 the Hungarian Parliament passed an amendment to the Criminal Code that introduced penalties for intimidating behaviour towards ethnic, racial,

religious or other groups, as a direct response to the anti-Roma marches that had taken place in the country.<sup>71</sup>

The information provided by participating States also covered already-functioning or newly-established anti-discrimination and equality bodies and their tasks and activities, including outreach initiatives targeting Roma and Sinti communities.

More specifically, the replies provided information on a large number of projects addressing issues in relations between by the Roma and Sinti and the police.

Forty-five programmes, ranging from very general training programmes for police officers to those targeting officers who are or will be delegated to work with and among Roma communities have been developed in 12 states in an effort to improve relations between the police and Roma communities. Examples include the role of police mediators (Albania)<sup>72</sup> or “police specialists

for Roma communities” (Slovakia reported 231 such officers in 2013).<sup>73</sup> Civil society research into responses to violent attacks against the Roma in some participating States, however, reports that many of the perpetrators of these crimes are never brought to justice.<sup>74</sup> The research points to a number of shortcomings in responses to violence against Roma, including failure to identify suspects in a significant number of cases or to recognize the racial-bias motivation behind these crimes.<sup>75</sup>

### Priority Areas and Recommendations

Hate-motivated crimes against Roma and Sinti, when they go unpunished, can create a climate of impunity that may encourage further acts of violence against

71 “Hungary Adopts Stricter Hate Crime Legislation”, Hatter Support Society, 3 May 2011, <<http://en.hatter.hu/news/hungary-adopts-stricter-hate-crimes-legislation>>.

72 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Permanent Mission of Albania to the International Organizations in Vienna, received 5 February 2013, p. 7.

73 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, received 18 February 2013, p. 13.

74 “Imperfect Justice: Anti-Roma Violence and Impunity”, European Roma Rights Centre, March 2011, <<http://www.errc.org/reports-and-advocacy-submissions/imperfect-justice-anti-roma-violence-and-impunity/3827>>.

75 ECRI in its 2007 General Policy Recommendation No. 11 on combating racism and racial discrimination in policing also emphasizes the issue of shortcomings in investigations and provides detailed guidance on how to address them; <[http://www.coe.int/t/dlapil/codexter/Source/ECRI\\_Recommendation\\_11\\_2007\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dlapil/codexter/Source/ECRI_Recommendation_11_2007_EN.pdf)>.

them. Preventing these crimes requires a multi-tiered approach.

While most participating States reported on legislative measures designed to address such crimes, there remains a need to further ensure that such crimes are properly investigated by law enforcement agencies and prosecuted by judicial systems. The OSCE commitments on combatting hate crimes should be fully realized in protecting Roma communities and individuals.

Action should be taken to combat the activities of organizations or individuals intended to intimidate Roma communities — the judgments of the European Court for Human Rights should be instructive in this area for legislators, the judiciary and law enforcement bodies.<sup>76</sup> Police need to be trained on the protection of minority communities, including Roma, from hate crimes and other forms of intimidation.

Government officials and leaders of political parties must not only refrain from the use of anti-Roma rhetoric, but must also demonstrate the political will to condemn such rhetoric when used by others.

Improving mutual trust between Roma and public authorities, particularly the police, remains a challenge. Ensuring that crimes against Roma are properly investigated is one part of the solution to this challenge. Other initiatives by law enforcement agencies can also contribute to improving trust, including the adoption or expansion of good practices like Roma-police mediators or police specialist programmes. Ensuring the effective representation and participation of Roma on police forces should be a priority, particularly in communities with significant Roma populations.

76 The European Court of Human Rights, in its judgment of 9 July 2013, found that the rights under Article 11 of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) of a leader of a Hungarian paramilitary group had not been violated, that is to say, the dissolution of the Hungarian Guard (Association and Movement) did not contravene the ECHR. A large part of the Court's reasoning was based largely on the harm done to the vulnerable Roma minority by the activities of the Hungarian Guard, even though it noted that no physical violence [was] done. Furthermore, "iii) the activities of the Hungarian Guard amounted to the intimidation of the Romani minority, taking into account the historical context, the visually striking imagery of the Hungarian Guard with its implied threat of paramilitary violence, the choice of venue for rallies, the fact that Roma were a 'captive audience' during rallies (that is they were effectively trapped in their homes), the repetition of organized rallies and the well-documented fact that Roma are a vulnerable minority in Hungary" (Vona v Hungary, 9 July 2013, paras. 63-70, <<http://www.errc.org/article/vona-v-hungary/4158>>).

### 3. HOUSING AND LIVING CONDITIONS

#### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

Despite the signs of *positive change* during the review period, the housing situation for the majority of Roma in many participating States continues to be characterized by a lack of secure tenure, a lack of access to basic infrastructure, discrimination in access to social-housing schemes, residential segregation and conditions that pose a risk to human health. As in the previous Status Report, residential segregation and forced evictions, including of Roma immigrants, continue to be key challenges.

Only Slovakia and Serbia reported having mapped the spatially informal settlements of marginalized com-

"[Recommended action by participating States:] 43. Put in place mechanisms and institutional procedures to clarify property rights, resolve questions of ownership and regularize the legal status of Roma and Sinti people living in circumstances of unsettled legality (e.g., Roma neighbourhoods lacking land rights or which are not included in the urban plans of the main locality; families and houses without legal residence status in settlements where the people have been living *de facto* for decades)."

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter IV

munities or identified the number of so-called informal settlements lacking adequate infrastructure. Spain and Greece have done similar work, although less detailed. The most recent such survey was conducted by the FRA,<sup>77</sup> the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the European Commission and the World Bank in 12 countries of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, confirming the precarious or substandard living conditions for Roma.<sup>78</sup> The UNDP, World Bank and

77 EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, "Housing Conditions of Roma and Travellers in the European Union: Comparative Report", October 2009, p. 92, <[http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Roma\\_Housing\\_Comparative-final\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Roma_Housing_Comparative-final_en.pdf)>; this report was done in response to a request by the European Commission in December 2007.

78 Tatjana Peric, "The housing situation of Roma communities: Regional Roma Survey 2011", UNDP, 2012. This survey, co-funded by the European Commission in the EU Member States, covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia and Romania.

European Commission Regional survey from 2011,<sup>79</sup> as do NGO studies<sup>80</sup>, points to a similar lack of progress in countries that are not EU members.

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the European Committee on Social Rights have received a number of complaints relating to evictions and to the housing of Roma and Sinti communities.<sup>81</sup> In the case of *Yordanova and Others v. Bulgaria*, concerning the planned eviction of Roma from a settlement on municipal land in Batalova Vodenitsa in Sofia, the Court found a violation of Article 8 (the right to private and family life) and, further, that the law governing removal orders did not properly balance the different interests involved.

Since 2009, the European Committee on Social Rights has found violations of the housing rights of Roma and Travellers in France,<sup>82</sup> Portugal<sup>83</sup> and Italy.<sup>84</sup> In these cases, violations of housing rights were found on the grounds of the poor living conditions of Roma and Travellers in camps or halting sites, the failure to create a sufficient number of halting sites for Travellers, evictions

performed without respect for the dignity of the persons concerned and without providing alternative accommodation, the failure to provide legal remedies and/or legal aid to those who need it to seek redress from the courts following eviction, and the failure to adequately supply affordable housing for persons with limited resources.

In their replies, most participating States reported that housing is accessible to all without discrimination. However, several participating States (Finland, Greece, Serbia and Sweden) also recognized that discrimination against Roma in the housing market exists.<sup>85</sup> This is also confirmed by the cases reported to national human rights institutions, including Ombuds offices.

Residential segregation was reported as a problem in a large number of countries in the OSCE area. Research on this topic in Hungary and the Czech Republic concluded<sup>86</sup> that the main burden for changing this lies in the hands of local governments, as these are entirely responsible for the distribution of municipally owned housing.<sup>87</sup> In several countries, residential segregation seems to be on the rise and the economic crisis is aggravating this trend. This is evidenced by the rise in relocation or rehousing of Roma into, for example, so-called “residential hotels”<sup>88</sup> or container settlements.<sup>89</sup>

79 “The Situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States. Survey results at a glance”, FRA, UNDP, World Bank and European Commission, 2011, p.12, <[http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance\\_EN.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/2099-FRA-2012-Roma-at-a-glance_EN.pdf)>.

80 For example, ERRC research from 2010 in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia shows that Roma in large numbers in those countries have to live in substandard housing conditions. “Although each country has its own characteristics, housing which fails to meet adequate living standards is a common issue facing many Roma in these countries.” See: ERRC, “Factsheet: Roma Housing in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia and Romania”, ERRC, 2010, <<http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/undef-housing-brief-13-december-2010.pdf>>.

81 See: *Buckley v. the United Kingdom* (25.09.1996); *Chapman v. The United Kingdom*, *Coster v. the United Kingdom*; *Board v. the United Kingdom*, *Lee v. The United Kingdom*, *Jane Smith v. The United Kingdom* (18.01.2001, Grand Chamber); *Connors v. the United Kingdom* (27.05.2004); *Yordanova and Others v. Bulgaria* (24.04.2012); *Winterstein and Others v. France* (no. 27013/07) communicated on 09.09.2008.

82 See: *European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) v. France*, Complaint No. 51/2008 <[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC51Merits\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC51Merits_en.pdf)>; and *Centre for Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) v. France*, Complaint No. 63/2010, <[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/complaints/CC63Merits\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/complaints/CC63Merits_en.pdf)>, as well as Council of Europe Ministerial Resolution, CM/ResChS(2013), 6 Médecins du Monde – International c. France, Réclamation n° 67/2011, <<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=2051673&Site=CM>>.

83 See: *European Roma Rights Centre v. Portugal* Complaint No. 61/2010 <[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC61Merits\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC61Merits_en.pdf)>.

84 See: *Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) v. Italy*, Complaint No. 58/2009 <[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC58Merits\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/Complaints/CC58Merits_en.pdf)>.

85 In Finland, the National Housing Tribunal addressed a case in 2010 concerning discrimination in housing in which the Discrimination Tribunal concluded that the practices of a municipality violated the Non-Discrimination Act.

86 See, for example, Gabor Fleck, Cosima Rughinis (Eds.), *Come Closer. Inclusion and Exclusion of Roma in Present Day Romanian Society*, 2008.

87 Lippai, Cecilia, Lenka Strnadová, and Ladislav Toušek, “Housing Conditions and Spatial Segregation of the Roma in the Czech Republic and Hungary: A Case Study Comparison,” 2011, <[http://respect.iusspavia.it/files/workingpapers/RESPECT\\_WP\\_13-2011\\_Lippai-Strnadova-Tousek.pdf](http://respect.iusspavia.it/files/workingpapers/RESPECT_WP_13-2011_Lippai-Strnadova-Tousek.pdf)>.

88 The term “lodging house” or “residential hotel” refers to the social housing scheme in the Czech Republic following the transformation of the housing market in the mid-nineties. “The drastic changes in the housing market led to the emergence of private ‘bedsits’ ubytovny [singular: ubytovna, lodging house], where people who have lost their regular home are accommodated in extremely modest conditions (usually entire families in a single room, with joint kitchens, bathrooms and toilets). Persons lodged in such facilities have no adequate legal protection regarding security of tenure and rents are disproportionately high, although partially covered by welfare benefits,” Fundamental Rights Agency, “Case Study, Living Together, Czech Republic, October 2009”, p.8, <[http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/601-ROMA\\_Housing\\_Case-final-ENCS.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/601-ROMA_Housing_Case-final-ENCS.pdf)>; in practice, the rents charged for this substandard housing are unreasonably higher than those charged on the normal market and are paid by the state authorities directly to landlords.

89 See “Roma evicted from Belgrade shanty town”, 7 March 2010, <[http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society.php?yyyy=2012&mm=03&dd=07&nav\\_id=79145](http://www.b92.net/eng/news/society.php?yyyy=2012&mm=03&dd=07&nav_id=79145)>.

In Slovakia in the municipality of Michalovce in 2009, and in Ostrovany in 2010,<sup>90</sup> municipal funds were used to erect a wall between Roma and non-Roma residents. This also happened in Lomnička, Trebišov and Prešov.<sup>91</sup> According to media reports, 14 walls had been erected by the end of July 2013 to segregate Roma from their non-Roma neighbors. The most recent one was built in Košice.<sup>92</sup> In its new Roma strategy submitted to the Commission, the Slovak government mentioned three key principles that will guide state action in the future: de-stigmatization, desegregation and de-ghettoization. The evidence suggests that some local-level efforts run counter these strategic principles.<sup>93</sup>

Roma also face discrimination in accessing social housing when eligibility criteria are set up in such a way that they cannot meet them. So far, social housing legislation<sup>94</sup> that has been recently adopted or amended has failed to account for the specific vulnerability of Roma (as reported from Albania, formal employment is one eligibility criteria that Roma often cannot meet).

In many participating States, forced evictions are a constant threat to Roma living in precarious circumstances, most often in illegal or unregulated settlements. Evictions typically lead to even worse living conditions, as moving to other locations may place Roma even further away from utilities and services or in housing of even lower quality. This process perpetuates the vulnerability and marginalization of these communities, and can create tensions with the residents of areas to which Roma communities are being resettled. Forced evictions of Roma immigrants from unauthorized campsites have

been reported from several EU Member States.<sup>95</sup> With regard to Travellers within the EU, FRA found a lack of halting sites available, leading to Travellers being forced to reside illegally as a last resort when seeking adequate halting places to meet their needs.<sup>96</sup>

Following the June 2011 European Council Decision, improving housing conditions for Roma became a priority area. In its first review report to the European Parliament, the European Commission negatively evaluated the EU Member States' housing initiatives in this regard.<sup>97</sup> The Commission recommended promoting desegregation, facilitating local integrated housing approaches (particularly with regard to public utilities and social service infrastructure) and, where applicable, improving the affordability, capacity and quality of social housing and halting sites providing access to affordable services.<sup>98</sup> A key EU development is a regulation from 2010 that makes financial support from the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF) applicable to housing interventions for extremely poor and marginalized communities, something that had not been the case before.<sup>99</sup> This change to the regulations should lead to more opportunities for social inclusion and desegre-

90 See "Standards to not apply. Inadequate Housing in Romani Communities", European Roma Rights Centre, December 2010 p 19.

91 *Ibid.* p 20.

92 "Walls are going up again", *The Economist*, 25 July 2013, <<http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2013/07/slovaks-and-roma>>.

93 Slovak National Centre for Human Rights, "Report 2012 on the observance of the human rights and observance of principle of equal treatment and rights of the child in the Slovak Republic", Bratislava 2013, p.126-127, Map of Anti-Roma Walls in the Slovak Republic .

94 Albania has amended its legislation, while the Czech Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro are in the process of making amendments.

95 Italy, France the United Kingdom, Spain, Germany and Belgium. For example see: Amnesty International, "Amnesty appeal to stop forced eviction of Dale Farm Irish Travellers", 2011, <[http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news\\_details.asp?NewsID=19645](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=19645)>; "Thematic study on the housing conditions of Roma and Travellers", RAXEN NFP, Belgium, March 2009, <[http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra\\_uploads/574-RAXEN-Roma%20Housing-Belgium\\_en.pdf](http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/574-RAXEN-Roma%20Housing-Belgium_en.pdf)>; "Faces of a Madrid Slum Clearance", *The Atlantic*, 19 June 2013, <<http://www.theatlanticcities.com/neighborhoods/2013/06/faces-madrid-slum-clearance/5966/>>; and "Spanish Gypsies Lament after Homes Demolished", *NBC News*, 5 November 2012, <[http://photoblog.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2012/11/05/14949970-spanish-gypsies-lament-after-homes-demolished?lite](http://photoblog.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/11/05/14949970-spanish-gypsies-lament-after-homes-demolished?lite)>.

96 FRA Housing Report, *op. cit.*, note 77, p. 6. CERD, in its concluding observations on France in 2010, expressed similar concerns. See European Committee of Social Rights, 28 June 2011, Decision on the Merits, *Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) v. France*, Complaint No. 63/2010, CERD/C/FRA/CO/17-19, 23 September 2010, para 16, <<http://daccess-ods.un.org/TMP/5396255.25474548.html>>.

97 "Although all Member States agree with the need to improve the housing conditions of many Roma, few propose concrete measures as part of an integrated approach to tackle the situation" and further: "Member States are therefore encouraged to consider broadening the scope of housing interventions, urban planning and rural development and making them part of such comprehensive plans", European Commission Communication 2012, *op. cit.*, note 23.

98 *Ibid.*, p.12.

99 Regulation No 437/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 May 2010 amended article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1080/2006 on the ERDF as regards the eligibility of housing interventions in favour of marginalized communities.

gation, although certain challenges remain,<sup>100</sup> as only a few Member States have Roma-focused plans or programmes for facilitating access to housing.<sup>101</sup>

### Action by Participating States

A *positive change* in housing and living conditions for Roma has been noted for the current review period, both in terms of reporting on housing initiatives and in the funding made available for improving the housing conditions of Roma. Some countries have achieved *visible progress* in this regard (Spain, Poland, Slovenia and Croatia). However, in several key participating States with large Roma populations, there has been an absence of real change or the trend has been negative, despite some efforts and projects implemented.

It should be noted that 22 of the participating States reported that they have undertaken initiatives to improve Roma housing conditions, and that these have been supported by legal frameworks and action programmes targeting Roma specifically. In most cases these laws were adopted very recently, so their effectiveness in creating better conditions for Roma communities remains to be seen.

Several participating States (such as Poland, the United Kingdom and Ireland) reported housing programmes supported by state budgets, as well as the outcomes and beneficiaries of these programmes. In other participating States (such as Germany and Austria), governments stated that the housing needs of Roma had already been secured in general laws and provisions. Almost all of the countries with sizeable Roma communities have developed projects in the field of housing, although many of these are large, mainstream projects targeting the general category of socially excluded or disadvantaged populations, rather than Roma in particular. This is especially true for EU Member States, due to their inclusion

policies.<sup>102</sup> Most of the projects in the field of housing, as reported in the governments' replies, have been financed from national budgets, coupled with EU funding (for Member States) or with money from the EU and other donors for countries with EU-accession aspirations.

Altogether, the approximately 49 projects reported in the responses to the ODIHR questionnaire can be grouped into the following categories:

- Most of the projects (about 20) reported focus on the construction or renovation of housing units for Roma in need. Some of these housing units are intended to be permanent homes, while others are defined as "shelter houses," "assisted houses," or "social housing", and are meant to be rather temporary shelters. Many of these projects are accompanied by the construction or upgrading of the surrounding infrastructure, to prevent the degradation of the housing over time. There are few examples, however, where the social context of such projects has been taken into account to prevent further social exclusion. The projects also lack detail regarding the extent to which Roma communities are directly involved in the development and whether they offer economic opportunities for Roma (through employment).
- Fourteen of the projects (in Spain, Hungary and Turkey) focus on the "rehabilitation" of towns or particular districts. These are sometimes described as "urban regeneration and development projects", which are often part of broader schemes of sustainable urban development. These projects may offer a good chance for comprehensive improvements to the situation of Roma communities. Such projects can sometimes have a negative effect, however, as there have been instances in which they have been used as an opportunity to move Roma communities into substandard housing in peripheral districts, while their previous places of habitation were turned into residential areas. The subsequent process of gentrification has meant that even those Roma who have initially remained in the "regenerated" districts were eventually forced to leave because they could no longer afford the rent and increased cost of living.

100 A study for the European Parliament points out that although this measure is important and potentially successful, "the Commission has already acknowledged shortcomings in the administration of funds at the local level and the widespread reticence and lack of awareness of such opportunities constitute serious obstacles to the implementation of successful Roma strategies in this area." European Parliament, "Measures to Promote the Situation of Roma EU Citizens in the European Union", Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, 2011, p. 36.

101 Sobotka, Eva, and Peter Vermeersch. "Governing Human Rights and Roma Inclusion: Can the EU Be a Catalyst for Local Social Change?" *Human Rights Quarterly* 34, no. 3, 2012, p. 800–822.

102 European Commission: "Communication from the Commission Europe 2020: A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth", 3 March 2010, Brussels, < <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF>>.

- Six of the projects reported deal specifically with the issue of infrastructure creation and/or improvement, including the construction of bridges, roads and sewage systems, providing electricity and water supplies, organizing transportation, building community centres and facilitating business development.
- Five projects deal with the important issue of resolving legal matters associated with housing plans and Roma settlements. These include the creation of the urban plans that are legal requirements for construction projects, solving property issues and legalizing already-existing settlements.
- Five projects (in France, Ireland and the United Kingdom) focus on Traveller and/or Roma communities and include refurbishing and creating caravan sites, providing caravan dwellers with “specific accommodation” (i.e., new caravans) or offering caravan dwellers the option of moving into permanent apartments. These projects are particularly important in the broader context of the situation of Roma as they migrate to Western Europe, where policies toward Roma encampments are ambiguous.
- Three of the projects, reported by France and Italy, aim to create “integrated villages” or to move camp dwellers into “integrated neighborhoods”, and are especially important as tools against segregation.

In the case of Finland there are attempts to make already-existing housing opportunities more accessible to Roma, not by producing special legislation, but through research projects and information campaigns.<sup>103</sup> In addition, in many of the participating States the implementation of housing policy falls under the competence of local administrations. This may sometimes hamper the implementation of national policy commitments, as local governments may be uninterested in improving the housing conditions of Roma.

<sup>103</sup> Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Finland co-ordinated by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, received 27 February, 2013.

Some participating States reported their use of the European Regional Development Funds (ERDF)<sup>104</sup> for programmes aimed at addressing the social inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups at the local level, including Roma.<sup>105</sup> For example, the Bulgarian government reported that 125,214 Roma have directly or indirectly benefited from this programme.<sup>106</sup> Civil society actors, however, provide a different assessment, stressing that the programme was halted in 2009, with an adverse impact.<sup>107</sup>

A number of participating States (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Serbia) reported successful projects to legalize housing for Roma in particular municipalities, along with the reconstruction of housing and Roma *mahalas* or neighborhoods destroyed during the conflicts in the Western Balkans.<sup>108</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina was one state that reported progress in building houses for Roma, as this was a priority area.<sup>109</sup>

In Serbia, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Urban Planning supported eight municipalities in

<sup>104</sup> “Support of modern social housing for vulnerable, minority and socially disadvantaged groups as well as other disadvantaged population groups” within the Operational Programme “Regional Development 2007 - 2013”. The project has been implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund. The total financing allocated to the scheme is 15,659,106 BGN (approximately 8 million Euro), including co-financing from the State Budget; Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria to the UN, the OSCE and other International Organisations in Vienna, received 11 March 2013.

<sup>105</sup> Among other things, the programme supports the construction of new buildings for social housing on land that is municipal property, as well as the repair, reconstruction and renovation of existing buildings owned by municipalities for social housing.

<sup>106</sup> Bulgarian response, *op. cit.*, note 104.

<sup>107</sup> Deyan Kolev at the ODIHR Expert Meeting on the OSCE Status Report, 23 May 2013. See also “Civil Society Monitoring on the Implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategies and Decade Action Plans in 2012, Summary Report”, Roma Decade, 2013, p 16.

<sup>108</sup> The most prominent case in Kosovo is the return project for the Roma Mahala in northern Mitrovica/Mitrovicë. By 2007, 460 Roma had returned to this neighborhood. Those who could not prove property ownership were resettled in newly-built apartment blocks. Finally, in 2011, the remaining displaced Roma who had been exposed to lead contamination in the Osterode IDP camp were able to return to the Roma mahala, to houses built with the support of 5 million euros from the EU; see <[http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/press\\_corner/all\\_news/news/2011/20112011\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/press_corner/all_news/news/2011/20112011_en.htm)>.

<sup>109</sup> Commission Staff Working Document Bosnia And Herzegovina 2012 Progress Report, p. 20, <[http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key\\_documents/2012/package/ba\\_rapport\\_2012\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/ba_rapport_2012_en.pdf)>.

drafting urban planning documents for adoption.<sup>110</sup> In 2010, two municipalities, Knjazevac and Srbobran, adopted urban planning documents.<sup>111</sup> Some participating States also undertook studies to map the housing situation and housing needs of the Roma population to support the creation of better housing policy. However, comparatively few housing-policy measures were reported as having been put into practice.<sup>112</sup>

The example of Spain stands out in this regard. It should be underlined that the situation there is not as dramatic as in many other participating States, as figures for 1991 reported that only about ten per cent of Roma there lived in slums or shanty towns. Spain, through its plan for rehabilitating and renovating urban areas, managed to reduce that percentage to less than four per cent by 2007.

There is a different set of issues in relation to the situation of Roma immigrants who seek secure living conditions in destination countries, mostly in EU Member States. Some positive steps have been undertaken in this regard towards Roma, Sinti and Caminanti people in Italy.<sup>113</sup> Along with a conceptual change of policy towards these communities, the government is planning to end its “camps” policy and move toward an integrated approach in securing permanent housing for these groups. A number of smaller initiatives from different localities in Italy were also reported.

France reported the setting up of temporary “integration villages” for a number of Romanian Roma families, in Saint Denis, Aubervilliers, Saint Ouen, Bagnolet and Montreuil. In another programme, 40 wooden chalets in Bordeaux were built with ERDF funds to accommodate relocated people, including Roma. Furthermore, France has engaged pilot programmes, such as one in Rhône, the “Andatu Project”, to relocate Romanian immigrants. Since the beginning of 2012, 20 families there have been assisted by an association (Forum Réfugiés) on their way to self-sustainability through access to

rights and general integration. They were provided with temporary residence permits and assistance in finding accommodation and employment.<sup>114</sup>

In the case of the United Kingdom, the government will provide approximately 72 million euros from 2010 until 2015 to provide new and refurbished Traveller pitches in England through the Traveller Pitch Fund, which is part of the Affordable Housing Programme.<sup>115</sup> Ireland is implementing its third Traveller Accommodation Programme (2009-2013), aiming to provide 440 units of Traveller-specific accommodation supported by approximately 50 million euros in capital funding from the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.<sup>116</sup>

Several countries in the Western Balkans still host numbers of internally displaced Roma or Roma refugees from the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. While sustainable solutions have been found for some of them, many still remain displaced and living in deplorable housing conditions. In 2011, a regional multi-annual housing programme was endorsed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia and Serbia to provide durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons from the 1991-1995 conflict and to vulnerable persons displaced in Montenegro in 1999.<sup>117</sup> Within this regional initiative, the Montenegrin government is planning the permanent closure of the Konik refugee camp,<sup>118</sup> which now hosts 1,400 displaced Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians from Kosovo.\*

### Priority Areas and Recommendations

There has been some *positive change* in the funding for and projects implemented to improve Roma housing conditions, although many are still piecemeal and require greater funding, especially in the participating States that have the largest Roma communities. In fact,

110 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the NGO PRAXIS, received 15 April 2013.

111 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Permanent Representative of the Republic of Serbia to the OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna, received 6 March 2013.

112 Such studies were conducted in Slovakia, Serbia and Hungary; Finland is planning such a study.

113 “The old conception, which associated these communities with the solely connotation [sic] of “nomadism” has been overcome: this term is outdated both linguistically and culturally, since it does not portray correctly the current situation” in: *National Strategy for the Inclusion of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti Communities – European Commission Communication No.173/2011*, p.4; <[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma\\_italy\\_strategy\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_italy_strategy_en.pdf)>.

114 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Permanent Representative of France to the OSCE, received 6 March 2013.

115 United Kingdom Response, *op. cit.*, note 34.

116 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the OSCE, received 28 May 2013, p.19

117 The regional programme is supported by the European Commission, the US government, UNHCR, the OSCE, and a fund managed by the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB).

118 See “Montenegro firmly committed to resolving housing issue of displaced and internally displaced persons”, 17 January 2013, <<http://www.predsipol.gov.me/en/news/118835/bcv.html>>.

\* All references to Kosovo refer to Kosovo under UNSCR 1244. All references to Kosovo institutions refer to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government.



in those countries, various *negative trends* are now on the rise that should be a cause for major concern.

Housing conditions impact the health of Roma and especially their conditions for educational achievement and child development, and the dire living and housing conditions of many Roma are among the strongest push factors for their migration. Evictions and “voluntary” or *de facto* forced return policies may prove ineffective. Governments should address this as an urgent challenge.

Improving this situation will require long-term Roma housing policies, with sufficient funding and subsidization policies for social housing for some time into the future. Social housing legislation for vulnerable groups, to establish long-term support mechanisms to alter their living conditions, is a prerequisite.

Major steps need to be taken with regard to regularizing the status of Roma settlements that are currently illegal. This is an often-repeated recommendation on which there has been insufficient action. Halting and reversing the dangerous trend of segregation and ghettoization should also be a priority.

#### 4. HEALTH CARE

##### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

Despite a rise in the number of projects and programmes in this area, limited progress has been achieved in reversing the negative health trends in Roma communities. Concern remains about instances of discrimination in access to health services and dire health conditions, especially for Roma immigrants<sup>119</sup> and Roma women and children.<sup>120</sup> Further, a lack of identity cards continues to impact a significant number of Roma, especially in the Western Balkans region.<sup>121</sup>

119 “Roma Health Newsletter”, World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, Denmark, May 2012.

120 Roma women and children are considered the most vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation among immigrant Roma.

121 In Albania, for example, a five-month survey by UNHCR conducted in 2007, revealed over 1,600 unregistered Roma children in different locations. The issue was listed as one of the priority areas in the conclusions of high-level conferences initiated by the EU’s Directorate-General for Enlargement with the governments of accession countries.

Substandard living conditions,<sup>122</sup> including lack of clean water and sanitation, have a serious impact on the health status of many Roma communities. These conditions make Roma communities more vulnerable to infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and hepatitis.

High, long-term unemployment, welfare dependency, segregation and isolation in ghetto-type settlements are all factors that impact Roma family life and are especially evident among the younger generation, in the form of drug and alcohol addiction, with a related increase in the incidence of HIV/AIDS.<sup>123</sup>

According to the results of surveys published by UNDP, the World Bank, European Commission and FRA in 2011, about 20 per cent of Roma respondents either were not covered by medical insurance or did not know whether they were covered. Most Roma families are unable to afford medicines, and about 40 per cent did not consult a doctor when they are ill.<sup>124</sup> Surveys by FRA and the World Bank report that Roma households experience much less security when it comes to the protection of their health than do their non-Roma peers. In some participating States, Roma do not register the births of children or apply for identity cards for them; this continues to constitute a major impediment for them in accessing health care.

A 2012 World Bank Regional Survey notes that Roma life expectancy is 10-15 years lower than that of the

“[Recommended action by participating States:] Ensure that Roma and Sinti people have access to health care services on a non-discriminatory basis.”

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter IV

122 For example, studies on the situation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia demonstrate that those who live in marginalized communities have worse health conditions, for more, see: Masse, Rambouskova, J., Dlouhy, P., Krizova, E., Brochazka, B., Hrcirova, D., and Andel, M. “Health behaviors, nutritional status, and anthropometric parameters of Roma and non-Roma mothers and their infants in the Czech Republic” *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 2009.

123 “HIV/AIDS in Southeastern Europe: Case Studies from Bulgaria, Croatia, and Romania”, World Bank, Working Paper No. 4, May 2003, <[www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/07/26/000094946\\_0307100402503/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf](http://www.wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/07/26/000094946_0307100402503/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf)>.

124 A 2011 survey reveals that in the area of health, one out of three Roma respondents aged 35 to 54 on average reported experiencing health problems that limit their daily activities; the survey was performed in 11 Member States of the European Union; UNDP/EC/WB Regional survey 2011, *op. cit.*, note 21.

general population.<sup>125</sup> The Roma infant mortality rate continues to be twice that of non-Roma, while the incidence of low birth weights is five times higher and 20 per cent of Roma children experience stunted growth. The same report notes a high level of measles, mumps and rubella among Roma. Poor health and low socio-economic status are also linked to a high prevalence of malnutrition in Roma communities. The most worrying trends are the lack of vaccination among Roma children, their exposure to polluted environments, and the lack of infrastructure in their communities, especially in urban ghetto areas.

The most recent report on the health status of Roma in Europe is “Health and the Roma community: analysis of the situation in Europe”,<sup>126</sup> which was funded by the European Union through its Public Health Programme and covered Roma living in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. The report found that 15 per cent of the Roma in these countries suffer from some sort of disability or chronic disease.

There has been a particular longstanding concern about the health situations of (and access to health services for) Roma women. Roma women activists and organizations themselves have also been very active in addressing the multiple forms of discrimination that Romani women face, as was visible in the Declaration of the Third International Roma Women’s held in Granada, Spain, 23 to 25 October 2011. This Declaration recognizes the existence of harmful practices, such as early, arranged marriages in Roma communities and underlines that these practices constitute barriers to the development of and equality for Roma women, as well as to the development of Roma communities in general.

During the reporting period, there were also developments in providing redress to Roma women who have been sterilized without their free and informed consent in the past. In 2009, the Czech Republic expressed regret for coerced sterilizations of women there, and acknowledged individual failures,” and in 2012, the Czech Government Human Rights Council recommended the government provide compensation to all women who

125 “Reducing Vulnerability and promoting the Self-employment of Roma in Eastern Europe through Financial Inclusion” The World Bank, 4 September 2012, p.2, <<http://documents.banquemondiale.org/curated/fr/2012/09/16706486/reducing-vulnerability-promoting-self-employment-roma-eastern-europe-through-financial-inclusion>>.

126 “Health and the Roma community: analysis of the situation in Europe” Fundación Secretariado Gitano Health Area, 2009 <[http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma\\_health\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/files/roma_health_en.pdf)>.

have been illegally sterilized.<sup>127</sup> Individual Roma women who sued have also been awarded compensation by the Czech courts and through settlements with the government after their cases were declared admissible by the European Court of Human Rights.

In 2009, Hungary compensated a Roma woman who had been sterilized without her free and informed consent during the course of another obstetrical procedure.<sup>128</sup>

In 2011 and 2012, a total of three judgments were handed down against Slovakia by the European Court of Human Rights in cases brought by Roma women sterilized there without their free and informed consent: *V.C. v. Slovakia*,<sup>129</sup> *N.B. v. Slovakia*,<sup>130</sup> and *I.G. and others v. Slovakia*.<sup>131</sup> According to information provided by the Slovak government, compensation has been paid to the victims of involuntary sterilization.

### Action by Participating States

Twenty-one of the 40 participating States who replied to the ODIHR questionnaire indicated that some Roma-targeted programmes and projects had been implemented in the area of health. Ten participating States also provided data on funding and projects realized, while others provided some detail either about projects or beneficiaries. Some participating States underlined that general health services and health care provisions are applicable to all, without discrimination, including

127 “Parallel Report by the European Roma Rights Center, Life Together and the Groups of Women harmed by Forced Sterilization concerning the Czech Republic, To the Human Rights Council, within its Universal Periodic Review, for consideration at the 14th Session”, European Roma Rights Center, 22 October to 5 November 2012, p.6, <<http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/czech-republic-un-upr-submission-10-april-2012.pdf>>.

128 “Alternative report submitted to the UN CEDAW Committee for consideration in relation to the examination of the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of Hungary”, Hungarian Women’s Lobby and the European Roma Rights Centre, January 2013, <[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/HWLandERRC\\_Hungary\\_ForTheSession\\_Hungary\\_CEDAW54.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/HWLandERRC_Hungary_ForTheSession_Hungary_CEDAW54.pdf)>.

129 Case of *V.C. v. Slovakia*, no. 18968/07, 8 February 2012, <<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/webservices/content/pdf/003-3736079-4262767>>; also see “Human rights of Roma and Travellers in Europe”, Council of Europe Publications, Strasbourg 2012, p. 98, <[http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/prems/prems79611\\_GBR\\_CouvHumanRightsOfRoma\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/commissioner/source/prems/prems79611_GBR_CouvHumanRightsOfRoma_WEB.pdf)>.

130 Case of *N.B. v. Slovakia* no. 29518/10, 12 September 2012, <[http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-111427#{"itemid":\["001-111427"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-111427#{)>.

131 Case of *I.G. and Others v. Slovakia*, no. 15966/04, 29 April 2013, <[http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/fra/pages/search.aspx?i=001-114514#{"itemid":\["001-114514"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/fra/pages/search.aspx?i=001-114514#{)>.

Roma (as in the case of Austria, Germany, Norway, Portugal and the United Kingdom). In some other replies, governments reported supporting awareness-raising about Roma health needs through health mediation programmes (as in Belgium, Finland, France and Poland) or through intercultural guidelines for medical staff prepared by Roma (as in Finland). In newer EU Member States, such as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, Roma are included under the provisions for the broader category of socially disadvantaged or excluded people or communities, especially where major health programmes are mentioned.

Some participating States reported other measures and projects realized in this area during the review period, included immunization programmes and health screening campaigns. Those specifically oriented toward Roma often include improving sanitary conditions (especially in participating States with higher numbers of unregulated or illegal Roma settlements, such as in Central and Eastern Europe, or higher numbers of “camps” and shanty towns of migrant Roma, as in Western Europe); educational programmes and awareness-raising campaigns, including those targeting Roma women on the subject of reproductive rights; nutrition programmes to reduce child mortality; early diagnostics for specific diseases (HIV, tuberculosis, breast cancer and other cancers) and HIV/AIDS-prevention services; monitoring of water quality in Roma settlements; and activities to increase access to health care services, including through support provided to civil society organizations, health and social welfare centers or community centers, and the organization of mobile clinics to provide health care services to Roma communities.

Expanding Roma health mediator programmes was the most commonly reported measure targeted at improving the health status of Roma. Currently, this has been institutionalized in several countries (Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia,<sup>132</sup> Romania, Serbia and Slovakia<sup>133</sup>), where Roma health mediators are trained and employed by health ministries.

132 In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in March 2010, Foundation Open Society Institute Macedonia Public Health Programme launched the Roma Health Mediators Project with Open Society Institute – Roma Health Programme technical assistance and in partnership with other civil society groups. The country did not officially provide information on questions related to health in its replies to the ODIHR questionnaire. According to the OSCE Mission to Skopje Ministry of Health information on issues related to Roma health can also make the work of Roma health mediators more visible.

133 In Slovakia, the programme is run through community health workers funded by the Ministry of Health.

In Western Balkan countries, programmes addressing Roma health issues more often rely on projects and programmes funded by international donors (the EU, UNFPA, WHO, World Bank or OSI), although when the practice of employing health mediators becomes institutionalized, the health ministry usually covers the cost (as in Serbia). In Ukraine, Roma health mediators are still part of a project run by civil society. In much of the OSCE area, Roma health mediators, the majority of whom are women, have become an important community resource working to facilitate access to health care services among Roma and also represent role models for Roma women, i.e., in their career development as nurses and social workers.

The Roma health mediator programme in Romania initiated by civil society<sup>134</sup> was systemized within the Romanian public health system in 2002 when the Ministry of Family and Health adopted an ordinance making “Roma health mediator” an official profession. In November 2008, the Ministry of Family and Health approved the transfer of the Roma health mediators and community nurses to local authority management, even as their financing was still ensured from the ministerial budget. In 2011, approximately 450 Roma health mediators were actively involved in supporting members of the Roma minority (mothers and children especially) in accessing public health care services. The programme has been identified as a good practice by both the Council of Europe and the European Commission.<sup>135</sup>

In Bulgaria, the Roma health mediator programme functions as part of the Health Strategy for Disadvantaged Persons Belonging to Minorities (2005-2015). The programme is supported by the National Council for Co-operation on Ethnic and Demographic Issues and the Ministry of Health. In 2007, there were 92 Roma health mediators, and that number had risen to 105 in 2011. There are also eight community health care and social work centres run by Roma civil society in larger cities, supported in Roma communities by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS and Tuberculosis. Two major

134 The Roma health mediator programme was implemented through a partnership between the NGO Romani CRISS, the Ministry of Family and Health, and the OSCE/ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. See “Scurt istoric al ului de mediere sanitara”, Romani CRISS website, <<http://www.romanicriss.org/Istoric%20al%20program%20mediere%20sanitara.pdf>>[http://www.romanicriss.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=298&Itemid=552](http://www.romanicriss.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=298&Itemid=552)>.

135 “Roma health mediators: Success and challenges”, Open Society Institute Public Health Programme, 2011, <<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/roma-health-mediators-successes-and-challenges>>.

information campaigns have been supported by the Operational Programme Human Resources Development, where Roma communities were part of the target groups. The Bulgarian government, in its reply, provided information about the outcomes of these programmes and their beneficiaries (although the data seem to reflect the total number of beneficiaries, including Roma).

In Serbia there are currently 75 Roma health mediators; 60 of them are employed by the Ministry of Health, while the rest are supported financially by the OSCE Mission and the EU. "Health mediator" is an official profession in Serbia.<sup>136</sup> Most of the mediators are Roma women who have been trained (for three months) and are supervised by professional community nurses, who report to the ministry regarding their work together. The health mediators are provided with computers and mobile telephones, and pay visits to Roma communities, including those most disadvantaged and isolated. A software programme has been designed for data collection about these visits and the data are submitted to the ministry, where they are processed and shared with other ministries, if necessary. The Ministry reported that the Roma health mediator programme is delivering concrete outcomes and measurable improvements in Roma health status and in access to healthcare among Roma in Serbia (e.g., Roma child mortality has dropped by 50 per cent since the programme was implemented).

The Serbian Government reports that, through its health mediator programme, it has recorded information regarding 120,708 individuals (36,600 families) from Roma settlements since 2010. The health mediators visited 138,106 households, recording that 13,647 people in these settlements had no health insurance or personal identification, including birth certificates. The mediators secured insurance for 7,389 persons and resolved 3,545 cases of individuals without personal identification. Furthermore, 19,528 persons were registered with the doctor of their choice and systematic health check-ups were performed on 7,112 women.

In Slovakia, the "Programme for Supporting the Health of Disadvantaged Communities in Slovakia for

the Period of 2009-2015",<sup>137</sup> initiated by the Ministry of Health Care, is implemented through a network of community health-education workers managed by regional public health authorities. Their main role is to help Roma in segregated settlements improve their general health conditions, by providing them with information about disease prevention, health care provisions, health insurance and patients' rights. Between 2009 and 2011, a total of 12 regional public health authorities participated in the programme; a total of 30 community health education workers operated in the field, including ten co-ordinators and 20 assistant co-ordinators. By 2011 their network covered 122 Roma settlements. The ministry covered the salaries, social security contributions, travel costs and material expenses for the programme's staff. The programme was affected by budget cuts due to austerity measures in 2012, resulting in a slight decrease in the number of mediators employed. However, the plans under the new "Strategy for Roma Inclusion" feature an increase in both the budget and the number of mediators.<sup>138</sup>

Ukraine is continuing its Roma health programme, dubbed "Increasing Access of Roma to Health Services". The project involves preparing Roma medical mediators to oversee the health care situation in Roma communities, while providing information about the need for regular medical examinations. Through this programme, the Health Ministry of Ukraine has been addressing the high incidence of tuberculosis among Roma and has improved pediatric assistance to Roma children and medical care for Roma women. The Ukrainian government reported that the mortality rate among Roma children remains higher than the national average and the rate of tuberculosis infections among Roma remained high.<sup>139</sup>

The Czech Republic has adopted measures to improve the health status of the Roma, including the

137 The Programme's first stage (2007 to 2008) was approved through the Slovak Government Resolution No. 680/2007 of August 15, 2007 and was designed in co-operation with the Office of the Government Plenipotentiary for Romani Communities. The Programme constitutes a systemic continuation of the pilot project entitled "Improving the Romani Minority's Access to Health Care in the Slovak Republic". The implementation of the Programme's first stage involved ten regional public health authorities in Banská Bystrica, Bardejov, Košice, Michalovce, Poprad, Prešov, Rimavská Sobota, Rožňava, Spišská Nová Ves, and Stará Ľubovňa.

138 The second stage of the programme will be implemented between 2013 and 2015. It envisages increasing the total number of community health education workers to 120 by the end of 2013.

139 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organisations in Vienna, received 28 March 2013.

136 The Roma health mediator programme was introduced by the OSCE Mission in Serbia in 2007 with funding (EUR 2 million) from the EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance. The programme was institutionalized in 2010.

implementation of the “Social and Health Assistance” programme and the publication of the “Roma Population and Health – Czech Republic – 2009 National Report”. In 2011, the initial steps were made towards establishing a health mediator programme in a number of regions and municipalities; steps were taken through another Czech project to create health mediator positions and provide training for health mediators in socially excluded communities.

Finland reports that, as access to social services, including health care services, is provided on an equal basis to all, Roma are included, and that some hospitals that serve larger numbers of immigrant Roma from Eastern Europe employ intercultural mediators.

Belgium features similar policies; under the auspices of the national Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and the Environment, it has established intercultural mediators who act on behalf of Roma. The mediators are currently employed in a number of hospitals and are of Albanian, Bosnian, Romanian and Serbian origin. The mediators primarily serve immigrant communities residing in Belgium. The government has found that, for vulnerable groups like the Roma, these social services in hospitals are particularly important in order to guarantee accessibility, continuity and quality of care. In an effort to support the co-ordinators of intercultural mediation in hospitals, the Federal Public Service’s Intercultural Mediation and Policy Support Unit recently organized training sessions for working with Roma patients.

Some participating States, such as Spain, pay more attention to awareness-raising and disseminating information to Roma when it comes to health. The government reported on six programmes in this area, including those that issue publications, handbooks or audio-visual materials, such as a video entitled “The Art of Healthy Living” produced within the framework of the National Strategy for Health Equity for the Roma Population.

Programmes designed to train Roma health professionals were also set up during the review period. One such example is a European Union-funded scholarship programme in Romania. Developed by OSI and the Roma Education Fund, the programme gives Roma students and professionals the opportunity to study medicine, nursing or pharmacology.<sup>140</sup>

140 “European Union Agrees to Fund Scholarships for Roma Health Professionals in Romania”, Open Society Foundations, March 1 2010, <<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/press-releases/european-union-agrees-fund-scholarships-roma-health-professionals-romania>>.

## Priority Areas and Recommendations

Addressing the health status of Roma requires attention to the underlying root causes of their health status. Preventative and awareness-raising actions, while needed, may have limited outcomes if the communities in question remain living in conditions that are detrimental and hazardous to their health.

At the same time, it is also crucial to tackle issues related to discrimination against Roma. The health systems in many participating States still remain inaccessible to many Roma, especially to the severely marginalized, such as members of socially excluded Roma communities, Roma immigrants, Roma women and children, and Roma living in illegal settlements or shanty towns. The lack of the necessary personal identification documents, including birth certificates, makes it particularly difficult for Roma to access health services, and comprehensive approaches to ensuring that Roma receive these documents are needed.<sup>141</sup>

The provision of a comprehensive package of policies targeting Roma children, mothers and caregivers is instrumental in laying the foundations for health throughout the course of life. Education, starting from early childhood, is of the utmost importance, especially for women and girls when it comes to accessing information allowing them to make life choices that support healthy lifestyles.

Sustained action is needed to improve living conditions for Roma communities across Europe, including support for improvements in hygiene and safety standards in both rural and urban Roma communities.

The provision of equitable, universal access to health care services — regardless of the ability to pay — should be a priority in order to reduce health inequities among marginalized communities. Groups working with Roma communities have identified a number of barriers to accessing health care services among Roma, namely, a lack of knowledge about disease prevention, a lack of knowledge about their health care service rights, and a lack of physical access to services due to distance and the cost of transportation. Some participating States have cited austerity measures and limited budgets as contributing to this situation. There needs to be an understanding of the need for continuity in health care efforts in order to achieve sustainable results. Budgetary shortages in this area could be offset through the increased

141 “Briefing Paper and Policy Recommendations on Roma Health”, EPHA, 2013 <<http://www.ephpa.org/spip.php?article3980>>.

use of Structural Funds in the EU Member States and other support funding in those countries aiming at EU accession.

## 5. UNEMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

During the review period, continuing negative economic conditions have significantly exacerbated the disadvan-

[Recommended action by participating States:]

“Promote increased representation of qualified Roma and Sinti people in public employment (Article 48)

“Develop training programmes to prepare under-represented groups such as Roma and Sinti for employment in local public administration and other areas, and develop policies to encourage employment of the graduates of these programmes as civil servants (Article 49)

“Develop policies and programmes, including vocational training, to improve the marketable skills and employability of Roma and Sinti people, particularly young people and women (Article 51)

“Adopt social policies that strengthen incentives to seek employment, as a sustainable way to avoid dependency on social benefits” (Article 52).

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter IV

tages faced by Roma on the labour market.<sup>142</sup> The economic downturn has deepened *negative trends* in Roma employment, especially as increased competition on the labour market has significantly limited the opportunities of even skilled Roma to obtain jobs.<sup>143</sup> Further adding to this deteriorating situation is the falling demand for unskilled or low-skilled labour in industries such as construction, both in home countries and in those that are the most common destinations for Roma economic migrants.<sup>144</sup> The employment of Roma economic migrants in Western European destination countries has

142 Brown, P, Dwyer, P, & Scullion, L. “Roma SOURCE: Interim Research Report”, University of Salford, 2012, p. 53, <<http://www.romasource.eu/userfiles/attachments/pages/167/romasourceinterimresearchreport-en.pdf>>.

143 FRA/ UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey, *op. cit.*, note 21.

144 According to the Financial Times, the number of Romanian citizens now returning home from Italy and Spain is rising as the construction industry in southern Europe is receding. Jan Cienski and Thomas Escritt “Europe’s Roma suffer as downturn bites”, *Financial Times*, 9 August 2009, <<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/17494620-8501-11de-9a64-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2XsJ5jM1G>>.

been impeded by labor restrictions. These restrictions, however, are being gradually lifted (for example, in France and Ireland), and in some cases this has been accompanied by positive measures, for example tax breaks for companies employing Roma. This allows for better employment opportunities for Roma immigrants.<sup>145</sup>

When compounded by a lack of skills on the part of many Roma, discriminatory practices on the labor market continue to be a determining factor in Roma employment. In this context, initiatives and efforts undertaken by participating States to increase employability and provide jobs and income opportunities to Roma should be considered a *positive change*. At the same time, however, it should be noted that neither the activation programmes nor measures like public works programmes have been able to reduce, in a significant way, the level of unemployment among this population.

A report published by the World Bank in 2012 found that, in Eastern European countries, the number of working-age Roma men with some form of employment ranged from only 20 to 43 per cent. Even fewer working-age Roma women (between 9 and 26 per cent) have formal or informal jobs.<sup>146</sup> As stated in the Hungarian Strategy for Social Inclusion, the total Roma em-

ployment rate barely reaches 20 per cent; among Roma women there, only ten per cent have steady employment. The FRA 2011 survey found important differences between the Roma and non-Roma surveyed in France, Italy and Portugal, where only about one out of 10 Roma aged 20 to 64 is reported as being in paid employment.<sup>147</sup>

In several participating States, a strong connection has been made between work promotion programmes and projects and Roma dependency on welfare benefits transfers. Reforms of this type to welfare policy have been guided, in part, by the belief that welfare transfers de-motivate some long-term unemployed people from

145 “French government eases job access for Roma” *BBC News* website, 23 August 2012, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19354146>>.

146 “Reducing Vulnerability and promoting the Self-employment of roma in Eastern Europe through Financial Inclusion”, The World Bank, 4 September 2012, p.2, <<http://documents.banque mondiale.org/curated/fr/2012/09/16706486/reducing-vulnerability-promoting-self-employment-roma-eastern-europe-through-financial-inclusion>>.

147 FRA/ UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey, *op. cit.*, note 21, p. 16.

engaging in an active job search. Cuts in welfare were supposed to motivate people, including Roma, to seek jobs. These policies have sometimes led to employing Roma in public work schemes from which they receive less income than they previously received from social welfare, while simultaneously losing other associated benefits altogether.<sup>148</sup> These practices, have worsened the financial positions of some Roma.

World Bank research carried out in five Eastern European countries<sup>149</sup> with significant Roma populations suggests that, while most Roma are among the poorest categories of the population, it is a misperception that the majority of Roma live off of social assistance. The report reveals that only 16 per cent and 12 per cent of working-age Roma individuals in Bulgaria and Romania, respectively, receive guaranteed minimum income support, while in Serbia only a quarter of Roma households are recipients of social assistance. The World Bank also concludes that working-age Roma want to work, but have lower levels of education than non-Roma, making it difficult to find jobs.<sup>150</sup>

One apparent result of high and persistent unemployment rates among Roma is their involvement in marginal activities, such as activities in the grey or black economy. Marginal economic niches traditionally occupied by Roma, such as trade and the recycling of metal and plastic, seem to persist and even to be on the rise in several participating States. These also continue to be common occupations for Roma immigrants in destination countries.

In the newer EU Member States, active employment measures implemented through human resources development programmes are often not adapted to the realities of Roma communities. This means that, despite the relatively large amount of funding available, many of these projects have only a very limited impact for Roma. At the same time, the absorption rate of EU funding for Roma inclusion measures has been very low. Significant deficiencies in the systems for contracting these projects and disbursing and monitoring the Structural Funding

have caused major disruptions and affected their quality and impact.

### Actions by Participating States

Out of 40 replies to the ODIHR questionnaire, 16 participating States<sup>151</sup> provided information and some data about programmes or projects aimed at increasing employment or employability that either were mainstreamed, but inclusive of Roma, or targeted directly at Roma. Reporting by some participating States included funding figures and the number of Roma beneficiaries.<sup>152</sup> A few states, such as Germany, indicated some projects implemented by Roma organizations in this area, whereas several others indicated they run large mainstream programmes for disadvantaged groups, including Roma, supported with EU structural funds.<sup>153</sup>

The programmes and projects listed included actions such as subsidized employment, including various mediator programmes from which Roma have benefited; training programmes, usually carried out for categories of disadvantaged or marginalized groups, including Roma, to boost employability; and the provision of micro-credit.

It is a sign of *positive change* that 16 participating States, despite the ongoing economic crisis, have implemented measures to raise the level of Roma employment and income-generating opportunities. Subsidized positions such as those for health mediators, labour mediators, school mediators and school assistants, and various experts employed in public offices and as staff in Roma self-government bodies, have increased the number of Roma benefiting from employment and incomes.

In a number of participating States, the European Social Fund became the major source of funding during the review period for active employment measures aimed at long-term unemployed or socially excluded groups, including Roma. This is evident especially in the Member States with the largest Roma populations, such as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Spain. In countries aiming at EU accession that have had to begin harmonizing their legislation and

148 147 "Poor, abused and second-class: the Roma living in fear in Hungarian village," The Guardian, 27 January 2012, <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jan/27/hungary-roma-living-in-fear>>, also see "Hungary puts its Roma to work", EurActive, 21 September 2011, <<http://www.euractiv.com/social/europe/hungary-puts-roma-work-news-507804>>.

149 Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania and Serbia.

150 "Roma Inclusion: An Economic Opportunity for Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Romania and Serbia" World Bank, 2010, <<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/12905/696550ESW0P1180EconomicOpportunity.pdf?sequence=1>>.

151 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

152 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Slovenia.

153 The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria.

policy with EU standards, financing tools such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance have been essential. Such programmes commonly feature several stages of intervention, including provision of information, mediation with potential employers, and free-of-charge vocational training courses. The actual employment of the beneficiaries is not necessarily an objective of such programmes, raising questions about their effectiveness.

Several participating States reported on mainly mainstream, large-scale employment programmes for categories of disadvantaged persons, Roma included, under their operational programmes. Bulgaria, for example, reported two such programmes, in which approximately 4,500 Roma benefited from training and requalification.<sup>154</sup> In the case of Hungary, Roma unemployed figure as a priority in several large mainstream operational programmes supported by large budgets.<sup>155</sup> Active employment measures were implemented in Slovakia in four national programmes, including the “Social Fieldwork in Municipalities” programme, which led to the establishment of a network of social fieldworkers and their assistants. As of 31 December 2012, the network involved 288 social fieldworkers, 330 assistant social fieldworkers and 14 regional co-ordinators active in 238

municipalities; a total of 45, 070 target-group members participated.<sup>156</sup>

In Romania, Roma have been listed as a target group in four priority areas, including education and professional training and active employment measures. Romania has reported 40,581 Roma beneficiaries in their four areas in more than 71 projects funded through ESF and implemented by various actors, including public institutions, such as Regional Employment Agencies, the National Agency for Roma, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor, and more than 40 private actors, including NGOs and private-sector entities. No information was provided on the amount of funding provided in these priority areas.<sup>157</sup> According to information available on the website of the Managing Authority for the European Social Fund, during the review period Romania made 121.3 million euros available for programmes specifically targeting Roma in 43 earmarked projects.<sup>158</sup> In the Czech Republic, under the priority of social integration and equal opportunities, integration of socially excluded groups, 25 projects have been implemented, worth approximately 5 million euros.

In the older EU Member States, Roma unemployment is usually addressed through inclusive programmes that are designed for immigrant communities and are dealt with primarily through government employment-agency networks. In some instances, targeted projects carried out by Roma organizations are supported, as in the case of Germany, where the ESF Federal Programme of Labour Market Assistance for People with Leave to Remain and Refugees offered a first round of funding (2008 to 2010) in which approximately 80 per cent of the projects reached Roma, corresponding to about 1,700 people. Employability increased for 64 per cent of the supported participants, whereas motivation to actively look for employment increased for approximately 70 per cent of the supported participants. In the current second round of funding (November 2010 to mid-2014), a total of 1,250 Roma had been reached by the end of 2011.

154 The programme “Take your life in your hands”, intended for approximately 5,000 long-term unemployed, inactive and/or unmotivated persons included some 391 Roma in 2012; another programme “New choice - development and realization” covering 2009-2014 with a budget of 180 million BGN included 7,446 representatives of ethnic groups (4,150 of whom identify themselves as “Roma”).

155 For example: TÁMOP 1.1.2 programme “Development of employment of disadvantaged people (Decentralized programmes in converging regions)” with a budget of HUF 106 billion; TÁMOP 1.1.4 “Labour market programme for the employment of disadvantaged people in the Central Hungary Region”. The programmes do not include an indicator for involving Roma, but labour offices reportedly do pay special attention to Roma unemployed and monitor the number of Roma involved. TÁMOP 1.4.1 “Supporting community labour market programmes”, included Roma as a horizontal indicator; TÁMOP 1.4.3 “Supporting innovative experimental employment programmes” with a total budget of HUF 4.7 billion; in the case of TÁMOP 2.1.6 “I study once again”, the National Labour Office has undertaken the project in consortium with local government offices, and is planning to involve 3,000 Roma out of a total of 37,000 targeted people, the budget is HUF 20 billion.

156 Other projects include: “Education and Preparation for the Labour Market”, through which during 2012 a total of 676 jobseekers (including 44 Roma) were enrolled in training courses; “Increasing Employment and Employability of Disadvantaged Job Applicants” the project plans to incorporate 1,500 citizens from marginalized Roma communities into the labour market. In 2012, a total of 460 jobseekers including 166 Roma participated in the project “Community Centers – Systemic Establishment, Support for and Development of Activities” budgeted with 17,970,000 Euro.

157 Romanian Response, *op. cit.*, note 46.

158 “Beneficiaries List”, Romanian Managing Authority of the European Social Funds, <<http://www.fseromania.ro/index.php/implementeaza/lista-beneficiari>>.



In Spain, the government has reported growth in employment among Roma men and women, particularly under the Operational Programme to Fight Discrimination of the European Social Fund (the Acceder Programme).<sup>159</sup> According to the data provided, around 67 per cent of the more than 64,000 people participating in the Acceder programme are Roma, and around 70 per cent of the more than 43,000 employees recruited through the Acceder programme are Roma.

Some countries have carried out rather modest projects targeting Roma beneficiaries, such as Albania, where members of the Roma community are receiving free vocational training through regional departments of the public vocational training programme. Approximately 150 Roma benefit from this each year. In Montenegro, between 50 and 100 unemployed Roma and Egyptian people take part annually in the active employment policy programme, particularly through education and training programmes, public works (both state and local), and seasonal jobs. In Slovenia, in 2010, 1,100 unemployed Roma were included in active employment-policy programmes (in 2011, 1,315 were included, and the number for 2012 was similar). Moreover, Roma, as a vulnerable target group, are entitled in some participating States to preferential inclusion in active employment-policy measures, as they are not required to demonstrate the otherwise necessary prior period of unemployment (from six to 24 months).<sup>160</sup> In Serbia, in 2012, 15,447 Roma (including 6,680 women) were covered by active-employment measures.<sup>161</sup>

Some participating States, especially in the Western Balkans region, provided more exact data on the number of unemployed Roma and those who have benefited from various programmes or projects, as well as for the number of Roma who have found employment. In Serbia, for example, the National Employment Service opened a special public tender in 2010 disbursing subsidies for members of the Roma community to become self-employed and to employers hiring Roma. By 31

October 2010, 117 Roma, 38 of them women, had received self-employment subsidies and a total of 66 Roma, including 30 women, were employed through these subsidies to employers. In Albania, 16 Roma and Egyptians were employed during 2012, either in public or private businesses or by opening their own businesses. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Roma employment during the two-year (2009 and 2010) implementation of the Action Plan consumed approximately 766,000 euros from the budget and resulted in a total of 212 Roma who had been registered with employment offices being hired.

Some participating States directly target Roma in public works schemes in order to provide income and assist them in escaping unemployment rolls.<sup>162</sup> In Hungary, the public-employment scheme is the largest in which Roma participate. Roma public works employees have cleaned trains, cleared fields of ragweed, worked at waterside resorts and in forest management. Short-term public works jobs usually mean working on community initiatives, and most Roma have been employed in public works as unskilled laborers. According to data from the labour offices in Hungary, national public employment schemes and local government public employment schemes have benefited more than 6,700 and 72,500 previously unemployed Roma people, respectively.

In addition, Hungary is continuing its unique Social Land Programme, in which local Roma Minority Self-Governments play a special role, as they must be included as consortium partners. Budgets for this programme for the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 were approximately 952,000 euros, 450,000 euros and 460,000 euros, respectively. Furthermore, the programme is providing 1,401 people with employment. Half of the targeted families are Roma.<sup>163</sup>

Government programmes stimulating formal self-employment through the development of social enterprises are rare (reported only by Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia), and such interventions are still at the “pilot project” stage. Romania reported the implementation of several social entrepreneurship projects under its Human Resources Development Operational Programmes. One of the projects, implemented by the United Nations

159 “ACCEDER” is being implemented by the Fondacion Secretariado Gitano < <http://www.gitanos.org/> >.

160 In addition, several projects led by Roma are financed, such as: “Harmony of nature and society” project; the “Romano kher – Roma house” project; and the “Roma restaurant - Romani kafenava” project.

161 According to Serbia’s reply to the ODIHR’s questionnaire as part of the joint programme Support to National Efforts for Promotion of Youth Employment and Management of Migration (involving four UN agencies), the Youth Employment Fund was established; among its 2,716 beneficiaries, 396 are Roma (the programme covers 52 municipalities) from Serbian Response, *op. cit.*, note 111.

162 Montenegro reported that public works are one of the most successful active employment policy programmes being continuously implemented. Seasonal employment is also a measure of the active employment policy that contributes to mitigating the effects of open unemployment. During the past two years, more than 150 Roma persons were employed to perform seasonal labour.

163 The families involved have received almost 17,000 small domestic animals as part of the programme, which is intended to improve the living conditions of 2,657 families.

Development Programme, in partnership with the NGO Roma Civic Alliance and the government's Department for Interethnic Relations, targets the establishment of three social enterprises run by Roma, in addition to its goal of educating Roma communities in the basic theoretical concepts of social entrepreneurship and on the role of public authorities in the development of social economy models for Roma communities.

In Hungary, investment grants to develop the employment capacity of small businesses have been awarded by the Ministry for National Economy, aiming to create workplaces. These grants were made available to 29 Roma employers in 2010 and to 95 Roma employers in 2011. In 2012, a total of 585 businesses received 24.5 million euros in grants: Businesses received funds to create 4,012 new jobs and employ 3,292 previously unemployed people (including 401 Roma) for at least two years.

In Slovakia, the Register of Social Enterprises shows 91 social enterprises incorporated in the country. Most of the social enterprises that have been established by municipal self-governments also employ members of marginalized Roma communities.

In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Active Employment Measures for 2011 included two special measures created for the Roma, one focusing on training and the other on self-employment. During the preparation of the Operational Plan for the year of 2012, the Roma were included as a target group for all measures. In the 2012 Self-Employment Programme, grants were approved for a total of 14 Roma. In the "Training to Meet the need" programme, 16 Roma received certificates. In the "Self-Employment with Credit Programme", contracts were concluded with seven Roma. In the "Programme for Subsidized Employment", 31 Roma were employed. Finally, 64 Roma participated in the "Education for Starting a Business Programme".

Slovenia has put in place programmes designed to assist minority groups — including Roma — in the development of social entrepreneurship projects. The projects involve marketable activities, such as the sale of goods or services. The government reported that the programme targets the development of new (or the expansion of existing) market activities, the training of persons from vulnerable target groups and the creation of new jobs. Nine of the projects funded included members of the Roma community among the vulnerable groups targeted.

## Priority Areas and Recommendations

While employment promotion programmes in many participating States target disadvantaged or marginalized communities in general, attention is needed in the range of services provided through these programmes of the context in Roma communities, i.e., to the very low education levels and skill of many of the beneficiaries, and to the effects of discrimination on the labour market.

Positive practices, such as the promotion of Roma as health, education and employment mediators at the local level, as well as in advisory positions in municipal authorities, can serve the double purpose of providing employment and undercutting negative perceptions that lead to discrimination against Roma on labour markets.

The opportunity the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies represents should be taken by EU Member States to increase their activities to enhance programmes for Roma social inclusion in the areas of employment and income.<sup>164</sup>

164 The OSCE has given the matter attention during a roundtable discussion, held on in September 2012, focused on ways to overcome existing barriers to the integration of migrant, minority and Roma and Sinti women into their communities and into the society as a whole. The results have been shared with OSCE participating States at the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting Special Day on Roma and Sinti on 27 September. "Assisting integration of women from migrant, minority and Roma and Sinti communities in focus at OSCE conference" 2012, <<http://www.osce.org/gender/93515>>.

## 6. IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

From a policy perspective, education for Roma has, compared to other areas, received greater attention from international organizations and national governments. This indicates *visible progress* in making education a priority area for many states in improving the situation of Roma and Sinti.

At the same time, some key challenges remain. These relate, in particular, to the segregation of Roma children into “special” education and residential segregation, resulting in all-Roma schools. Some participating States continued with a policy of promoting inclusive education<sup>165</sup> in the face of conditions of residential segregation that support *de facto* segregation in education (such as in Bulgaria), while others have attempted to desegregate education through the adoption of regulations (such as Romania), or made desegregation in education a main principle of their Roma framework strategy (such as in Slovakia).

The fact that a number of new ECtHR judgments on discrimination against Roma children in education were issued during the review period highlights this challenge. Following up on the first such judgment, in 2007, in the case of *D.H. and Others v The Czech Republic*,<sup>166</sup> the ECtHR delivered judgments during this review period in four separate cases of discrimination in education against Roma children: *Sampanis and Others v Greece* (2008),<sup>167</sup> *Oršuš and Others v Croatia* (2010),<sup>168</sup> *Horváth and Kiss v. Hungary* (2013),<sup>169</sup> *Sampanis and*

*Others v. Greece* (2012)<sup>170</sup> and *Lavida and Others v. Greece* (2013).<sup>171</sup>

In the case of *Sampanis and Others v Greece*, the ECtHR found a violation of Article 14 together with Article 2 of Protocol No. 1 of the European Convention of Human Rights, based on the failure by Greek authorities to provide schooling for the applicants’ children

“Education policies should aim to integrate Roma and Sinti people into mainstream education by providing full and equal access at all levels, while remaining sensitive to cultural differences.”

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter V

and their subsequent placement into “special” classes in an annex to the main school building because of their Roma origin.

In the judgment of *Oršuš and Others v Croatia*, from March 2010, the ECtHR found the violation of the same articles of the Convention: Article 14 and Article 2 of Protocol No. 1, together with Articles 6 & 1 (the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time). The Court found the placement of the applicants, at times, into Roma-only classes during their primary education had not been justified (the segregation of the Roma children into separate classes had ostensibly been based on their language skills), holding that adequate safeguards had not been put in place at that time to ensure sufficient care for the applicants’ special needs as members of a disadvantaged and vulnerable minority.

The ECtHR judgment regarding discrimination against Roma children in access to education handed down in the case of *Horváth and Kiss v. Hungary*, from January 2013, was on a complaint by two young Roma men who, on the basis of their ethnic origin, had been wrongly placed in a school for the mentally disabled, amounting to educational discrimination. The Court found violations of the same articles as in the previous such cases. The ECtHR underlined that there has been a long history of wrongful placement of Roma children into “special” schools in Hungary, and also noted that, as a result of this practice, the applicants had been isolated and had received an education that made their social integration difficult. The Court concluded that “positive obligations incumbent on the State in a situation where there is a history of discrimination against ethnic

165 “Towards Roma Inclusion: A Review of Roma Education Initiatives in Central and South-Eastern Europe”, UNICEF, 2010, <[http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA\\_PAPER\\_FINAL\\_LAST.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/ceecis/ROMA_PAPER_FINAL_LAST.pdf)>; see also Guy, Will, André Liebich, and Elena Marushiakova, “Improving the Tools for the Social Inclusion and Non-discrimination of Roma in the EU”, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union (European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities).

166 The 2007 ECtHR required the government of the Czech Republic to adopt general measures in order to “put an end to the violation found by the Court and to redress so far as possible the effects”.

167 *Sampanis and Others v Greece* (2008), <[http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-2378798-2552166#{"item mid":\["003-2378798-2552166"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-2378798-2552166#{)>.

168 *Oršuš and Others v Croatia* (2010), <[http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-97689#{"item id":\["001-97689"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-97689#{)>.

169 *Horváth and Kiss v. Hungary* (2013), <[http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-116124#{"item id":\["001-116124"\]}](http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng/pages/search.aspx?i=001-116124#{)>.

170 *Sampanis and Others v. Greece* (2012), <<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/webservices/content/pdf/003-4192106-4967450>>.

171 *Lavida and Others v. Greece*, (2013), <<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/sites/eng-press/pages/search.aspx?i=003-4378378-5255719>>.

minority children” required Hungary to “provide the necessary safeguards against misdiagnosis”.

In its most recent judgment, *Lavida and Others v. Greece (May 2013)*,<sup>172</sup> the ECtHR for a third time ruled on discrimination against Roma pupils in Greek schools. The ECtHR once again found a violation of Article 14 and Article 2 of Protocol No. 1. The case involved 23 Romani school children from the town of Sofades, in the central Greek region of Thessaly. The applicants complained that the children had been placed in a primary school reserved for Roma children and alleged that this had deprived them of a proper education. The Court observed that primary school no. 4 in Sofades was attended solely by Roma children and that no non-Roma children residing in the district were educated there. The ECtHR found that this situation and the state’s refusal to take anti-segregation measures implied discrimination and a breach of the right to education.

Many Roma children are still affected by overrepresentation in “special” education and by segregation. The available data reveal that this is the case in a number of other participating States. For example, in Poland, between 17 and 22 per cent of Roma children are diagnosed as requiring “special” education and directed to enroll in institutions that provide this.<sup>173</sup> In the Czech Republic, Roma children being sent to special education is a continuing issue.<sup>174</sup>

Segregation in education has also been the result of residential segregation. In some countries, segregation in education persists in practice due to “white flight”, where non-Roma parents remove their children from schools attended by Roma children and enroll them elsewhere.

Another negative challenge continues to be the poor outcomes of Roma children, despite efforts and funding made available to improve the quality of their education. Here, migration, social exclusion, poor housing conditions and poor health are all interconnected and play a role in determining these persistently poor outcomes.

The various programmes and projects (e.g., for school mediators and school assistants) aimed at increasing Roma school attendance or registration in primary

education are working to create some *visible progress* in this area, and many participating States report progress reached during the review period (for example, Serbia, Montenegro, and Spain). At the same time, some *negative trends* persist. In comparison with the majority, a smaller percentage of Roma children finish primary education successfully (with some exceptions, such as in Spain), and even fewer continue on to secondary education.<sup>175</sup>

The example of Hungary is instructive here. According to a 2010 Household Monitoring survey, 88 per cent of non-Roma children aged between three and five attend kindergarten or preschool, while only 42 per cent of Roma children in the same age group do so.<sup>176</sup> This is particularly typical of disadvantaged Roma settlements and regions where there is a serious shortage of kindergarten capacity.<sup>177</sup> According to a 2010 study, the number of Roma-majority schools in Hungary has increased by some 34 per cent since 2004. In 70 per cent of these schools, it is difficult to find teachers who can cover the entire spectrum of required subjects.<sup>178</sup> In schools and classes where, as a consequence of segregation, pupils living in extreme poverty and Roma constitute a separate group, the standard of education is lower. The number of classes taught by specialist teachers is lower, and the institutions concerned have inferior equipment compared to other local schools and classes. As a consequence, the existing social differences between non-Roma and Roma children are multiplied. Roma children are also extremely overrepresented amongst children with multiple disadvantages. According to estimates, approximately one-half of children with multiple disadvantages are Roma, and almost two-thirds of Roma pupils struggle with multiple disadvantages. According to 2008 estimates, only 2 per cent of young Roma begin their studies in higher education and only 0.5 per cent eventually obtain a degree.<sup>179</sup>

175 FRA/ UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey, *op. cit.*, note 21; also see “Roma Education in comparative perspective: Findings from the UNDP/World Bank/EC Roma Survey”, UNDP, 2012, <[http://issuu.com/undp\\_in\\_europe\\_cis/docs/education\\_web](http://issuu.com/undp_in_europe_cis/docs/education_web)>.

176 “National Social Inclusion Strategy – extreme poverty, child poverty, the Roma – (2011-2020)”, Ministry of Public Administration and Justice State Secretariat for Social Inclusion, December 2011, Appendix, p. 14.

177 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

178 “Effect analysis of integration-centred education policy”, Gábor Havas and János Zolnay Public Foundation for European Comparative Minority Research, 2010.

179 Open Society Institute, “Comparative Data Set on Education”, 2008, <[http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/table\\_2008\\_0.pdf](http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/table_2008_0.pdf)>.

172 *Ibid.*

173 Power Point Presentation by Jozef Wojas, Kuratorium Oświaty w Krakowie, Delegatura w Nowym Sączu w Centrum Doskolanienia Nauczycieli, 18 December 2012.

174 For more see the ODIHR Field Visit Report, “Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma Children: Field Assessment Visit to the Czech Republic”, 26 October 2012, <<http://www.osce.org/odihhr/96661>>.

The recent FRA report on Roma provides even more data on persisting trends in the education of Roma children.<sup>180</sup> For example, according to their findings, “at least 10% of Roma children aged 7 to 15 in Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, France and Italy are identified in the FRA survey as not attending school, meaning that they are either still in preschool, not yet in education, skipped the year, stopped school completely or are already working. This proportion is highest in Greece with more than 35% of Roma children not attending school.”<sup>181</sup> With regards to completing any type of upper-secondary general or vocational education, the report concludes: “In five out of 11 EU Member States, Portugal, Greece, Spain, France and Romania, fewer than one out of 10 Roma is reported to have completed upper-secondary education. In the Czech Republic and Poland, the results are better but still fewer than one out of three young Roma is reported to have completed this level of education.”<sup>182</sup>

Mapping of the access to and enrollment in early education schemes has revealed the much lower participation of Roma children in early education compared to non-Roma children, with those Roma children enrolled in preschool education spending, on average, only half as long there as non-Roma children do. Only a small percentage of Roma can be said to actually benefit from early education.<sup>183</sup> Ongoing developments related to the EU’s social inclusion agenda have reinforced particular initiatives for Roma early education and early childhood development.<sup>184</sup> For example, the Belgian Presidency of the Council of Europe in the second half of 2010 chose to focus on the issue of Roma early childhood development not only because general attention to Roma was on the rise within several EU institutions, but also because the issue of combating child poverty had become a leading theme for the Open Method of Co-ordination and for the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion. A subsequent report emphasized that there was “a political window of opportunity to tackle the issue of Romani poverty through the perspective of

early childhood services”.<sup>185</sup> Adverse economic conditions prevailing at the family level are the main obstacle to the participation of Roma and Sinti children in early education, followed by discrimination and hostility encountered in the educational environment and restrictive administrative procedures, coupled with a shortage of places in early education services.<sup>186</sup>

### Action by Participating States

Some participating States, following judgments from the ECtHR on discrimination against Roma children in access to education, have made efforts to reform the system and promote inclusive education. A number of factors have slowed the process of implementing these judgments and reforming these systems.

Serious steps have been undertaken by the Czech authorities during the period covered in the current report to implement the judgment by the ECtHR in in 2007 in the case of *D.H. and Others v. the Czech Republic*. In March 2010, the government approved the National Action Plan on Inclusive Education (NAPIE), aimed at eliminating the practice of segregating Roma children as a matter of priority. That same objective was included in the Strategy for the Fight against Social Exclusion 2012-2015, adopted by the government in 2011. Earlier actions undertaken, such as the adoption of the new School Act, which abolished the “special” schools while simultaneously introducing specialized primary schools for children with “mid-range to severe disability” and practical primary schools for children with “light mental disability” (to be educated using the Framework Education Programme for Children with Light Mental Disability), further intensified the complexity of the school system. In practical terms, however, not much has been reformed or changed in this system. Efforts in this direction are being opposed or contested by many schools and by “special education” teachers, and there is little public support for such reforms.<sup>187</sup>

Following the ECtHR judgments in *Sampanis and Others v Greece* and *Lavida and Others v. Greece*, the government made efforts during the review period to abolish segregated schools through the implementation of a national programme for “Education of Roma Children”

180 FRA/ UNDP/World Bank/EC Regional Roma Survey, *op. cit.*, note 21, p. 13.

181 *Ibid.* p. 14.

182 *Ibid.* p. 15.

183 “Mapping of participation of Roma and Sinti children in early education processes with the OSCE region”, OSCE/ODIHR, November 2010, p. 6, <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/73874>>.

184 Dierckx, Danielle, and Peter Vermeersch, “The social affairs agenda of the Belgian presidency: high ambitions and mixed achievement”, 2011, in *Readjusting the Council Presidency: Belgian Leadership in the EU*, eds. Steven Van Hecke and Peter Bursens. Brussels: Academic and Scientific Publishers, p. 153–168.

185 UNICEF, the OSCE and the Belgian Federal Planning Service for Social Integration, “Early Childhood Development and the Inclusion of Roma Families”, discussion paper prepared on behalf of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (2011), 5.

186 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

187 ODIHR Czech Field Visit Report, *op. cit.*, note 174.

and through so-called Education Priority Zones (ZEP), a programme to combat segregation introduced by the Ministry of Education in 2010 and co-funded by the EU. This national programme is being implemented by the University of Thessaloniki and the University of Athens, and supervised by the Ministry in 84 municipalities with large concentrations of Roma. The ZEP programme is being implemented in geographic regions where primary school integration indicators are low. It aims to ensure the equitable educational integration of students and, if possible, to remove social and economic barriers to their progress. Nevertheless, the ECtHR re-considered the *Sampanis* case in 2012 and noted that Greece had still not taken into account the particular needs of Roma children as members of a disadvantaged group; the operation, between 2008 and 2010, of the 12<sup>th</sup> Primary School in Aspropyrgos, which was attended by Roma pupils only, amounted to discrimination against the applicants, according to the judgment.

Steps have been taken in Croatia to implement the judgment in *Oršuš and Others v Croatia*. Beginning in the 2010/2011 school year, Croatia began collecting data on the number of Roma pupils who have been offered special assistance in Croatian-language skills, pursuant to Article 43 of the Primary and Secondary Education Act. In that year, assistance was offered in nine counties to 555 of the 4,723 Roma pupils enrolled in primary education. At the beginning of the 2011/2012 school year, special assistance in Croatian-language skills involved a total of 568 out of 4,915 Roma children who attended primary school in 2011/2012.

For children who are members of the Roma national minority in Croatia, inclusion in preschool education is ensured in order to bridge the gap between the socio-economic situation in which Roma children live and the possibilities for their successful integration into mandatory primary school education. If, in a certain environment, there is no opportunity for inclusion in an integrated preschool, then a preschool programme is provided through other means, often in primary schools.<sup>188</sup>

Education has been listed by nine participating States as an area where some positive achievements have been produced.<sup>189</sup> A majority of participating States (31 out of the 40 respondents) indicated one or more educational categories in their replies as areas of improvement: Mainstream educational programmes that are also

inclusive of Roma children (for example, programmes for immigrants or disadvantaged children); targeted educational programmes and projects for Roma children; preschool programmes for Roma children; and some data on the outcomes/beneficiaries of these educational programmes or projects and their budgets. Norway indicated the existence of projects to address Roma children who drop out of school.

Early Childhood Programmes are increasingly recognized as necessary, especially for children from disadvantaged communities, including Roma and Sinti. Many participating States (21 total) reported in their replies to the ODIHR questionnaire that they were implementing programmes or projects to increase the number of Roma children benefiting from early education. Such projects were either designed as mainstream approaches for all disadvantaged children or targeted Roma children specifically. Data on programme beneficiaries and budgets were also provided by some states. Most of these programmes and projects are co-funded by the EU and realized by municipalities, by Roma and non-Roma civil society, or by other institutions (for example, universities), in co-operation with ministries of education.<sup>190</sup>

In the review period, governments seemingly followed up more on examples of good practice for promoting the inclusion of Roma and Sinti in early education, such as fee-exempt places for Roma children (or children from low-income families) in preschools; engaging Roma mediators/teaching assistants as an effective link between Roma communities and preschools; and simplifying administrative procedures in order to facilitate enrolment for all children, including Roma.<sup>191</sup>

In Slovakia, for example, in order to increase the total number of children from socially disadvantaged environments receiving preschool educations and spending their final year before compulsory school attendance in kindergarten, the law exempts parents from paying school administration fees if their children are in the final year before commencing their compulsory school attendance and if the parents submit to the kindergarten

190 In Bulgaria only 45 per cent, in Romania 37 per cent, in the Czech Republic 32 per cent, and in Slovakia 28 per cent of Roma children aged 3-6 are in preschool. Hungary, with obligatory preschool and where poor families not only receive support for out-of-pocket expenses and school lunch, but also receive subsidies upon regular preschool attendance, is doing considerably better; 76 per cent of Roma children are in preschool. For more see: <<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/ECAEXT/EXTROMA/0,,contentMDK:23208275~pagePK:64168445~piPK:64168309~theSitePK:615987,00.html>>.

191 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

188 Croatian response, *op. cit.*, note 56.

189 The Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Montenegro, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia and Spain.

principal a confirmation that they are recipients of material need benefits and related welfare allowances.<sup>192</sup> Similarly, in Bulgaria, Roma children were among the beneficiaries of a project for social inclusion of children up to seven years of age.<sup>193</sup>

Romania reported that Roma children benefited from the National Programmes for Early Childhood Education Reform,<sup>194</sup> financed by the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. These programmes were aimed at piloting and supporting measures designed into the country's Strategy for Early Childhood Education that targeted all children seven and younger, including children belonging to ethnic minorities. A programme entitled "Everyone in kindergarten, everyone in first grade" aiming to prevent children in Romania aged five to eight years from leaving school early has been implemented in 420 disadvantaged communities, with a high percentage of Roma pupils enrolled.<sup>195</sup> In Hungary, the establishment and operation of the Sure Start Child Centres for disadvantaged children and their parents has reportedly improved and supported the integration of Roma children by increasing the number of Roma children enrolled in preschool institutions for one year prior to their enrolment in primary education.<sup>196</sup>

A significant problem in all of these examples is estimating how many Roma children have benefited from these programmes or projects, as participating States have indicated in their replies that no ethnically disaggregated data are collected in their country, or that their education systems do not distinguish among children on the grounds of ethnic origin.<sup>197</sup>

Some small projects have also been implemented, as in the case of Albania<sup>198</sup> or the municipalities of Vantaa, Turku, Varkaus, and Ylöjärvi in Finland.<sup>199</sup> In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, in co-operation with the Roma Education Fund and 18 Local Self-Government Units, has

been implementing the "Inclusion of Roma Children in Public Preschool Education" project for six years now.<sup>200</sup>

Roma school mediators or assistants are part of another scheme that was among those most often reported or promoted as a good practice in addressing the challenges of Roma access to education. As early as 2006, 16 participating States were implementing such schemes either as state-run programmes (there were fewer examples of this) or as projects carried out by civil society and/or local authorities.<sup>201</sup> In the replies to the ODIHR questionnaire, 14 participating States<sup>202</sup> reported that Roma school mediators were either employed by education ministries or by local authorities, while eight participating States<sup>203</sup> listed these positions as project-based — run by civil society and supported by the state and/or donors.

In participating States where the position of school mediator has been institutionalized, the position, including its job description and remuneration, is regulated by particular laws or orders, such the Law on Upbringing and Education (the Schooling Act) in Slovakia. This law elaborates not only the position and job description for teaching assistants in kindergartens, primary schools and special schools,<sup>204</sup> but also introduces the definition of children and pupils from socially disadvantaged environments.<sup>205</sup> The Roma Educational Centre, under the auspices of the Methodological and Pedagogical Centre in Prešov, is also reportedly implementing a national project entitled "Inclusion of Marginalized Romani Communities through Education of Pedagogical Employees", which is being implemented at 200 schools.<sup>206</sup>

192 Slovak Response, *op. cit.*, note 73.

193 This was financed from a loan of 40 Million euros by the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development; Bulgarian Response, *op. cit.*, note 104.

194 Romanian Response, *op. cit.*, note 46, p. 36; (the World Bank provides 7.5 Million US dollars, European Bank of Reconstruction and Development - 105 million euros).

195 *Ibid.*, (total project funding is 5 Million Euro).

196 Hungarian Response, *op. cit.*, note 137.

197 Bulgarian Response, *op. cit.*, note 104.

198 Albania Response *op. cit.*, note 72.

199 Finnish Response, *op. cit.*, note 103.

200 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the International Organizations in Vienna, received 19 March 2013.

201 "The situation of Roma School Mediators and Assistants in Europe", the Council of Europe, 2006, <[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/Source/Mediators\\_Analyse\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/Source/Mediators_Analyse_EN.pdf)>.

202 Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom.

203 Austria, Belgium (in Wallonia), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Italy, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova and Sweden.

204 *Ibid.*, in particular, Article 28 Paragraph 14, Article 30 Paragraph 6, Article 95 Paragraph 9, and Article 99 Paragraph 5.

205 Slovak Response, *op. cit.*, note 73; this provision is an important contribution to improving the status of children from socially disadvantaged environments, many of whom hail from marginalized Roma communities.

206 *Ibid.* The project is envisaged to take 40 months, from October 2011 until January 2015.

In some participating States, the number of Roma school mediators is quite high, as in Romania: In the review period, between 420 and 460 such mediators were working in the school system annually, whereas there are fewer in other, smaller countries, such as in Serbia, whose response to the questionnaire reported 178 Roma assistants in preschools and primary schools who are regular staff members and are remunerated from the state budget. Even in states with small Roma populations, governments are turning to this practice; Poland's Ministry of Education employs some 100 Roma school assistants, for example. In Slovenia, Roma assistants were one outcome of a project realized between 2008 and 2011 on "Successful Integration of the Roma into Education", which received a special mention at the 2010 RegioStars Awards, bestowed by the European Commission.<sup>207</sup> Eventually, this led to the adoption of a rule that any school with more than 45 Roma pupils may employ two Roma teaching assistants.

In France, 27 Roma mediators were trained in 2011 and 30 in 2012; they were employed by local authorities and tasked with working with marginalized communities in the areas of education, healthcare and housing. In addition, France reports that it supported the Council of Europe's ROMED programme financially in 2011 and 2012.<sup>208</sup> In Italy, city authorities in Milan implemented several projects aimed at facilitating the processing of Roma, Sinti and Caminanti children into schooling by promoting a mediation service performed by mediators operating both in the classroom and in the communities. Similar use of mediation has reportedly allowed for an improvement in the quality of education accessed by young Roma, Sinti and Caminanti students in the Municipality of Rome.<sup>209</sup> In Portugal, during the 2008-2012 period, improvement of the educational levels attained by Roma has been associated with the work of school mediators, with an intercultural approach to education, and with the promotion of Roma culture.<sup>210</sup> Serbia, using World Bank funding (2 Million euros), reported that grants were provided to municipalities for schools developing inclusive education practices; there were 56

such grants approved for various municipalities (35,000 euros per municipality).<sup>211</sup>

Various forms of mediation involving Roma children who have achieved some level of formal education seem to serve the purpose of preventing them from dropping out of early childhood education, raising Roma children's attendance rates, and contributing to inclusive education practices, as well as offering job opportunities to Roma. In the reports from most participating States, a rise in the percentage of Roma children attending primary school was observed. Few analyses, however, were provided of the effectiveness and results achieved through the introduction of this practice in improving school achievements and raising the percentage of those Roma who effectively continue their educations. In the case of Serbia, the improvements achieved were considered "modest" by an independent study.<sup>212</sup>

Scholarship programmes also became a widely-used practice during the review period, along with less-used affirmative action measures, such as quotas at universities for Roma students; 14 participating States<sup>213</sup> indicated they offered such scholarship programmes, either specifically for Roma students or through general programmes that are inclusive of Roma students. Kosovo also provides such scholarships

In Hungary, for example, Roma pupils have benefited from several support programmes that were managed until 2010 by the Community Fund for Hungarian Roma and are currently run by the Public Fund for Hungarian National and Ethnic Minorities. The Macika Scholarship Programme, set up in 2000, has provided scholarships to Roma pupils enrolled in secondary and higher education. The Útravaló ("On the Road") Scholarship Programme started in 2005, with sub-programmes entitled "Road to Secondary School", "Road to Graduation" and "Road to a Profession", and has provided both scholarships and mentoring to disadvantaged students enrolled in 7th and 8th grade education, in an effort to ensure they continue their studies. In 2011, the Útravaló and Macika scholarship programmes were merged into a single programme designed to support disadvantaged students. In order to ensure significant support for Roma, this programme now also includes the

207 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organisations in Vienna, received 25 February 2013, p. 30; (The contract value was 1.593,100 euros).

208 French Response, *op. cit.*, note 114, p. 5.

209 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of Italy to the OSCE, received 26 February 2013, p. 31.

210 Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from the Permanent Mission of Portugal to the OSCE, 24 April 2013, p.2-3.

211 Serbian Response, *op. cit.*, note 111.

212 Battaglia, Marianna, Lara Lebedinski, "Equal access to education: An Evaluation of the Roma Teaching Assistant Programme in Serbia", Bocconi University, November 12, 2012.

213 Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom.



requirement that at least half of the supported students must be Roma. In 2012 there were about 20,600 students receiving such scholarships and 11,000 mentor teachers receiving stipends through it, at a total cost of nearly ten million euros.

Through the sub-programmes of the Útravaló/MACI-KA Scholarship Programme, a total of 11,422 new students received scholarships in the 2011/2012 school year, an increase of 15 per cent compared to 2010/2011. In the case of the “Road to Secondary School” sub-programme, 70 per cent of the beneficiaries were reportedly Roma. In addition to newcomers, 8,782 ongoing students received mentoring and financial aid, thereby increasing the overall number of those supported to 20,204 students and 10,196 mentors in 2011/2012. According to the latest data, a total of 17,303 students — including 7,938 newcomers — are receiving stipends in 2012/2013. In the sub-programme “Road to Higher Education”, 399 students received support in 2012, including 57 Roma.

The Arany János Talent Fostering Programme for Disadvantaged Students has been set up to enable the children of the poorest parents in Hungary to successfully attend full-time secondary education. The selected students attend a preparatory year of education that enables them to continue their studies in secondary schools (and boarding school facilities). According to the official information reported, these institutions are very successful in preparing students for admission to higher education. The programme was launched in 2000, and a sub-programme, the Arany János Talent Fostering Boarding Facility Programme for Disadvantaged Students, was set up in 2004, with the aim of achieving the objectives of the Arany János programme through boarding school facilities (seven boarding school facilities and 13 vocational schools). In 2011, four church-run colleges were established in the capital and in three cities with universities (Budapest, Debrecen, Nyíregyháza and Miskolc). In 2012 one more church run college (boarding school) was established in Szeged, while in 2013 three non-church maintained ones were set up in Hajdúböszörmény, Pécs, and Eger.<sup>214</sup> Each church-run college supports 30 to 40 students. According to the government’s information, about 100 Roma students in higher education are receiving support.

In Romania, children from disadvantaged groups are supported with monthly allowances of 180 euros

in order to encourage their access to and attendance of high school; they are also supported with small one-time grants of 200 euros to buy computers. In addition, the Education Ministry has supported the establishment of a Roma education inspector position in each County School Inspectorate. Each inspector of Roma Education Teachers collaborates with between two and six methodologists, who specialize in Roma history, language and traditions. Annually, 50 to 60 Roma history and language teachers are trained in intensive courses during the summer period with UNICEF support. There is also support for Romani language teaching at the pre-primary and primary levels of education (for 900 pupils yearly) and for organizing History, Culture and Romani Language courses for 30,000-32,000 pupils. There is also support for bilingual instruction in 22 kindergartens.

In several participating States, particular scholarship programmes aimed at supporting Roma students have been developed, such as in Poland and Croatia. In the case of Poland, there are three different scholarship programmes established to support Roma children: a scholarship for particularly gifted Roma students, one for Roma students in general, and one for upper-secondary school students. In the 2008 to 2012 period, 427 students were supported in the half-million euro project.<sup>215</sup> In Croatia, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport provides stipends of 68 euros per month to all Roma high school students. From the 2007/08 school year onward, there has been a rising trend in the number of Roma students supported: from 162 students (97 boys, 65 girls) in that academic year to 425 in 2012.<sup>216</sup> For post-secondary education, the Ministry provides scholarships to all Roma students who request them, under the condition that they declare themselves members of the Roma national minority. The amount of the stipends is 133.50 euros per month for ten months, or 1,335 euros per year. In 2011/ 2012, approximately 37,000 euros was disbursed as scholarships to 29 Roma students.

In Montenegro, the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights Scholarship programme for Roma high school pupils and university students is run through an NGO, “The Roma Scholarship Foundation”. Over the past four

214 Katalin R. Forray, “Special Needs and Alternative Strategies: Roma Education in Hungary”, <[http://www.academia.edu/1476815/Special\\_needs](http://www.academia.edu/1476815/Special_needs)>; and follow-up to the Hungarian response to ODIHR, received 16 October 2013.

215 80 Roma students benefited from the first scholarship programme (124,500 euros allocated); 288 students (66 per cent of them female) benefited from the second (336,250 euros allocated); and 59 students benefited from the third in the year 2012 (25,000 euros allocated); Polish Response, *op. cit.*, note 50.

216 Croatian Response, *op. cit.*, note 56, p. 15-16; for placement in dormitories, additional activities, graduate travel, work of school superintendents, scholarships, etc. in 2012, 2,249,343.33 HRK was spent.

years this programme was provided with 233,653 euros (Roma high school students received monthly stipends of 100 euros and a 100-euro one-time payment for buying textbooks, while Roma university students received 150 euros per month and a 150-euro one-time payment for textbooks). In Albania, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with Roma civil society associations and private universities, made available some quota positions, as well as 16 scholarships for Roma students at universities in Tirana and Fier.

In Northern Ireland, additional funding has been provided for schools to support Roma and Traveller pupils. The grant-aided schools are funded by the Department of Education under a Common Funding Scheme. Under this Scheme, schools with Traveller children are allocated additional funding of over 1,000 Pounds per year for each Traveller pupil. This enables the schools to provide additional support to tackle Traveller educational underachievement and exclusion. The same amount is allocated to schools for each pupil who does not have sufficient skills in the language of instruction to participate fully in the school curriculum. Since immigrant Roma pupils face barriers to education similar to Traveller children and also have significant difficulties with English, schools receive additional funding of over 2,000 Pounds every year for each Roma pupil.<sup>217</sup>

Roma students have also benefited from quota systems in some participating States. In Romania, the Ministry of National Education reserves places for Roma children in secondary schools for admission into various specializations (between 2,700 and 3,200 Roma pupils are admitted into the ninth grade annually). In addition, the Ministry provides admission to all universities in the state for Roma students (during the 2010-2011 academic year, 555 PhD programme places were awarded, while during 2011-2012 a total of 611 places were awarded, and 564 places were awarded in 2012-2013).

In Serbia, thanks to affirmative-action measures, 238 Roma were reportedly enrolled in faculties of higher education and 367 in secondary schools in the 2012/2013 academic year. Also, a model for late registration for birth certificates was developed and implemented in 19 municipalities through a project with UNICEF; thanks to this, 500 previously undocumented children were identified and enrolled into schools.<sup>218</sup>

217 United Kingdom Response, *op. cit.*, note 34; see also examples from Italy, community of Sant'Egidio project "Right to education, Right to the Future".

218 Serbian Response, *op. cit.*, note 111, p. 17.

In Romania, courses for remedial education, like the "Second Chance" programme, aimed at fostering adult education, have been introduced. Between 2005 and 2011, from 5,000 to 7,000 teenagers and young adults were included in this programme, 60 per cent of whom were reportedly Roma and followed this programme until the 2011-2012 school year.

### Priority Areas and Recommendations

Structural discrimination in education for Roma children is a critical concern, given that education is a necessary condition for social, economic and political inclusion, and represents the most effective tool for breaking the vicious circle of disenfranchisement in which so many Roma and Sinti find themselves. While ECtHR decisions and independent studies have made strong arguments (some fiscal) in favor of dismantling school segregation, irrational perceptions and attitudes, sometimes among parents from majority populations and Roma parents alike, prevail surrounding this issue and serve to maintain the *status quo* in almost all of the participating States.

The ECtHR judgments should guide state reforms in this area, with the aim of combatting the segregation of Roma children in school systems and effectively preventing Roma children from being improperly channeled into "special" education streams, which has the same segregating effect.

Increasing disadvantaged Roma children's access to early childhood education, to quality education, to inclusive education, and to scholarship schemes for their continuing education, as well as increasing the engagement of Roma parents in their children's education, are the preconditions for Roma success in education. There are some positive trends noticeable in a number of participating States in this area, and these trends need to be strengthened.

Both governments and Roma organizations need to reassess their spending on children's education. There is surprisingly little spent, for example, on scholarships, something that could, in the most direct way, stimulate both Roma children and Roma families to continue their children's educational progress.

The poor educational outcomes of Roma children need to be urgently addressed. Roma children's educational progress and achievements should be in the spotlight for both Roma parents and their children's teachers. Programmes to promote and ensure the attendance by Roma students at all levels of compulsory education

should be in place. These could even be strengthened to encourage Roma & Sinti children toward academic achievement and progress.

The participating States must prioritize the incorporation of Roma children into mainstream education from preschool forward. This will involve working with administrators, educators and parents on overcoming the biases that have motivated educational segregation until now.

## 7. ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

While Roma participation in public and political life and their representation in elected bodies today share some traits with the previous assessment period, a *positive change* can be observed in a number of participating States where, due to amendments or new legislation, Roma representation in elected bodies, especially at the municipal level, has been strengthened (e.g., in Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia). Similarly, the establishment of Roma minority councils in several participating States as key advisory bodies representing Roma interests, legitimized through direct Roma voting (as in Serbia), has been a new development in this period. In the Western Balkans, national and ethnic community councils exist as mechanisms for protecting the rights of members of specific communities, including those of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians.

The June 2011 EU Council Decision on the Framework for Roma National Strategies provided a new impetus in this area. The EU requested the establishment of a Point of Contact in each Member State with regard to Roma Strategy implementation and, as a result, governments have not only nominated such representatives, but have also established consultation mechanisms or working groups where there previously were none (e.g., in Austria, Belgium, France and Sweden). In some participating States where these mechanisms have existed for a long time, they have been renewed or strengthened (e.g., in Finland and Spain).

At the same time, mainstream parties are still relatively reluctant to put forth Roma candidates, despite a significant increase in the pool of potential Roma candidates, i.e., Roma individuals with the necessary educational and professional backgrounds needed to run

for public office. During the review period, some Roma candidates have been able to win public office at national level. With regard to the impact or role these elected Roma representatives play for their communities, the record here is mixed. Criticism of their performance has come, in particular, from civil society. Independent reports have pointed out that some Roma elected representatives do not appear to be advocates of Roma inclusion.<sup>219</sup>

A declaration by the Summit of Mayors on Roma organized by the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in September 2011 emphasized the fact that "active participation and inclusion of Roma is of major benefit for each community as a whole."<sup>220</sup>

ODHIR continued to monitor elections across the region during the review period, paying special attention to issues related to minority participation, including that of the Roma minority. Those election observation reports include observations on Roma participation in parliamentary elections as candidates and voters. The

"Roma and Sinti people have an equal right to participate in public affairs. This includes the rights to vote, stand for election, participate in public affairs and form political parties without discrimination."  
— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter VI

reports note problems ranging from incidents of direct pressure, threats, or so-called "controlled voting", to vote buying, lack of education and illiteracy, as well as other difficulties and obstacles impeding Roma participation. A lack of civil registration documents remains a major obstacle for Roma communities across the OSCE region, negatively impacting their rights as voters. In addition, Roma and Sinti women are still underrepresented and are far from enjoying equal participation in public and political life.

There were also isolated incidents of attacks against Roma politicians, including the bombing of the

219 "Assessment of Barriers to Roma political participation in Romania", National Democratic Institute, 2009, <[http://www.ndi.org/files/Assessment%20Report%20Final%20\(complete\).pdf](http://www.ndi.org/files/Assessment%20Report%20Final%20(complete).pdf)>.

220 "Summit of Mayors on Roma: Building mutual trust at the grassroots" Final Declaration, Strasbourg, France, 22 September 2011, <<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=20110922-final&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=Congress&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=CACC9A&BackColorLogged=EFEA9C>>.

headquarters of a Roma political party in Bulgaria, in which one Roma politician was killed.<sup>221</sup>

### Action by Participating States

The overwhelming majority of the participating States that responded to the ODIHR questionnaire reported on already existing or recently established consultation mechanisms in which Roma representatives are involved and take part in decision-making with regard to issues that involve their communities. Some, such as Spain (the State Council for the Roma People)<sup>222</sup> or Finland (the Roma Board),<sup>223</sup> continue to refine their mechanisms, while several other EU Member States, such as Austria,<sup>224</sup> Belgium,<sup>225</sup> Italy<sup>226</sup> and Sweden,<sup>227</sup> designing new mechanisms. In several states this has been strengthened through legislation (as in the cases of Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia).

In Serbia, the Roma National Council is the main body ensuring the political participation of Roma. It has consultative status with Serbian state institutions. Since 2010 it has been made up of 35 directly-elected members. According to information provided by the Serbian Government, 30,811 registered Roma voters cast their

votes for candidates to the Roma National Council in 2010.

In Hungary, the parliament adopted an act on the election of parliamentary representatives in 2011. This act ensures conditions for Roma participation in parliamentary elections scheduled for 2014, through a preferential quota that enables Roma candidates to get into the National Assembly with only a quarter of the votes that would otherwise be needed. The role of Hungary's Roma Minority Self-Government at the national level was strengthened during the review period as a result of a partnership agreement concluded with the Government.

As mentioned in the section above, the adoption in some participating States (Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia) of legal provisions mandating the participation of Roma in political bodies has been a positive development.

In Croatia, the National Minority Rights Act has guaranteed the right of the Roma minority, together with 11 other minorities,<sup>228</sup> to representation in the Croatian parliament. During the parliamentary elections of December 2011, a new representative of the Roma national minority was elected to jointly represent all the minorities. Furthermore, the Constitutional National Minority Rights Act stipulates that members of national minorities in cities and municipalities where they account for between five and 15 per cent of the population are entitled to proportional representation in bodies of local governmental units; they will also be entitled to such representation should they account for over five per cent of the population in a county. In 2009, four Roma were elected to local representative bodies, and there were no Roma in executive positions at the local level. Following local elections for executive and representative bodies at the local level held in May 2013, 12 Roma were elected to local representative bodies, two Roma were elected to executive (Deputy Mayor) positions, while one Roma was elected to a regional level representative body.<sup>229</sup>

In Slovenia, the Local Elections Act, which governs municipal council elections, mayoral elections and elections to municipal department, village, or municipal quarter community councils, establishes that members of the Roma community have the right to vote and be voted for in elections for membership of a

221 "Bulgaria: Man dies as result of bombing of Euroroma office", Sandanski, Bulgaria, 1 August 2012, ROMEA, <<http://www.romea.cz/en/news/world/bulgaria-man-dies-as-result-of-bombing-of-euroroma-office>>.

222 State Council of the Roma People (Consejo Estatal del Pueblo Gitano), in: Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Permanent Mission of Spain to the OSCE, received 26 February 2013.

223 Finland's National Policy on Roma, adopted in (2009), includes proposals for action aimed at the development of both national and regional practices for hearing the Roma; Finnish Response, *op. cit.*, note 103.

224 A platform for structured dialogue between federal institutions and civil society ("Dialogplattform") was established by the National Contact Point (NCP) who is seated in the Federal Chancellery, in: Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from The Austrian Federal Chancellery, received 5 June 2013.

225 Belgium is planning to establish the Council of Roma and Travellers, in: Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Permanent Representation of Belgium to the OSCE, received 6 March 2013.

226 In Italy, UNAR (the National Office against Racial Discrimination) is a national Point of Contact for the Roma Strategy; Roma organizations are part of four technical tables or working groups on implementation of the Strategy; Italian Response, *op. cit.*, note 210.

227 Sweden aims at government office to coordinate and monitor implementation of Strategy; currently a Stockholm county administration board is in charge of monitoring the pilot programme, with inclusion of Roma representatives; Response to the ODIHR questionnaire from Ministry of Employment of Sweden, Division for Discrimination Issues, received 28 June 2013.

228 Article 17(5) of the Croatian Parliamentary Elections Act stipulates that the members of Austrian, Bulgarian, German, Polish, Roma, Romanian, Rusyn, Russian, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vlach and Jewish national minorities are entitled to jointly elect a member to the Croatian Parliament.

229 Follow up Response from Croatia, received 14 October 2013.

municipal council. The Act, which replaces a previous local self-government act, introduced provisions based on the constitutional obligation to enforce the rights of the Roma community to representation on municipal councils. The amendments established the competences of a national authority to carry out the election of a Roma community representative in a municipality if the local administration fails to ensure a Roma councillor is elected.

According to information provided by the participating States, in Romania, for example, 161 Roma won seats as local councillors in the last round of elections, in 2012, a decrease compared to the 2008 local elections. In Hungary, 19 local councilors of Roma origin were elected (separately from the elections to the Roma Minority Self-Governments), while in Serbia, 26 Roma won local seats. Bulgaria reported 41 Roma local representatives elected. According to the information provided in the response from Slovakia, 28 local councilors won seats there, mostly in localities where Roma constitute the majority population. No other provisions were reported by any other participating States with respect to Roma political participation at the local level.

The 2008 Status Report amply reflected the challenges that still exist in terms of Roma and Sinti voter mobilization and voter education. Five years ago, it noted that a lack of civil registration in Roma communities, exploitation of Roma communities through vote buying, proxy voting and cultural practices that limit Roma women's participation, all continue to limit Roma participation in electoral processes. Similar trends continued to be reported during the period under review.<sup>230</sup>

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230 For example the OSCE/ODIHR Election Expert Team Report on the Romanian Parliamentary elections from 2012 found that these challenges continue and need attention: "A number of OSCE/ODIHR EET interlocutors raised concerns about possible election irregularities in some Roma communities. This perceived vulnerability was largely seen as due to social exclusion, poverty, and lower education levels amongst the Roma population. Although the authorities have taken measures to address the continuous problem of lack of proper identification or documentation in some Roma communities, an unknown number of Roma voters still do not possess documentation. People living in informal settlements, including some Roma communities, are treated as homeless and given temporary identification that has the name of the voter and the city of residence. Homeless voters are supposed to vote in one designated polling station in each district. The OSCE/ODIHR EET was informed that in at least one locality in the country, homeless voters are spread throughout all BESVs, potentially causing confusion. A large-scale civic education programme targeting selected minority communities and aimed at increasing the understanding of electoral processes could be developed and conducted in close co-operation with relevant civil society organizations, including those representing Roma". See the full report at: <<http://www.osce.org/odihr/98757>>.

Romania reports that it is continuing its programme of issuing civil status and identity documents for Romanian citizens of Roma origin in accordance with the law. The programme was set up in order to ensure equal access to public services and electoral processes by Roma citizens. According to the Romanian response to the ODIHR questionnaire, between 2010 and 2012, 71,522 Roma individuals were issued identity documents and 8,513 were issued civil status documents.<sup>231</sup>

In May 2012, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria adopted amendments to the Law on Civil Registration. Those amendments stipulate that, in order to arrange for the registration of an address, Bulgarian citizens, including Roma, may submit not only property deeds or tenant agreements, but also other documents to prove their residence (such as contracts for electricity, central heating, water supply or sanitation). Should the inhabitant of a housing unit not be in a position to submit any of these documents, the amendments to the Law on Civil Registration provides a special procedure whereby a commission is set up by the mayor of the municipality to examine the inhabitant's circumstances and provide an opinion on the registration of an address.

This problem is especially acute in the post-crisis area of the Western Balkans, where conflicts have led many people to lose their personal documentation, including Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians. The issue has been prioritized in all participants subject to the Zagreb Declaration,<sup>232</sup> which seeks to facilitate and support the procurement of such documentation by members of these communities. Despite this, in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, some 470 Roma were identified during the review period as still lacking personal documents.<sup>233</sup>

In recent years, EU institutions have given additional support to the promotion of the active participation of Roma non-governmental organizations in policy-making processes at national and transnational levels. This goes hand in hand with a rise in the number of educated Roma who are eager to form organizations and get involved; in fact, the number of such Roma organizations

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231 The Directorate for Persons and Databases Management fulfilled the measures stipulated in Government Decision no. 1.221/2011, reporting that in the period between 2010 and 2012, it issued 8,513 civil status documents and 71,522 identity documents to persons of Roma origin.

232 "Zagreb Declaration", Conference on the Provision of Civil Status Documentation and Registration in South Eastern Europe, 27 October 2011, <<http://www.osce.org/hcnm/85249>>.

233 Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Response, *op. cit.*, note 201.

grew throughout the review period. The two EU Roma Summits, as well as the creation of the European Platform for Roma, have promoted “active dialogue with Roma”,<sup>234</sup> This is something that has been inscribed in the OSCE Action Plan since 2003 as the guiding principle that “each policy and implementation strategy should be elaborated and implemented with active participation of Roma and Sinti communities.”<sup>235</sup>

### Priority Areas and Recommendations

There is a growing awareness that local-level administration plays a very large role when it comes to Roma inclusion. With on-going decentralization in many participating States, the areas of competence and the public policy instruments at the disposal of local administrations to address social problems, such as unemployment and access to education, sometimes exceed those of national-level government or even those of supra-national entities such as the EU. It is crucial, therefore, that further efforts are made to stimulate the involvement of local authorities in the Roma inclusion process.

One way to achieve this is to stimulate the participation of Roma community members in public and political life as voters, candidates and partners in governance issues. To that end, concrete efforts by participating States and the OSCE need to be undertaken to protect and enhance the right of Roma women and men to participate as voters and candidates in local and national elections; to address the on-going challenges that render Roma communities especially vulnerable to vote-buying and vote manipulation; to address the lack of capacity of Roma elected representatives at national and local levels through targeted programmes; and to enhance government consultation mechanisms, allowing for partnerships with Roma civil society organizations as a measure of good governance.

Some of the challenges that most commonly affect the Roma community itself — lack of education, lack of experience in administration, vulnerability to exploitation — also adversely affect the effectiveness of local Roma representatives when it comes to fulfilling their roles in office. In this regard, increased support for capacity-building training programmes designed to equip Roma local representatives with the skills and knowledge necessary to make the most of elected office is needed from the OSCE and its participating States.

234 EU Framework, *op. cit.*, note 11.

235 2003 Action Plan, *op. cit.*, note 1, Chapter II. Paragraph 5.

## 8. POST-CRISIS SITUATIONS

### Continuing Challenges and Emerging Trends

The developments during the current review period with regard to Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities indicate signs of *visible progress* in some of the region's participating States. Security has improved, including for members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo.\* In northern Mitrovica/Mitrovicë, in October 2010, the lead-contaminated IDP camp of Česmin Lug was closed, followed by the closure of the lead-contaminated IDP camp of Osterode in December 2012.

Initiatives to improve the housing and living conditions in the Konik IDP and refugee camp in Podgorica, Montenegro are underway, despite a fire there that left some 800 Roma homeless and required that they be moved into temporary container housing. A relocation project for local Roma and displaced Roma or refugees living in the Belvil neighborhood and beneath the Gazela Bridge in Belgrade, Serbia that started with evictions of these people and resulted in disturbances by those protesting the relocation of the Roma into their neighbourhoods,<sup>236</sup> is currently also being implemented.

Although the lead-contaminated camps in northern Kosovo were closed, and the Roma IDPs have been re-settled to the rebuilt Roma *mahala* in southern Mitrovica/Mitrovicë and elsewhere, the former camp residents still need further close monitoring of their

\*All references to Kosovo refer to Kosovo under UNSCR 1244. All references to Kosovo institutions or authorities refer to the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government.

236 See the article “International Roma Day coincided with racist clashes in Belgrade over the relocation of Roma from a shanty town in central Belgrade to state-sponsored container camp in a suburb”, EurActive, 10 April 2012, <<http://www.euractiv.com/enlargement/roma-day-marked-racist-clashes-s-news-512050>>; According to the European Roma Rights Centre since 2009, 18 forced evictions were registered affecting over 650 Roma families, numbering more than 2,700 individuals. Almost all instances of forced evictions were marked by the same human rights violations, notably the failure to provide evictees with adequate (or indeed any) alternative accommodation, or to consult affected communities throughout all stages and provide due process and compensation; for more see <<http://www.errc.org/article/racist-attacks-on-resettled-roma-in-belgrade/4186>> and <<http://www.errc.org/article/evicted-roma-face-attacks-in-new-belgrade-settlement/3984>>.

health and adequate therapy against lead poisoning.<sup>237</sup> Moreover, the issue of land allocation with respect to the row houses that have been built in the *mahala* must be clarified in order to provide security of tenure to the returnees.<sup>238</sup>

In August 2013, Kosovo still had around 17,523 IDPs, of which 1,346 are members of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities.<sup>239</sup> No long-term solution has yet been found for the IDPs in the camp in Leposavić/Leposaviq in northern Kosovo, which hosts 114 Roma and Ashkali.<sup>240</sup>

Overall, the number of voluntary Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian returns to Kosovo remains low, and their sustainable reintegration remains a challenge for municipalities which often lack capacity and financial resources. A larger number of Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians remain displaced within the region as a whole, estimated at between 40,000 and 50,000 people, including some 15,000 to 20,000 undocumented Kosovo Roma in Serbia,<sup>241</sup> around 2,000 displaced Roma, Ashkali and

Egyptians in Montenegro<sup>242</sup> and over 1,000 displaced members of these groups in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Many find themselves in deplorable living conditions. After 13 years of displacement, returning to their place of origin is not a viable option for them.<sup>243</sup> This is also reflected in the low numbers of voluntary returns to Kosovo from the region in recent

“The participating States have an obligation to ensure that, even in crisis and post-crisis situations, all fundamental rights, including the rights of refugees ... are secured without discrimination ... .

“Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:  
116. The ODIHR will assume a proactive role in analyzing measures undertaken by participating States relating to Roma and Sinti people and offer advice with a view to better tackling those elements of tension in particular contexts which may evolve, if not prevented, into open conflict situations.”

— OSCE Action Plan, Chapter VIII

years. Furthermore, many are still without civil registration documents and are, therefore, without access to social rights or services and are at risk of statelessness. Although in recent years improvements have been made to facilitate late registration or the obtaining of documents, more efforts are needed to enable access to civil registration for the displaced Kosovo Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the region.

237 See further Council of Europe Advisory Committee On The Framework Convention For The Protection Of National Minorities, “Second Opinion on Kosovo”, adopted 5 November 2009, ACFC/OP/II(2009)004, Strasbourg, p.2, <[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3\\_fcnmdocs/PDF\\_2nd\\_OP\\_Kosovo\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_fcnmdocs/PDF_2nd_OP_Kosovo_en.pdf)>. According to tests in 2013 from Medical institutions in Kosovo, there are still individuals living in Leposavić/Leposaviq with increased lead levels in their blood.

238 “Beneficiaries of the projects signed tripartite agreements with the municipality and Mercy Corps for an initial 18 month period, with the option for renewal for an additional 97.5 years. The Mitrovicë/Mitrovica municipal assembly has voted to allocate land for the projects, but the official documents required to secure that land do not exist. There is also disagreement as to whether the municipal assembly voted for a 99-year use, or “long term” use.

239 “Kosovo durable solution still elusive 13 years after conflict”, Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 10 October 2012, p.4, <[http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F-004BE3B1/%28httpInfoFiles%29/059256A33883575EC1257A-93003F6A18/\\$file/kosovo-overview-oct2012.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F-004BE3B1/%28httpInfoFiles%29/059256A33883575EC1257A-93003F6A18/$file/kosovo-overview-oct2012.pdf)>.

240 According to the Mission in Kosovo, there are currently 141 people (35 families) displaced in the Leposavić/Leposaviq camp. Nineteen families will be resettled to the Roma mahala in southern Mitrovica/Mitrovicë and 5 to other municipalities, by an EU funded project. For the remaining 11 families, a solution still needs to be found.

241 “Report of the OSCE-ODIHR Roundtable Organized in co-operation with the Serbian Ministry of Human and Minority Rights: Sustainable Solutions for Displaced Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and Policies to Improve the Reintegration of Repatriated Roma”, ODIHR, 16 April 2010, Belgrade, <<http://www.osce.org/odihhr/75578>>.

242 In follow-up to the Sarajevo process in 2011 a regional multi-annual housing programme was endorsed by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia and Serbia to provide durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons from the 1991-1995 conflict or vulnerable displaced persons from 1999 in Montenegro. According to the Montenegrin authorities, the refugee camp Konik which hosts 1400 displaced Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians from Kosovo will be closed within this programme.

243 See “Serious Obstacles Remain For Internally Displaced In Balkans, Warns United Nations Special Representative”, UN Press release, 7 July 2009, <<http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/0/38C08A0FBA110AFEC12575EC00369E82?opendocument>>.

Taking into account the political changes that have occurred since the conflict in 1999, many of them prefer integration in their current locations.<sup>244</sup>

Sustainable reintegration of the repatriated Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian remains a challenge for municipalities. Despite positive policy developments, those sent back to Kosovo within the current readmission process are not finding reception conditions conducive to their reintegration. Key difficulties remain in the areas of adequate housing conditions and economic opportunities, as well as access to education and social services. Overall, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians continue to be among the most vulnerable communities in Kosovo, with high rates of unemployment and low rates of school integration. Girls and women from these communities are particularly affected by low school enrolment and high drop-out rates. Initiatives for promoting education in these communities are predominately being undertaken by international actors and are lacking in local ownership.<sup>245</sup>

### Action by Participating States, and by Kosovo Authorities

Across the Western Balkans region, the sustainable return of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian refugees from the 1991-1995 conflicts and from the Kosovo conflict in 1999 is burdened by difficulties in the property restoration process (partially because of a lack of property ownership documents or means of proving ownership) and/or a lack of civil registration documents. Many Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities still remain in deplorable housing conditions without access to social rights

244 According to a needs assessment survey of internally displaced in Serbia from 2010 "(...) only 21.6% of all the IDP households are ready to return. A similar degree of desire to return (20.9%) is recorded among IDP households in need. Roma are far less willing to return to Kosovo (8.8%) than non-Roma (23%) [...] The willingness of Roma to return is probably a consequence of a significant discrimination in Kosovo, higher than in the communities where the displaced Roma settled. This attitude is reflected in the regional distribution, so the greatest willingness to return was recorded in regions where there is a smaller representation of Roma, in Šumadija and western Serbia (24.7%) and southern/eastern Serbia (31.3%)", in: "Assessment of the Needs of Internally Displaced Persons", UNHCR, Republic of Serbia, Joint IDP Profiling Service, February 2011, p. 33, <[http://www.jips.org/system/cms/attachments/419/original\\_Serbia\\_-\\_Profiling\\_final\\_analytical\\_report\\_%28English%29.pdf](http://www.jips.org/system/cms/attachments/419/original_Serbia_-_Profiling_final_analytical_report_%28English%29.pdf)>.

245 OSCE Mission in Kosovo, "Assessing Progress in the Implementation of the Policy Framework for the Reintegration of Repatriated Persons in Kosovo's Municipalities", October 2012, <<https://www.osce.org/kosovo/82416>>.

and/or services, as well as without any future prospects for improvement.

In order to respond to these challenges and to reduce the risk of statelessness, the UNHCR continues to support issuance of civil status documentation and late birth registration certificates, and to promote amendments to national legislation and policies in co-operation with other international partners and civil society organizations. As follow-up to a regional conference in Zagreb in October 2011, supported by the UNHCR and the OSCE, governmental representatives from the Western Balkan region agreed to ensure access to civil registration documents for vulnerable groups and to remove existing obstacles.<sup>246</sup> This initiative has been further carried out by the governments participating in the Decade of Roma Inclusion<sup>247</sup> with the support of the UNHCR, the EC and the OSCE.

Major progress by the Kosovo authorities was observed during the reporting period in standard-setting, with the adoption of a Strategy and an Action Plan for 2009-2015. Although the OSCE Mission in Kosovo's assessment of the implementation Strategy and the Action Plan by the end of 2012 found that little had been done in most areas, it did note positive developments related to support for return and reintegration.

The approval in Kosovo of the Revised Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons and its Action Plan in 2010 is a positive development, which was followed up in 2011 with outreach and awareness-raising initiatives for municipal institutions. Moreover, the government allocated 3.4 million euros in the year 2011 to a central-level reintegration fund for assistance packages for repatriated persons.<sup>248</sup>

The repatriation of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians from Western Europe to their places of origin remains a challenge. Several Western European countries, as well as countries sharing a border with Kosovo, have signed bilateral readmission agreements and started repatriating

246 The participants of the conference adopted the Zagreb Declaration, see <<http://www.osce.org/hcnm/85249>>.

247 In April 2012, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Presidency of the Roma Decade hosted a conference on "Addressing the Problems of Persons without Documents and Access to Rights", while Montenegro declared it would further prioritizing issuance of civil registration documents for all, and particularly vulnerable groups such as Roma within their programme for their presidency between 2013-2014.

248 OSCE Mission in Kosovo, *op. cit.*, note 245.



persons there.<sup>249</sup> In its 2009 position paper on this issue, the UNHCR underlined the need for a careful evaluation of asylum applications from Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian minority members, in light of their need for international protection, and discouraged governments from choosing the option of internal movement within Kosovo or relocation to Kosovo for members of these communities.<sup>250</sup> Despite this official position, Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians are still being repatriated to Kosovo.<sup>251</sup> In Kosovo there is still a general lack of capacity and resources to ensure adequate reception of these people and assistance for their reintegration at the municipal level.<sup>252</sup>

Despite progress in the area of policy development, the overall implementation of the Revised Strategy at the local level is still not sufficient.<sup>253</sup> Reportedly, repatriated Roma are being left without assistance or are trying to leave Kosovo again, usually heading to neighbouring countries.

### Priority Areas and Recommendations

More attention is needed to provide durable solutions for the displaced or refugee Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians from the conflicts in the 1990s. In this regard, participating States should remove obstacles to property repossession and access to civil registration documents that are negatively impacting the return process. The Zagreb Declaration, to which participants from the Western Balkan region agreed in 2011, needs to be followed up by firm action and enhanced bilateral co-operation to resolve still-open cases of undocumented

Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and reduce their risk of statelessness.

In order to facilitate return, including economic integration, adequate resources should be provided at the municipal level to assist and facilitate the integration of repatriated Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians locally. Moreover, a case-by-case assessment has to be made by the sending countries in order to preclude secondary displacement.

Particular attention must be paid to accommodating the needs of the IDPs and refugees living in irregular housing. The factors that cause people to move from one informal settlement to the next must be identified and addressed.

249 Among others, Albania, Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and Switzerland.

250 "UNHCR's Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Individuals from Kosovo", UNHCR, November, 2009, p.17, <<http://www.refworld.org/docid/4af842462.html>>.

251 In December 2009 ODIHR carried out a needs assessment visit to assess the situation of Kosovo Roma IDPs in Serbia. Moreover, the OSCE Mission to Kosovo highlighted in its 2011 report: "According to statistics compiled by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a total of 1334 persons were forcibly repatriated to Kosovo in the first half of 2011, including 336 members of non-majority communities (303 of whom belong to groups considered at risk and in need of international protection by the UNHCR, namely Kosovo Serbs, Kosovo Albanians in a minority situation at the municipal level and Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians)", *op. cit.*, note 245.

252 "Implementation of the Strategy for Reintegration of Repatriated Persons in Kosovo's Municipalities", OSCE Mission to Kosovo, 2009, <<http://www.osce.org/kosovo/40180>>.

253 *Ibid.* p.18.



## PART III

# The OSCE's Role in Implementing the Action Plan

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During the review period, the mandate of the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues was strengthened through the adoption of two Ministerial Council Decisions on Roma and Sinti: the Helsinki Ministerial Decision of 2008 on “Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Implement the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area” and the Athens Ministerial Decision of 2009 on “Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Ensure Roma and Sinti Sustainable Integration”. Both were prompted by the findings and prioritizations of the 2008 Status Report and developments on the ground, such an increase in the number of violent incidents reported in the OSCE region in which Roma and Sinti were the targets and the particular interest of international organizations and civil society in improving access to early education for Roma and Sinti children.

The Helsinki Decision reaffirmed the OSCE commitments relating to Roma and Sinti. It called on the participating States to provide equal access to education, to promote early education for Roma and Sinti children as an instrument for the prevention of social exclusion and marginalization and the promotion of long-term improvements in the situations of these communities.

A year later, the Athens Decision focused on enhancing OSCE efforts to ensure integration of Roma and Sinti. The Ministerial Council tasked ODIHR, in co-operation and co-ordination with the High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM), the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media and other relevant OSCE executive structures, to continue assisting participating States in combating acts of discrimination and violence against Roma and Sinti, as well as to counter negative stereotyping of Roma and Sinti in the media.

It also tasked ODIHR, in consultation with the participating States and in close co-operation with other relevant OSCE institutions, to develop and implement projects addressing the issue of early education for Roma and Sinti. These Decisions guided the activities of the ODIHR Contact Point throughout the review period,

both in relation to the participating States and to Roma and Sinti communities and organizations.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, at its Twentieth Annual Session, in Belgrade from 6 to 10 July 2011, also adopted two resolutions on Roma: the “Resolution promoting policies in favour of the Roma population” and a resolution on “Promoting policies on equality between women and men of the Roma population”, and these have provided an additional basis for ODIHR’s activities.

### Realizing its core tasks: assisting participating States in implementing OSCE commitments

The core mandate of the ODIHR Contact Point is to assist participating States with the implementation of the OSCE commitments related to Roma and Sinti by offering expertise, knowledge and guidelines through direct contacts, as well as through reports and publications. ODIHR has maintained ongoing communication with OSCE Delegations and governments, made field-assessment visits to various participating States, and provided both expertise and financial support to governments and civil society in the development and implementation of Roma programmes.

The 2008 Status provided the basis to encourage governments to design policy measures or enhance existing ones focusing on Roma and Sinti. OSCE field operations, such as the OSCE Mission to Skopje, have used the 2008 Status Report as a model to produce their own assessment reports on Roma issues.

ODIHR programmatic activities during the review period, including field-assessment visits and reports on particular issues, were based on the Status Report’s analysis and recommendations. The findings of these reports, and follow-up activities by participating States to implement ODIHR recommendations, were presented and discussed at OSCE Human Dimension meetings. ODIHR reports have also provided reference points in consultations held with civil society organizations, experts and academics.

## Sharing expertise, seeking solutions

ODIHR's mandate also includes acting as a "clearing house" for information about Roma and Sinti issues. It collects and disseminates information on the situation of Roma in the OSCE area, and actively lends its expertise to efforts to find solutions to the complex issues they face.

Short field visits were carried out by the Contact Point to a number of participating States where violent incidents had occurred or where there were heightened tensions between Roma and majority communities, including to the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. During these visits Contact Point staff met with relevant stakeholders, particularly with representatives from the police and Roma communities.

## Prioritizing action

The Action Plan, the two subsequent Ministerial Council decisions, and the findings of the 2008 Status report have, as already mentioned, helped ODIHR prioritize its activities. Thus, the promotion of early education for Roma children and preventing their segregation in education systems, as well as improving the specific situation of Roma women and Roma youth, have become priority areas. Throughout the review period ODIHR has also promoted awareness-raising and supported activities to commemorate the Genocide of Roma and Sinti.

As mentioned in the text of this report, the financial crisis and its effect on the economies of many of the states in the OSCE region have, in some cases, contributed to the scapegoating of Roma, accompanied by a rise in anti-Roma rhetoric and instances where they have been the targets of violent and, sometimes, fatal attacks. Calling attention to these dangerous developments, calling for action by participating States to actively counter negative stereotypes and rhetoric in relation to Roma and to ensure their security through effective police efforts to prevent hate-motivated crimes and properly investigate them when they occur have all been priorities for the Office.

## Roma civil society

Another major ODIHR focus is on assisting Roma and Sinti civil society organizations. The Office actively supports the participation of Roma women and men in major OSCE Human Dimension events and in conferences organized by other organizations. The Office

also organizes consultations each year at which Roma experts from throughout the OSCE region take part. ODIHR ensures that Roma representatives and experts play key roles in Human Dimension meetings, especially as speakers and moderators. Roma civil society groups have also played a key role in the preparation of ODIHR field-assessment visits.

During the review period, ODIHR prioritized support for and the empowerment of Roma women and youth. As part of its efforts to promote a positive image of Roma women, ODIHR supported the production of video materials featuring Roma women who have made significant contributions to policy development at the international and national levels. Furthermore, the Office has backed capacity-building and networking initiatives as part of the Roma Youth Initiative.

## Co-operation with OSCE Institutions

During the review period, as part of its continued co-operation with other OSCE institutions and with field operations, the ODIHR Contact Point met annually with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) to outline its work and seek areas for possible joint activities. A representative of the HCNM participated in all of the Contact Point's field assessment visits. For the visit to the Czech Republic, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination also took part.

ODIHR maintains working relations with the OSCE Strategic Police Matters Unit (SPMU). The joint ODIHR/SPMU manual *Police and Roma and Sinti: Good Practices in Building Trust and Understanding* has been launched in several participating States. Representatives of the SPMU have joined the Contact Point on short visits to a number of participating States. ODIHR also co-operates with the Gender Section and the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, addressing the multiple forms of discrimination against Roma women and girls and the particular vulnerability of Roma to trafficking.

The Contact Point continued to meet annually with the Focal Points on Roma in OSCE Missions, with the Seventh Focal Point meeting held in 2013 in Belgrade. Missions also provide invaluable support for the short visits by the Contact Point to participating States.

## Co-operation with other intergovernmental organizations

ODIHR has established and continues to maintain good working relationships with major intergovernmental organizations, and particularly with the Council of Europe and institutions of the European Union and United Nations.

ODIHR has implemented several joint initiatives with the Council of Europe, such as the International Task Force for the Education of Roma. The Task Force aims to promote education for Roma and Sinti and to ensure close co-ordination of European and international initiatives. During the review period, Task Force meetings were held in Strasbourg and Paris. In co-operation with the Council of Europe, ODIHR has developed a website dedicated to remembrance of the Roma genocide (<http://www.romagenocide.org/>).

The Council of Europe Secretary-General's Special Representative for Roma participated in the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in 2011, where he delivered the introductory address on enhancing the implementation of the OSCE commitments regarding Roma and Sinti. The European Commission on Racism and Intolerance also presented its General Policy Recommendation on the fight against "anti-Gypsyism" at the same meeting. Further, the ODIHR Contact Point was actively involved in the creation of the Council of Europe's Roma Youth Action Plan.

ODIHR continues to participate in the Informal Contact Group on Roma of Intergovernmental Organizations, which holds regular co-ordination meetings. Two such meetings were held in 2011. The Contact Point also participates in the meetings of the new ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma issues at the Council of Europe, which reviews and analyses the situation of Roma in Europe on a regular basis.

ODIHR continues to expand its relationships with European Union institutions, particularly the European Commission Task Force on Roma Inclusion, the European Union Platform for Roma Inclusion and the Directorate General for Enlargement. Since 2010, ODIHR has co-operated closely with the Directorate General for Enlargement on Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the accession countries of the Western Balkans, including in a series of high-level conferences with governments in the region.

ODIHR also maintains working relationships with United Nations bodies, in particular with the United Nations Independent Expert on Minority Issues and the

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Independent Expert delivered the opening remarks, focusing on the empowerment of Roma women, at the Special Day on Roma and Sinti at the 2012 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

## SOME OF THE CONTACT POINT'S KEY ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES

### Field assessment visits

The Contact Point's pro-active approach to Roma and Sinti issues is best exemplified in its field-assessment visits. Although these are often triggered by specific developments in particular participating States, the focus of the visits is chosen to examine and assess trends and developments common across the OSCE region, and the recommendations produced by these visits are addressed to all OSCE participating States. During this assessment period, ODIHR, in co-operation with other OSCE institutions, conducted field assessment visits to Italy in 2008, Hungary in 2009 and the Czech Republic in 2012.

The field visit to Italy in 2008, conducted in co-operation with the HCNM, followed the issuing by the authorities of a number of emergency decrees and ordinances that introduces a census and identification operations in both authorized and unauthorized Roma settlements. The delegation visited Milan, Naples and Rome, meeting with representatives from different levels of government, civil society and Roma and Sinti communities, including both Roma with Italian citizenship and Roma from the former Yugoslavia and Romania, living in both authorized and unauthorized settlements. The field visit report, containing recommendations for federal, regional and local authorities on providing effective protection for the human rights and promoting the integration of Roma and Sinti, was provided to the Italian authorities and then published in early 2009.

Following a series of violent attacks against Roma in 2008 and 2009 in Hungary, including the murders of six Roma people, ODIHR conducted a field assessment visit to that country, from 25 June to 3 July 2009. The visiting delegation included representatives of the HCNM and the SPMU, and the OSCE Chairmanship in Office's Personal Representative on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination. The field visit focused specifically on the underlying context and factors leading to the attacks, the measures taken by the authorities to respond to and prevent further attacks and violence, the

impact of state policies and programmes on the progress of Roma integration, and areas in which ODIHR could support these efforts. During the visit, the delegation met with representatives of the relevant national and local state authorities, police, the Roma community and civil society. The field assessment report was published in 2010, and this was followed by a roundtable discussion on its findings, organized jointly with the Hungarian Government, in Budapest on 23 November of that year. The identification, proper investigation of and responses to such hate crimes by law-enforcement bodies were the main focus of discussion. Participants in the discussion acknowledged the need for further training of police and prosecutors to identify possible racial or ethnic bias in crimes targeting members of minority groups, including Roma and Sinti.

From 21 to 25 May 2012, ODIHR, in co-operation with the Irish OSCE Chairmanship and the HCNM, conducted a field visit to the Czech Republic. The aim of the visit was to assess progress toward integrating Roma children into mainstream education, especially in ending the improper placement of Roma children into schools for the mentally disabled and the role played by “anti-Gypsy” sentiment in the perpetuation of segregation. The delegation met with representatives of national and local governments, as well as with education and law-enforcement officials. The recommendations in the report: “Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma children: Field Assessment visit to the Czech Republic”, published in October 2012, recommends the phasing out of “practical primary” schools, promoting and supporting inclusive education, and introducing supportive measures for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

### Combating racism and discrimination

ODIHR has paid close attention in recent years to the apparent rise of extremist manifestations of racism and intolerance, as well as hate-motivated violence against Roma in Europe. In order to raise awareness of these issues and to analyze the potential threat to social cohesion and security, ODIHR organized a conference on “Extremism and the Roma and Sinti in Europe: Challenges, Risks and Responses” in London in September 2009. The conference brought together academics and civil society representatives to analyze issues such as the form and extent of anti-Roma racism and violence in Europe and public anti-Roma rhetoric in periods of social hardship and economic recession. A selection of papers submitted for the event formed the basis of the book *The*

*Gypsy “Menace”: Populism and the New Anti-Gypsy Politics*, which provides an analysis of current trends and possible ways to combat this extremism.

The serious human rights challenges faced by Roma when migrating or exercising their right to freedom of movement, together with attendant security implications, were the focus of an international conference in Vienna on 9 and 10 November 2009, co-organized by ODIHR, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, and the High Commissioner for National Minorities. The conference facilitated discussion of a wide range of issues, including hate-motivated incidents against Roma, racist rhetoric, pervasive discrimination, and underlying factors and reasons for migration.

The Special Day on Roma and Sinti during the 2011 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting focused on effective responses to intolerance directed at these communities, on enhancing implementation of OSCE commitments in this area, and on building partnerships between participating States and Roma and Sinti representatives in the design and implementation of integration policies. ODIHR organized three additional side events: on the role of the media and Roma organizations in countering prejudices and negative stereotypes; on challenges, risks and responses with regard to extremism and Roma and Sinti in Europe; and, in co-operation with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), on the ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 13 on combating anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma.

Following a number of anti-Roma marches by extremist groups in the Czech Republic, ODIHR visited a number of locations in the country in August 2011 to assess the situation and discuss adequate responses with relevant authorities. Follow-up to this visit was also part of the 2012 field visit, which primarily focused on access to education.

In reaction to violent anti-Roma protests in a number of cities in Bulgaria following the death of a young man in Katunitsa in September 2011, the Contact Point visited the country in November 2011 to discuss measures taken to prevent further violence with the Ministry of Interior. ODIHR participated in a conference hosted by the Bulgarian National Council on Ethnic and Integration Issues in Sofia, which discussed the draft National Strategy for Roma Integration (2010-2020), which had been prepared as a follow-up to the European Council’s conclusions on the Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies.

In February 2012, ODIHR addressed the United States Helsinki Commission, providing a detailed presentation on the situation of Roma in the OSCE area and highlighting current challenges with regard to racism and intolerance against Roma and Sinti communities.

With regard to addressing the root causes behind the vulnerability of Roma to trafficking in human beings, ODIHR provided expertise and financial support for a study on the social inclusion of Roma in Italy, produced by the NGO Geordie Onlus. The study was launched at an event in Rome, during which ODIHR discussed with municipal officials and Roma civil society representatives ways to promote the integration of Roma, especially those living in camps in the city. On this occasion, meetings were also held with the relevant authorities to discuss their implementation of the recommendations from the ODIHR report on the field assessment visit to Italy in 2009.

### Supporting governments and enhancing policy instruments

In 2011, ODIHR provided assistance to participating States in the development of their national Roma integration strategies. The Office supported the Moldovan authorities in the development and finalization of the Action Plan for the support of Roma people in the Republic of Moldova for 2011 to 2015 and, in co-operation with the Moldovan Bureau for Interethnic Relations, hosted a roundtable on 7 and 8 April in Chisinau to discuss the Action Plan with relevant government representatives, Roma civil society organizations and international stakeholders. In 2012, as follow-up to this, ODIHR assisted the Moldovan Bureau for Inter-ethnic Relations in raising awareness about the Action Plan at the regional and local levels. Three regional roundtables, in Chisinau, Soroca and Cahul, respectively, were organized with regional and local authorities and Roma civil society representatives. Moreover, the Action Plan was translated into three languages (the state language, Russian and Romani), and leaflets in these three languages were produced and distributed to local authorities and Roma civil society organizations nationwide.

In 2012, ODIHR, in co-operation with the SPMU, conducted an assessment visit to Ukraine. During the visit, the OSCE delegation held meetings with the Ukrainian authorities, as well as with representatives of Roma civil society and Roma communities. The aim of this visit was to assess the progress toward developing a Ukrainian Roma Integration Strategy and Action Plan.

In December 2012, ODIHR and the HCNM provided the Ukrainian authorities with comments on its draft Roma Integration Strategy.

To address the particularly vulnerable situation of Roma who lack civil registration documents, ODIHR shared its expertise at the regional Conference on Provision of Civil Documentation and Registration in South Eastern Europe, organized by the HCNM, in co-operation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on 26 and 27 October 2011 in Zagreb, Croatia.

### Improving access to education

In the area of education, ODIHR, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, met with the Greek authorities on 4 and 5 May 2011 in Athens to promote the access of Roma children to education. The Contact Point also engaged with the Polish authorities throughout the year to promote access to early childhood education and to quality education for all Roma children in Poland and to develop tools for raising awareness among Roma of the importance of early childhood education.

To provide support for such efforts to promote access to education for Roma and Sinti children, in December 2010 ODIHR published a report on enrolment and participation in early education programmes, based on replies by participating States and civil society organizations to a questionnaire circulated by the Office. In 2010, ODIHR also actively engaged in the establishment of the International Task Force for the Education of Roma, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, UNESCO, UNICEF, the European Commission, the Roma Education Fund and the International Step by Step Association. The Task Force fosters co-ordination of the promotion of early childhood care and education, of regular education, of out-of-school education, of vocational training and of adult education in Roma communities.

As mentioned above, in 2012 ODIHR, in co-operation with the Irish OSCE Chairmanship and the HCNM, conducted a field visit to the Czech Republic to assess the progress toward integrating Roma children into mainstream education and address the continuing challenges in the area of education, especially the improper placement of Roma children into schools for the mentally disabled.

### Roma and police

ODIHR has continued to promote improving relations between police and Roma and Sinti communities as a

means of enhancing the protection of Roma against violence and intolerance. ODIHR worked closely with the SPMU to produce and publish *Police and Roma and Sinti: Good Practices in Building Trust and Understanding*, a comprehensive manual that was launched on in May 2010 at the Annual Police Experts Meeting in Vienna. The provides examples of good practices for breaking down barriers and building trust and understanding between police and Roma and Sinti, and has been translated into Albanian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian and Slovak.

### Roma and Sinti women, Roma and Sinti youth

In 2008, ODIHR supported Yurom Centar, an NGO in Belgrade, and Luludi, an organization in Skopje, both of which focus on the situation of Roma women and children, in conducting information and voter-education campaigns for Roma communities in Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, respectively. These campaigns included the distribution of flyers and posters related to voting procedures, the organization of community meetings and roundtables, and “get out the vote” radio broadcasts at the local level.

In 2011, ODIHR supported the “Campaign to Prevent and Combat the Practice of Early Marriage”, implemented by the National Union of Roma Communities in Romania. As part of the campaign, this organization produced a documentary on early marriage and conducted activities in ten Roma communities in Romania.

In 2012, ODIHR shifted greater focus to raising awareness about the multiple forms of discrimination and vulnerability that Roma and Sinti women face. The Special Day on Roma and Sinti during the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting on 26 September focused on the empowerment of Roma women. Representatives from participating States and Roma women’s organizations stressed that education is vital to increasing Roma women’s active participation in public and political life. ODIHR also supported the nongovernmental Roma organization Romedia Foundation in producing a short film presenting Roma and Sinti women and their personal perspectives on these topics, which was shown during the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting as an advocacy tool to raise awareness about Roma women’s rights. On the Special Day, ODIHR also hosted the third “Roma Consultation Meeting” with more than 40 Roma and Sinti women civil society representatives from across the OSCE region. The consultation meeting led to the adoption of the “Warsaw Romani, Sinti and

Travellers Women’s Declaration”, which highlights the vulnerable situation of Roma, Sinti and Traveller women and the negative impact of government austerity measures on them.

ODIHR also contributed to various other conferences on Roma women during the year. In February 2012, in a presentation at a conference on Roma women’s health in Belgrade, ODIHR highlighted the particular difficulties for Roma women in accessing health care and the need to do more to address the multiple forms of discrimination they face in this area. On 5 September 2012 in Vienna, the Contact Point spoke at the OSCE expert roundtable organized by the OSCE Gender Section on “Women as Agents of Change in Migrant, Minority and Roma and Sinti Communities in the OSCE Area”. The presentation stressed that poverty, lack of education and other factors that keep Roma women dependent make them more vulnerable to discrimination, domestic violence and trafficking. ODIHR recommended that participating States play a proactive role by adopting gender-sensitive measures to improve the situation of Roma women. ODIHR also supported the participation of a group of Roma women civil society representatives at this roundtable.

On 11 and 12 October 2012, ODIHR took part in the OSCE Conference “Alliance against Trafficking in Persons”, in Vienna, where the root causes behind the vulnerability of Roma women and children to trafficking were discussed. While these factors, including poverty, social exclusion, lack of education and discrimination may not be different from those affecting other social or ethnic groups, their scope and extent have a disproportionate impact on women and children in these communities.

ODIHR has also placed special emphasis on empowering Roma youth and supporting the Roma youth network ternYpe. In 2011, ODIHR supported the efforts of Roma organizations to enhance youth activism, including training by the Roma Civic Alliance on youth mobilization and civic participation, which led to the establishment of the Roma Youth Alliance. In 2012, the Office funded and co-organized a meeting in December with the European Roma Grassroots Organizations Network and ternYpe in Brussels. The event brought together 40 Roma youth participants representing several youth networks, as well as mainstream civil society organizations working with Roma youth. In addition, on 7 and 8 December, ODIHR contributed to a meeting of the Informal Contact Group on the Roma Youth Action Plan organized by the Council of Europe, focusing on



the progress made in implementing the Roma Youth Action Plan.

### Teaching about the Roma and Sinti genocide and promoting its official recognition

During the assessment period the ODIHR Contact Point paid special attention to raising awareness of, commemorating and promoting education about the Roma and Sinti genocide during World War II.

In 2008, ODIHR provided support to the Ion Cioaba Foundation, a Roma social and cultural organization in Romania, in the production of a book about the Roma deported to Transdnistria during World War II. The book is of particular educational importance for raising awareness about the historical context of the challenges faced by this community today.

As mentioned above, ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Education Division, developed a website dedicated to information about the Roma genocide in World War II ([www.romagenocide.org](http://www.romagenocide.org)). The website serves as a virtual library on the Roma genocide, providing information on publications, curricula, teaching materials, textbooks, places of remembrance and innovative practices introduced by governments, civil society, international organizations, museums and schools.

In 2010, a commemorative event was co-organized by ODIHR, the Polish Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Treatment and regional authorities on 2 August in Oswiecim, where some 80 participants, including representatives of a European Roma youth network, took part in commemorating the victims of the "Zigeunerlager", or "Gypsy Camp", at the former Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The event aimed to raise awareness among young Roma about the origins of the Roma genocide, to teach them about this history and to discuss manifestations of racism and intolerance experienced by Roma today across Europe.

In 2011, following a declaration of the Polish parliament recognizing 2 August as the official Roma and Sinti Genocide Remembrance Day, ODIHR organized an international seminar entitled "The Roma and Sinti Genocide: Memory, Identity and Present-day Racism" on 1 August in Krakow to provide a forum for discussion of the Roma genocide in Auschwitz-Birkenau and ways to combat modern forms of racism and discrimination. The seminar was attended by historians, survivors and more than 90 young Roma from throughout Europe.

ODIHR also actively contributed to an expert meeting on the development of teaching materials on the Roma

genocide organized by the Anne Frank House on 19 and 20 June 2011 in Amsterdam. In 2012, ODIHR also engaged in raising awareness of the Roma genocide and participated in the opening of a memorial to Roma Holocaust victims in October in Berlin.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### The Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE

1 and 2 December 2003, Maastricht, the Netherlands

#### ACTION PLAN ON IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF ROMA AND SINTI WITHIN THE OSCE AREA (MC.DEC/3/03)

The Ministerial Council,

Committed to respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without adverse distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Supporting the adoption and implementation of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation to promote full equality of opportunities for all,

Recognizing the particular difficulties faced by Roma and Sinti people and the need to undertake effective measures in order to eradicate discrimination against them and to bring about equality of opportunities, consistent with OSCE commitments,

Recognizing that progress has been achieved in national legislation and in programmes for action and that substantial efforts have been undertaken by the participating States to this end,

Aware at the same time that resolute action is still required to improve the situation of the Roma and Sinti population across the OSCE region,

Noting the rich cultural, linguistic and historical diversity among Roma and Sinti people within the OSCE area, as well as the diversity of national structures and traditions in the OSCE area,

Noting the outcome of important recent governmental and non-governmental conferences and initiatives on Roma and Sinti in Europe, including, inter alia, the launching of a Decade of Roma Inclusion and the possible creation of a European Forum for Roma and Travellers,

Convinced that Roma and Sinti populations should have an ever-increasing degree of ownership of the policies focusing on them,

Decides to endorse the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area, adopted by the Permanent Council in its Decision No. 566 on 27 November 2003, and annexed to this Decision.

#### Annex to Decision No. 3/03

#### ACTION PLAN ON IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF ROMA AND SINTI WITHIN THE OSCE AREA

#### DECISION No. 566

#### ACTION PLAN ON IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF ROMA AND SINTI WITHIN THE OSCE AREA

#### I. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

1. The Action Plan is intended to reinforce the efforts of the participating States and relevant OSCE institutions and structures aimed at ensuring that Roma and Sinti people are able to play a full and equal part in our societies, and at eradicating discrimination against them.

2. The Action Plan relies on the framework of international and regional human rights law, existing OSCE commitments and examples of best practices from countries throughout Europe, where these are in place, and aims at fostering such practices elsewhere. The special measures foreseen by the Action Plan with a view to improving the situation of Roma and Sinti people are based on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Article I, paragraph 4 reads: "Special measures taken for the sole purpose of securing adequate advancement of certain racial or ethnic groups or individuals requiring such protection as may be necessary in order to ensure such groups or individuals equal enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms shall not be deemed racial discrimination, provided, however, that such measures do not, as a consequence, lead to the maintenance of separate rights for different racial groups and that they shall not be continued after the objectives for which they were taken have been achieved."

3. Both the participating States and OSCE institutions are called upon to implement the Action Plan. Roma and Sinti communities in the participating States are invited to draw upon and contribute actively to the implementation of the Action Plan's provisions.

## II. GENERAL CONTEXT: FOR ROMA, WITH ROMA

4. Each national policy or implementation strategy should: (1) respond to the real problems, needs and priorities of Roma and Sinti communities; (2) be comprehensive; (3) introduce a balanced and sustainable approach to combining human rights goals with social policies; and (4) maximize Roma ownership of the policies that affect them. At the same time, national policies or implementation strategies should be adapted and implemented according to the specific needs of Roma and Sinti populations in particular situations in participating States. Implementation strategies should also include mechanisms to ensure that national policies are implemented at the local level.

5. The guiding principle in the efforts of participating States and relevant OSCE institutions should be that each policy and implementation strategy should be elaborated and implemented with the active participation of Roma and Sinti communities. It is essential to ensure real participation by Roma and Sinti people in all the decisions that affect their lives. Roma and Sinti people should work alongside local, national and international authorities in the development of these strategies. Equally, Roma communities should be equal partners and should share the responsibility for the betterment of their welfare.

6. The particular situation of Roma and Sinti women should be taken into account in the design and implementation of all policies and programmes. Where consultative and other mechanisms exist to facilitate Roma and Sinti people's participation in such policy-making processes, women should be able to participate on an equal basis with men. Roma women's issues should be systematically mainstreamed in all relevant policies designed for the population as a whole.

## III. COMBATING RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

In order to counter prejudice against Roma and Sinti and to effectively elaborate and implement policies to combat discrimination and racial violence, the following actions are recommended:

### Legislation and law enforcement

*Recommended action by participating States:*

7. Consider ratifying the relevant international treaties as soon as possible, if they have not already done so, *inter alia*, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

8. Adopt and implement effective anti-discrimination legislation to combat racial and ethnic discrimination in all fields, including, *inter alia*, access to housing, citizenship and residence, education, employment, health and social services. Involve Roma and Sinti representatives in the design, implementation and evaluation processes.

9. The anti-discrimination legislation should ensure:

- Prohibition of both direct and indirect racial discrimination;
- Imposition of effective, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions for discriminatory acts or practices;
- Imposition of heavier sentences for racially motivated crimes by both private individuals and public officials;
- Equal access to effective remedies (judicial, administrative, conciliation or mediation procedures).

10. It should be ensured that national legislation prohibits all kinds of discriminatory acts and that all cases of suspected discrimination are thoroughly and objectively investigated.

11. Create, where appropriate, specialized institutions to ensure the implementation of such legislation, as well as domestic mechanisms to monitor and report regularly and with transparency on the progress achieved in its implementation. Encourage participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in such bodies, whose work should be accessible to the public.

12. Develop, where necessary, comprehensive national strategies or action plans to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti people, which include specific measures to tackle discrimination in all fields of life.

13. Assess on a regular basis, especially at the local level, the results of these strategies and involve Roma and Sinti communities in the evaluation process.

14. Endeavour, by encouraging a genuine dialogue or consultations or through other appropriate means, to improve the relations between Roma and Sinti people and other inhabitants, with a view to promoting tolerance and overcoming prejudices and negative stereotypes on both sides.

15. Document, consistent with national and international standards on the protection of data, all types and relevant cases of discrimination in order to better assess the situation and respond to the needs of Roma and Sinti people.

16. Ensure the vigorous and effective investigation of acts of violence against Roma and Sinti people, especially where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that they were racially motivated, and prosecute those responsible in accordance with domestic law and consistent with relevant standards of human rights.

17. Ensure no impunity for perpetrators of discriminatory or violent acts, *inter alia*, by taking prompt and effective investigative and punitive action on the part of the police.

18. Facilitate access to justice for Roma and Sinti people through measures such as legal aid and the provision of information in the Romani language.

19. Take into account in all measures and programmes, the situation of Roma and Sinti women, who are often victims of discrimination on the basis of both ethnicity and sex.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

20. The ODIHR and, where appropriate, other OSCE institutions and structures, including OSCE field operations, will assist participating States, at their request, in developing anti-discrimination legislation, as well as in establishing anti-discrimination bodies.

21. The HCNM, within its mandate, will continue to follow the development of anti-discrimination legislation

and provide advice and assistance to the participating States in this respect, as appropriate.

22. Upon request, the ODIHR will provide advice on how a participating State's existing mechanisms, such as ombudsman offices, commissions for combating discrimination, police disciplinary commissions, and other relevant bodies can alleviate tensions between Roma and Sinti and non-Roma communities.

23. The ODIHR/Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) will promote better relations between Roma and Sinti non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the participating States.

24. The ODIHR-CPRSI will serve as a clearing house on initiatives undertaken by participating States and facilitate exchanges of information on best practices.

25. The ODIHR-CPRSI will, in close co-operation with participating States, Roma and Sinti communities, and where possible with other international organizations, and in full respect of the laws on the protection of personal data, collect documentation for the purpose of developing more precisely targeted policies.

**Police**

*Recommended action by participating States:*

26. Develop policies that promote awareness among law-enforcement institutions regarding the situation of Roma and Sinti people and that counter prejudice and negative stereotypes.

27. Develop training programmes to prevent excessive use of force and to promote awareness of and respect for human rights.

28. Develop policies: (1) to improve relations between Roma and Sinti communities and the police, so as to prevent police abuse and violence against Roma and Sinti people; and (2) to improve trust and confidence in the police among Roma and Sinti people.

29. Develop policies and procedures to ensure an effective police response to racially motivated violence against Roma and Sinti people.

30. Assess the gap between international standards on police and currently existing national practices in

consultation with national police forces, NGOs and representatives of Roma and Sinti communities.

31. Elaborate, where appropriate, and in close partnership with international organizations and Roma NGOs, policy statements, codes of conduct, practical guidance manuals and training programmes.

32. Encourage Roma and Sinti people to work in law-enforcement institutions as a sustainable means of promoting tolerance and diversity.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

33. The Strategic Police Matters Unit in the Secretariat and the ODIHR will assist participating States in developing programmes and confidence-building measures — such as community policing — to improve the relations between Roma and Sinti people and the police, particularly at the local level.

34. The ODIHR-CPRSI and the Strategic Police Matters Unit will, within their respective mandates, produce a compilation of police “best practices” in the OSCE region with respect to policing and Roma and Sinti communities.

35. The HCNM, the ODIHR-CPRSI and the Strategic Police Matters Unit will assist the participating States in developing codes of conduct to prevent racial profiling and improve interethnic relations.

### Mass Media

*Recommended action by participating States:*

36. Launch information and awareness-raising campaigns with a view to countering prejudices and negative stereotypes of Roma and Sinti people.

37. In order to foster freedom of expression, encourage training of Roma and Sinti journalists and their employment in media outlets with a view to facilitating wider access to the media for Roma and Sinti people.

38. Encourage the media to show positive aspects and present a balanced portrayal of Roma life, refrain from stereotyping Roma and Sinti people and avoid inciting tension between various ethnic groups. Organize round

tables between media representatives and Roma and Sinti representatives to promote this objective.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

39. In co-operation with the ODIHR as well as relevant international organizations, the Representative on Freedom of the Media (RFOM) should consider how the OSCE could contribute to the establishment of a European Roma Radio which would broadcast throughout Europe. The ODIHR and the RFOM should organize public debates, anti-discrimination campaigns and joint training programmes with and for the media.

40. The RFOM should consider facilitating training seminars for Roma journalists.

41. The ODIHR-CPRSI and the RFOM will organize round tables with journalists on the image that Roma and Sinti communities have in society.

42. The HCNM will continue to elaborate and disseminate guidelines for policy-makers on the use of the State broadcast media in multicultural communities, aimed, *inter alia*, at encouraging support for minority broadcasters, including Roma and Sinti broadcasters, and improving their access to the media.

## IV. ADDRESSING SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

Action is required to ensure that Roma and Sinti people enjoy social and economic rights on a par with others. Measures at the grass-roots level, particularly those originating from Roma groups themselves, are particularly needed in order to promote the integration of Roma and Sinti people into social and economic life and to combat their isolation and poverty. The OSCE and its participating States should continue to facilitate such integration.

### Housing and living conditions

*Recommended action by participating States:*

43. Put in place mechanisms and institutional procedures to clarify property rights, resolve questions of ownership and regularize the legal status of Roma and Sinti people living in circumstances of unsettled legality (e.g., Roma neighbourhoods lacking land rights or which

are not included in the urban plans of the main locality; families and houses without legal residence status in settlements where the people have been living *de facto* for decades).

44. Involve Roma and Sinti people in the design of housing policies, as well as in the construction, rehabilitation and/or maintenance of public housing projects meant to benefit them. Ensure that housing projects do not foster ethnic and/or racial segregation.

45. Consider the possibility of guaranteeing loans to participating States that may be available from international organizations and financial institutions for low-income housing projects.

46. Promote the option of co-operative housing schemes for Roma communities and provide appropriate training for the maintenance of such facilities.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

47. The ODIHR-CPRSI and the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) are encouraged to play a larger role in facilitating the provision of information about and access to resources made available by foreign donors for specific projects, particularly those generated by Roma and Sinti groups, addressing the social and economic development of Roma and Sinti communities.

**Unemployment and economic problems**

*Recommended action by participating States:*

48. Promote increased representation of qualified Roma and Sinti people in public employment.

49. Develop training programmes to prepare under-represented groups such as Roma and Sinti for employment in local public administration and other areas, and develop policies to encourage employment of the graduates of these programmes as civil servants.

50. Reassess the impact of subsidized employment programmes, paying particular attention to their educational components, to ensure that these will aim to increase the competitiveness of Roma and Sinti people on the labour market.

51. Develop policies and programmes, including vocational training, to improve the marketable skills and employability of Roma and Sinti people, particularly young people and women.

52. Adopt social policies that strengthen incentives to seek employment, as a sustainable way to avoid dependency on social benefits.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

53. At the request of participating States, the OCEEA, together with relevant international organizations, will contribute to developing approaches designed to overcome obstacles and discrimination that prevent Roma and Sinti people from fulfilling their potential in the economic sphere.

54. At the request of participating States, the ODIHR-CPRSI and the OCEEA will support development of the employability and entrepreneurial skills of Roma and Sinti people through the establishment of training and retraining programmes in participating States. Successful practices, particularly relating to the development of entrepreneurial skills and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (e.g., the Youth Entrepreneurship Seminars programme) could be adapted to the needs of Roma and Sinti people. The OCEEA could also facilitate economic and social insertion by acting as a catalyst for support by partner organizations and financial institutions of micro-credit programmes, in the form of small loans for the establishment of small-scale businesses.

55. The OCEEA, working in close contact and in co-operation with other international organizations, so as to avoid overlapping, can assist governments in assessing the impact of economic policies and processes on Roma and Sinti communities (by developing policy performance/assessment indicators).

56. The ODIHR-CPRSI and the OCEEA will draw upon the research developed by UNDP and other agencies to assess the needs of Roma and Sinti people with a view to fostering policies that take into account the extent and nature of their specific needs in each participating State.

57. In co-ordination with relevant international organizations (in particular UNDP and the World Bank),



the ODIHR-CPRSI and the OCEEA will examine ways to stimulate better access by Roma and Sinti people to regular training programmes. Workshops or round-table discussions tailored to the needs of Roma and Sinti people can be organized, with a view to informing and educating community members regarding the economic and social rights of individuals and entrepreneurs.

### Health care

#### *Recommended action by participating States:*

58. Ensure that Roma and Sinti people have access to health care services on a non-discriminatory basis.

59. Promote awareness about the specific needs of the Roma and Sinti population amongst health care personnel.

60. Address the high incidence of disease and malnutrition among Roma communities.

61. Encourage access by Roma and Sinti populations to general public health services at an early stage by:

- (a) Informing Roma and Sinti people about the availability of such services and telling them how to take advantage of them;
- (b) Strengthening the confidence of Roma and Sinti people towards public health care providers, including through: punishing incidents of direct or indirect discrimination experienced by Roma and Sinti; training health care workers to understand relevant aspects of Roma culture; and supporting mediators who can play an important role in bridging the gap between Roma communities and public health care service providers.

62. Pay special attention to the health of women and girls, *inter alia*, by:

- (a) Promoting and/or developing programmes aimed at providing information on health care (including nutrition, neonatal care and domestic violence, etc.);
- (b) Improving access to gynaecological health care, including prenatal, delivery and postnatal health care services, *inter alia*, through the provision of information and training.

63. Pay special attention to the health of Roma and Sinti children through the provision of appropriate paediatric

care, including preventive measures such as offering vaccinations in Roma settlements.

#### *Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

64. In co-operation with other international organizations and NGOs, the ODIHR will draw upon existing research data to identify socio-economic, political and cultural factors that have an impact on the health status of particular Roma and Sinti populations, and will advise participating States regarding public health programmes which would respond to needs identified.

65. The ODIHR-CPRSI and, where appropriate, other OSCE institutions and structures, including OSCE field operations, will assist participating States in launching educational initiatives to help Roma and Sinti people make full use of regular health services. They will, *inter alia*, collect, produce and disseminate relevant information on good practices.

66. The ODIHR-CPRSI will pay special attention to ensuring that Roma and Sinti people have access to programmes aimed at prevention and/or treatment of drug abuse and addiction and AIDS and related diseases.

### V. IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Education is a prerequisite to the participation of Roma and Sinti people in the political, social and economic life of their respective countries on a footing of equality with others. Strong immediate measures in this field, particularly those that foster school attendance and combat illiteracy, should be assigned the highest priority both by decision-makers and by Roma and Sinti communities. Educational policies should aim to integrate Roma and Sinti people into mainstream education by providing full and equal access at all levels, while remaining sensitive to cultural differences.

#### *Recommended action by participating States:*

67. Ensure that national legislation includes adequate provisions banning racial segregation and discrimination in education and provides effective remedies for violations of such legislation.

68. Consult Roma and Sinti representatives when designing educational policies affecting them.
69. Actively promote equal opportunities in the field of education for Roma and Sinti children, particularly by providing them with language-related or other assistance.
70. Take special measures to enhance the quality and effectiveness of education for Roma and Sinti children. Encourage increased representation of Roma and Sinti people among school teachers.
71. Include Roma history and culture in educational texts, with particular consideration given to the experience of Roma and Sinti people during the Holocaust.
72. Consider measures to ensure the respect, protection and promotion of the Romani language and its teaching, and of Roma culture as an integral part of the Roma and Sinti cultural heritage.
73. Develop and implement comprehensive school desegregation programmes aiming at: (1) discontinuing the practice of systematically routing Roma children to special schools or classes (e.g., schools for mentally disabled persons, schools and classes exclusively designed for Roma and Sinti children); and (2) transferring Roma children from special schools to mainstream schools.
74. Allocate financial resources for the transfer of the Roma children to mainstream education and for the development of school support programmes to ease the transition to mainstream education.
75. Facilitate Roma children's access to mainstream education by taking measures such as:
- (a) Taking measures to eradicate manifestations of prejudice against Roma and Sinti people in schools;
  - (b) Training of educators regarding multicultural education and ways of dealing with ethnically mixed classes;
  - (c) Developing strategies to gain wider community support for the desegregation of schools;
  - (d) Providing support to bridge the gap between Roma and Sinti children and other pupils, including through pre-school programmes designed to prepare Roma and Sinti children for primary school;
  - (e) Providing support to increase the number of mediators/trainers and teachers from within the Roma communities.
76. Develop and implement anti-racist curricula for schools, and anti-racism campaigns for the media.
77. Develop policies that address the full range of factors which contribute to low-school attendance by Roma and Sinti children. This includes, *inter alia*, ensuring that Roma and Sinti families have the necessary documentation for registration as any other inhabitants.
78. Consider elaborating social support programmes for low-income Roma families with school-aged children.
79. Promote regular school attendance by Roma and Sinti children, *inter alia*, through the involvement of family and social mediators, the promotion of awareness by Roma and Sinti parents and elders of their responsibility to facilitate children's school attendance and, in particular, equal access to education for girls.
80. Pay special attention to providing Roma and Sinti girls with equal opportunities for educational and social inclusion and develop programmes to counter their particularly high drop-out rate.
81. Consider developing appropriate programmes for those who have not completed primary school or are illiterate.
82. Develop, where necessary, scholarship programmes for Roma students and encourage their increased participation in existing scholarship programmes.
83. Encourage computer literacy among Roma and Sinti people through the setting up of information web-sites.
84. Evaluate periodically the effectiveness of educational policies.
- Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*
85. The HCNM will encourage participating States to comply with their commitments to provide free and equal access to public education to all members of society, and will encourage them to take steps to improve the situation of Roma and Sinti people in this respect.

86. The HCNM will continue to provide guidance on educational models, curriculum content and the teaching of, or in, the mother tongue, including the Romani language.

## VI. ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

Roma and Sinti people face special challenges in their efforts to participate in the public — and particularly the political — life of their respective countries. Low levels of education and, in certain cases, discrimination against them contribute substantially to the under-representation of Roma and Sinti people at all levels of government. Roma and Sinti people have an equal right to participate in public affairs. This includes the rights to vote, stand for election, participate in public affairs and form political parties without discrimination. Efforts made in recent years to foster Roma political participation should be encouraged, particularly those originating from the Roma groups themselves.

### *Recommended action by participating States:*

87. Participating States must be proactive in ensuring that Roma and Sinti people, like any other inhabitants, have all the necessary documents, including birth certificates, identity documents and health insurance certificates. In resolving problems related to the lack of basic documents, participating States are strongly advised to work in partnership with Roma and Sinti civil organizations.

88. Participating States are encouraged to take into account the following basic conditions for ensuring effective participation by Roma and Sinti people in public and political life:

- *Early involvement:*  
Any initiative relating to Roma and Sinti people should involve them at the earliest stages in the development, implementation and evaluation phases;
- *Inclusiveness:*  
Roma and Sinti people should be included in formal consultative processes, and the effectiveness of mechanisms established for their participation in shaping major policy initiatives should be ensured by involving them in a broadly representative process;

- *Transparency:*  
Programmes and proposals should be circulated sufficiently in advance of decision-making deadlines to allow for meaningful analysis and input from representatives of Roma and Sinti communities;

- *Meaningful participation by Roma and Sinti people at all levels of government:*

Participation by Roma and Sinti people in local government is essential for the effective implementation of policies affecting them;

- *Ownership:*  
Roma and Sinti people play an essential and irreplaceable role in ensuring that the right to participate in the political process is observed in practice.

89. Elected officials should establish close working relations with Roma and Sinti communities.

90. Establish mechanisms to ensure equal, direct and open communication between Roma and Sinti representatives and government authorities, including advisory and consultative bodies.

91. Facilitate interaction between political leaders at the local and national levels and diverse Roma groups.

92. Organize election-awareness campaigns so as to increase participation of the Roma electorate in elections.

93. Ensure that Roma voters can make free and informed choices in elections.

94. Take measures to guarantee the equal voting rights of women, including by enforcing prohibitions on so-called “family voting”.

95. Encourage Roma and Sinti people to engage more actively in public service, including, where necessary, through the introduction of special measures to promote their participation in the civil service.

96. Encourage the representation of Roma and Sinti people in elected and appointed office at all levels of government.

97. Empower and integrate Roma and Sinti individuals into decision-making processes of States and localities

as elected representatives of their communities and as citizens of their respective countries.

98. Promote Roma women's participation in public and political life; Roma women should be able to participate on an equal basis with men in consultative and other mechanisms designed to increase access to all areas of public and political life.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

99. The ODIHR and, where appropriate, other OSCE institutions and structures, including OSCE field operations, will develop programmes aimed at fostering the registration necessary for full political participation.

100. The ODIHR-CPRSI should help to organize training for and by Roma NGOs, including media organizations, for wider Roma communities on the issues of democratic processes and participation.

101. The ODIHR and, where appropriate, other OSCE institutions and structures, including OSCE field operations, will develop and implement voter education and voter registration programmes.

102. The ODIHR will act as a catalyst for exchanges of information and best practices among participating States and other international organizations.

103. The ODIHR will continue and strengthen the practice of examining the involvement of Roma people in voting and election processes, and will continue the practice of including Roma and Sinti experts in its election observation missions in the OSCE area.

104. The HCNM, within its mandate, will continue to advise States on appropriate ways and means of facilitating the participation of Roma and Sinti people in all areas of public life.

105. The ODIHR-CPRSI and, where appropriate, other OSCE institutions and structures, including OSCE field operations, will design programmes that encourage Roma and Sinti representatives to stand as candidates for elected bodies or will identify creative solutions that would ensure the participation of Roma and Sinti representatives in national and local decision-making processes.

106. The ODIHR will devote particular attention to activities aimed at increasing access by Roma women to all areas of public and political life.

## VII. ROMA AND SINTI IN CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS SITUATIONS

The participating States have an obligation to ensure that, even in crisis and post-crisis situations, all the fundamental rights, including the rights of refugees deriving from relevant international instruments, in particular the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, are secured without discrimination. They take into account the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as a useful framework for the work of the OSCE and their endeavours in dealing with internal displacement.

*Recommended action by participating States:*

107. Consult Roma and Sinti populations when defining crisis situations in order to facilitate adequate procedures and to identify specific geographical areas from which refugees and internally displaced persons flee, as well as to ensure that the specific situation of Roma and Sinti people are addressed.

108. Ensure that Roma and Sinti populations in a forced displacement situation (refugees and IDPs) are duly registered and provided with the relevant documents.

109. The participating States should ensure that programmes are in place to promote informed choice regarding the decision of Roma and Sinti refugees and IDPs concerning durable solutions to their situations, including the exercise of their right to safe, decent and sustainable return. Such programmes should provide concrete information regarding each subject of concern to refugees and IDPs and should be made available in the relevant languages.

110. Ensure that Roma and Sinti refugees are treated in accordance with the relevant international norms and standards of protection, and in a non-discriminatory manner.

111. Make use of the ODIHR's role in conflict prevention and identification of areas of early

intervention, and draw on the expertise of the OSCE HCNM in this regard.

112. Pay special attention to the needs of Roma and Sinti women and children in crisis and postcrisis situations, particularly by providing them with access to health care, housing and schooling.

*Recommended action by OSCE institutions and structures:*

113. The ODIHR will make use of its specific role in addressing conflict prevention and identifying areas of potential crisis requiring early intervention.

114. In accordance with its mandate, the ODIHR-CPRSI is called upon to respond effectively to crisis situations by, *inter alia*, co-operating with relevant governments, inter-governmental bodies and international organizations, in particular the UNHCR, to ensure protection of Roma communities at risk.

115. The ODIHR-CPRSI will raise awareness among public officials, journalists and others of the situation of Roma and Sinti people in crisis or conflict areas.

116. The ODIHR will assume a proactive role in analysing measures undertaken by participating States relating to Roma and Sinti people and offer its advice with a view to better tackling those elements of tension in particular local contexts which may evolve, if not prevented, into open conflict situations.

117. The HCNM will continue to exercise his mandate of conflict prevention at the earliest possible stage.

### **VIII. ENHANCING CO-OPERATION AND CO-ORDINATION WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND NGOS**

Given the increased attention being paid to issues concerning Roma and Sinti people by various international organizations, co-ordination and co-operation is required to avoid duplication of effort. With a view to ensuring effective implementation of the Action Plan, the OSCE, and in particular the ODIHR, will closely co-operate with international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

118. The ODIHR-CPRSI will continue to participate actively in the *Informal Contact Group on Roma of the Intergovernmental Organisations*.<sup>2</sup>

119. The strengthening and up-grading of this informal body will be agreed upon and implemented in co-operation with all the relevant partners, particularly by ensuring the inclusion of representatives of OSCE participating States. Regular meetings of the Informal Contact Group at the expert level, or a higher level when deemed necessary, will be considered with a view to furthering this aim.

120. The Informal Contact Group should establish common orientations and priorities, as well as better co-ordination and co-operation in order to avoid duplication of effort.

121. The ODIHR-CPRSI will seek to consolidate the “International Roma Contact Group” and will further contribute to the Council of Europe’s initiative for a possible European Forum for Roma and Travellers.<sup>3</sup>

122. The ODIHR-CPRSI will provide information and co-ordination services to relevant national and international institutions, and will facilitate dialogue among them and with Roma NGOs.

123. The ODIHR-CPRSI will seek to develop relations with Roma and Sinti organizations and help them to co-ordinate their efforts and resources, both within individual States and across borders, and to avail themselves fully of opportunities provided by existing national and international policies affecting Roma and Sinti people.

124. The ODIHR-CPRSI will draw upon the experience and input of existing monitoring projects developed by other international organizations.

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<sup>2</sup> The *Informal Contact Group on Roma of the Intergovernmental Organisations* is composed of representatives from OSCE/ODIHR, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the European Union.

<sup>3</sup> The International Roma Contact Group was established in October 2000 at the initiative of the ODIHR Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues. The Contact Group includes representatives of the International Romani Union, the Roma National Congress, elected Romani representatives, Romani experts and the ODIHR-CPRSI.

## **IX. THE ODIHR CONTACT POINT FOR ROMA AND SINTI ISSUES**

125. Where necessary, the ODIHR-CPRSI will facilitate information-sharing among OSCE participating States that have developed or are seeking to improve national policies on Roma and Sinti people.

126. Upon request, ODIHR-CPRSI will advise participating States on future policies related to Roma and Sinti people and will stimulate debates between governments and Roma NGOs.

127. The ODIHR-CPRSI will support capacity-building for Roma and Sinti NGOs.

128. The ODIHR-CPRSI will establish a database of best practices in OSCE participating States.

129. The ODIHR-CPRSI should assume a proactive role in analysing measures undertaken by participating States, as well as in particular situations and incidents relating to Roma and Sinti people. Towards this end CPRSI will establish and develop direct contacts with participating States and will offer advice and opinions to them.

130. Governments concerned will co-operate with the ODIHR-CPRSI in identifying effective solutions to crisis situations.

131. The ODIHR-CPRSI will provide Roma and Sinti communities with more information on OSCE resources and activities.

132. In co-operation with relevant OSCE institutions and structures, the ODIHR will develop appropriate action aimed at tackling the root causes of trafficking in human beings, especially in children, and raise awareness of its consequences among Roma and Sinti communities.

## **X. IMPLEMENTATION: REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT**

133. The implementation of the Action Plan's provisions will be reviewed at the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, Review Conferences and other relevant human dimension events.

134. Drawing on the outcome of the above-mentioned meetings, as well as on input from the consolidated Informal Contact Group on Roma of the Intergovernmental Organisations and the International Roma Contact Group, the Director of the ODIHR will report to the Permanent Council, which may recommend to participating States and OSCE institutions priorities for co-operation and co-ordination.

135. The Permanent Council will periodically organize informal briefings by the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues on the areas covered by the present Action Plan in order to assess the impact at the national and local levels of the measures foreseen by it.

136. With a view to facilitating the implementation review process, OSCE participating States are encouraged to provide information on recent developments in the situation of Roma and Sinti people and/or measures inspired by this Action Plan at the Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, prior to Review Conferences and to the Permanent Council, where appropriate.

137. All relevant OSCE institutions and structures, including OSCE field operations, will continue to interact closely with participating States in order to assist them in implementing the Action Plan.

138. The ODIHR-CPRSI will disseminate information on this Plan to Roma and Sinti communities and organizations as well as to other international organizations.

139. In order to enable ODIHR-CPRSI to carry out the tasks entrusted to it in the present Action Plan, the OSCE Permanent Council will address providing adequate human and financial resources. The details will be worked out by the Advisory Committee on Management and Finance and will be submitted to the Permanent Council.

## APPENDIX II

### Timeline of Roma and Sinti Issues in ODIHR

The following table shows the development of Roma and Sinti issues within ODIHR, first from 1990 until the adoption of the OSCE Action Plan in December 2003, and since then to the present. It maps the development stages, from human dimension commitments and reports on Roma and Sinti to relevant actions and recommendations, a process that began with the OSCE's

recognition of the need to include Roma and Sinti in the decision-making process, and the establishment of relevant institutional mechanisms to address this inclusion. The period from 2003 to the present indicates practical initiatives undertaken to implement various chapters of the Action Plan.

Period	Human Dimension Commitments and Reports on Roma and Sinti	Actions/Recommendations for OSCE Participating States
<b>1990-1993</b>  Awareness-raising and calls for development of programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSCE Copenhagen Document, 1990</li> <li>• CSCE Meeting of Experts on National Minorities, Geneva, 1991</li> <li>• Helsinki OSCE Document, the Challenges of Change, 1992</li> <li>• HCNM Statement on Roma at the Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials, 1993</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of the particular challenges confronting Roma and Sinti;</li> <li>• Emphasis placed on undertaking effective measures in order to achieve full equality of opportunities;</li> <li>• Programmes developed to create the conditions for promoting non-discrimination and cross-cultural understanding;</li> <li>• New measures introduced to tighten east-to-west migration controls.</li> </ul>
<b>1994-1995</b>  Creation of an OSCE arrangement to monitor the situation and facilitate information exchange; mapping of Roma and Sinti throughout OSCE area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Dimension Seminar on Roma and Sinti, Warsaw, 1994</li> <li>• OSCE Summit of Heads of State, Budapest, 1994</li> <li>• Report of the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, 1995</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues established within ODIHR;</li> <li>• Suggestion of country-by-country study with regular follow-up</li> </ul>
<b>1996-1997</b>  Moving towards state policies and programmes through NGO-state exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapporteurs' Report of the OSCE Review Meeting, Vienna, 1996</li> <li>• Report of the First Roundtable on Roma and Sinti Issues</li> <li>• Human Dimension Implementation Meeting, Warsaw, 1997</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSCE delegations put forth policies and structures to address intolerance against Roma and Sinti</li> <li>• Recommendations:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a comprehensive approach to issues relating to Roma and Sinti;</li> <li>• Increase Roma political and public participation;</li> <li>• Combat hate crimes and discrimination.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

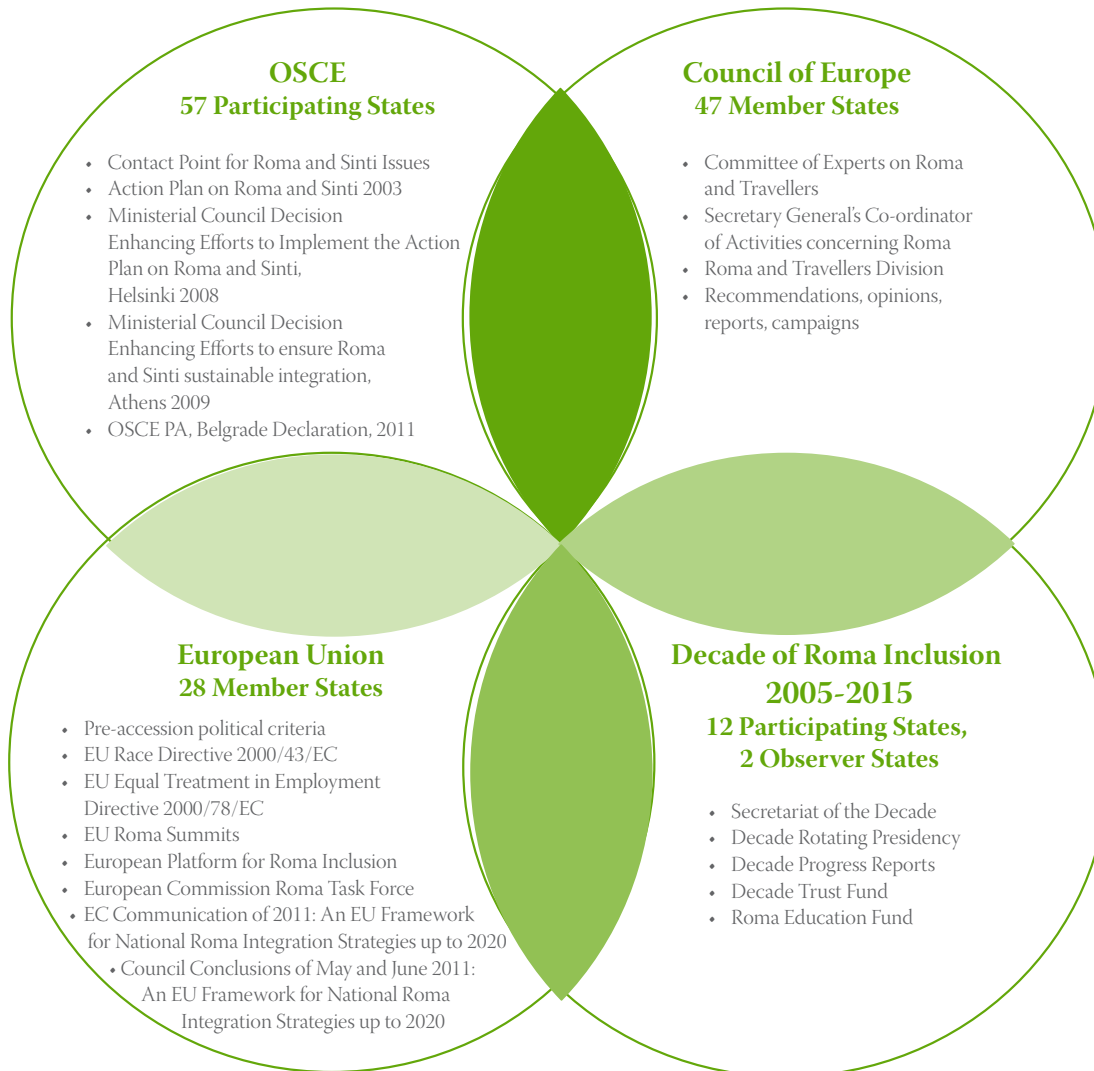
Period	Human Dimension Commitments and Reports on Roma and Sinti	Actions/Recommendations for OSCE Participating States
<p><b>1998-2002</b></p> <p>Establishing and strengthening ODIHR's Contact Point</p> <p>Moving towards a new phase of action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• putting best practices into operation;</li> <li>• implementing platform of action in emergency situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSCE Parliamentary Meeting, June 1998</li> <li>• Ministerial Council Meeting, Oslo, December 1998</li> <li>• Report of the Roundtable on Roma and Sinti Issues</li> <li>• St. Petersburg OSCE Parliamentary Meeting</li> <li>• Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting, Vienna, 1999</li> <li>• Istanbul Document (Summit of OSCE Heads of State), Istanbul 1999</li> </ul>	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The creation of the position of adviser on Roma and Sinti issues at ODIHR;</li> <li>• Enhanced tripartite co-operation among ODIHR, the Council of Europe, and the EC;</li> <li>• OSCE Task Force and Plan of Action on Roma in Kosovo and in other crisis situations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2003-2007</b></p> <p>Adoption of the Action Plan</p> <p>ODIHR implementation of various chapters of the Action Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting, Maastricht, December 2003</li> <li>• Regional Conference on the Civil Registration of Roma in South-Eastern Europe, Belgrade, 28 November 2005</li> <li>• International implementation conference on Roma, Sinti and Travellers, Warsaw, October 2005</li> <li>• International Conference on the Implementation and Harmonization of National Policies for Roma, Sinti and Travellers: Guidelines for a Common Vision, Bucharest, May 2006</li> <li>• OSCE Action Plan on Roma and Sinti: participation in political life, overcoming discrimination, September 2007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasizing a regional approach to issues of civil registration of Roma and Sinti in South-Eastern Europe</li> <li>• Harmonization of policies related to Roma and Sinti</li> <li>• Supporting Roma and Sinti in becoming political stakeholders</li> </ul>
<p><b>2008-present</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 6/08, "Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Implement the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti Within the OSCE Area", Helsinki, 2008</li> <li>• OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 8/09, "Enhancing OSCE Efforts to Ensure Roma and Sinti Sustainable Integration", Athens, 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforced the importance of education; and calls on the participating States to provide for equal access to education, to promote early education for Roma and Sinti children</li> <li>• Underlines that educational policies should aim to integrate Roma and Sinti people into mainstream education</li> <li>• Enhancing the OSCE efforts to ensure integration of Roma and Sinti</li> <li>• Urges participating States to step up their efforts in promoting tolerance and combating prejudices against Roma and Sinti people in order to prevent their further marginalization and exclusion and to address the rise of violent manifestations of intolerance against Roma and Sinti</li> </ul>



Period	Human Dimension Commitments and Reports on Roma and Sinti	Actions/Recommendations for OSCE Participating States
2008-present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Astana Declaration by the Chairperson-in-Office, June 2010</li>   <li>• OSCE Parliamentary Resolution on Promoting Policies in Favour of the Roma Population, Belgrade, 6 to 10 July 2011</li>   <li>• OSCE Parliamentary Resolution on Promoting Policies on Equality between Women and Men of the Roma Population, Belgrade, 6 to 10 July 2011</li>   <li>• Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti Within the OSCE Area, Status Report 2008</li>   <li>• Assessment of the Human Rights Situation of Roma and Sinti in Italy: Report of a fact-finding mission to Milan, Naples and Rome, March 2009</li>   <li>• Police and Roma and Sinti: Good Practices in Building Trust and Understanding, April 2010</li>   <li>• Addressing Violence Promoting Integration Field Assessment of Violence incidents against Roma in Hungary: Key Developments Findings and Recommendations, June 2010</li>   <li>• Mapping of Participation of Roma and Sinti children in Early Education Process within the OSCE region, November 2010</li>   <li>• Equal Access to Quality Education for Roma children: Field Assessment visit to the Czech Republic, November 2012</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for a strengthened commitment to implement the Action Plan and for stepping up efforts to implement the subsequent MC Decisions, placing a particular emphasis on educational opportunities for Roma and Sinti and promoting tolerance and combating prejudices against Roma and Sinti</li>   <li>• Underlines that Roma should be an essential part of the participating States' key policies</li> <li>• Requires that education be given priority in breaking the inter-generational exclusion gap</li>   <li>• Encourages participating States to foster positive measures and ensure equal opportunities to Roma women in accessing services and rights</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX III

### Participating States and Institutional Memberships



#### EU CANDIDATE COUNTRIES

- *Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*
- *Iceland*
- *Montenegro*
- *Serbia*
- *Turkey*

#### DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION

- *Albania*
- *Bosnia and Herzegovina*
- *Bulgaria*
- *Croatia*
- *Czech Republic*
- *Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*
- *Hungary*
- *Montenegro*
- *Romania*
- *Serbia*
- *Slovakia*
- *Spain*
- *Slovenia (observer)*
- *United States (observer)*

## APPENDIX IV

### ODIHR's Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues Events and Activities, 2008 to 2013

Name	Place	Date	Number of Participants
International Roundtable Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians of Kosovo: Challenges and Prospects of Sustainable Integration	Vienna	22 October 2008	45
International Roundtable "Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians of Kosovo: Challenges and Prospects of Sustainable Integration"	Pristina	9 February 2009	70
Academic consultation meeting on recent developments and trends regarding Roma and Sinti in Europe	Warsaw	9 March 2009	15
Consultation meetings on the implementation of the OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 6/08	Warsaw	20 March 2009	23
Launch event of a book on the deportation of Romanian Roma to Transnistria during World War II	Bucharest	7 April 2009	60
Regional Meeting of the OSCE field operation focal points on Roma	Skopje	28 April 2009	9
Academic conference "Extremism and the Roma and Sinti in Europe: Challenges, Risks and Responses"	London	10-11 September 2009	30
Expert review workshop on good practices in building trust and understanding between police and Roma	Vienna	28-29 October 2009	35
Joint FRA — Council of Europe — OSCE HNCM and ODIHR Conference on Roma migration and freedom of movement	Vienna	9-10 November 2009	80
Meeting on Ministerial Council Decision No. 6/08, "Promoting Access of Roma and Sinti Children to early education"	Warsaw	15-16 December 2009	19
Academic meeting on Roma and the media: "Countering Prejudices and Promoting Tolerance"	Warsaw	16-17 March 2010	17
Roundtable on sustainable solutions for displaced Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians, and policies to improve the reintegration of repatriated Roma	Belgrade	16 April 2010	80

Name	Place	Date	Number of Participants
Consultation meeting “Roma and Sinti in Times of Crisis”	Warsaw	5 October 2010	40
Roundtable on the development of the new Action Plan of the Republic of Moldova to support the inclusion of Roma (2011-2015)	Chisinau	7-8 April 2011	80
Launch of the Romanian language version of Police and Roma and Sinti: Good Practices in Building Trust and Understanding	Bucharest	8 July 2011	50
Seminar on “The Roma and Sinti Genocide: Memory, Identity and Present-day Racism.”	Krakow	1 August 2011	120
Workshop for NGOs on reporting and monitoring hate crimes against Roma and Sinti	Warsaw	13-15 April 2011	25
Workshop for NGOs on reporting and monitoring hate crimes against Roma and Sinti	Rome	13-15 July 2011	16
Consultation meeting “The Role of Roma Organizations in Supporting Implementation of Integration Policies, and for Combating Racism and Discrimination Against Roma and Sinti”	Warsaw	4 October 2011	35
Sixth meeting with the OSCE Field Operation Roma Focal Points	Tirana	27-28 March 2012	20
Roma civil society consultation meeting “Roma and Sinti and Empowerment of Roma Women”	Warsaw	26 September 2012	40
Three regional roundtables on “Increasing the Role and Capacity of Local Authorities in Developing and Implementing National and Local Action Plans for Roma Integration in Cooperation with the Roma Community”	Chisinau Soroca Cahul	17-18 October 24-25 October 30-31 October	44 35 34
Launch of the Slovakian-language version of Police and Roma and Sinti: Good Practices in Building Trust and Understanding	Bratislava	6 December 2012	40
Sixth meeting with the OSCE Field Operation Roma Focal Points	Belgrade	22 February 2013	10
Joint meeting of Center for Health and Human Rights, Mahindra Humanities Center and Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies: “Realizing Roma Rights: Addressing Violence, Discrimination, and Segregation in Europe”	Boston	8 April 2013	50
Consultation meeting on implementation of OSCE commitments towards Roma and Sinti	Warsaw	23 May 2013	14

## APPENDIX V

### Responses to ODIHR's Questionnaire from OSCE Participating States<sup>1</sup>

Country	National Roma Integration Strategy	Combined funds for implementation of Roma Strategy	Earmarked budgets for Roma	EU Funds for Roma	EU Funds for excluded/ disadvantaged communities	Lists of programmes /projects
Albania	x	840,000 euros		x		x
Austria	x				x	x
Belarus		620,000 euros				x
Belgium	x	980,000 euros	x			x
Bosnia and Herzegovina	x	7.5 million euros	x	x		x
Bulgaria	x	34.5 million euros	x		x	x
Croatia	x	12 million euros	x	x		x
Czech Republic	x	34.5 million euros	x	x	x	x
Estonia	x					
Finland	x	2.1 million euros	x			
France <sup>2</sup>	x	21.7 million euros	1.5 million euros		20.2 million euros from ERDF	
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	x		x	x		
Germany	x		x		x	x
Greece	x	72.7 million euros	11.2 million euros	61.5 million euros		
Holy See			x			
Hungary	x	84.5 million euros	x	x	x	x
Ireland	x	50 million euros	x		x	
Italy	x	15 million euros	x		x	x
Latvia	x	185,000 euros				x

1 Andorra, Azerbaijan, Luxemburg, Malta and Switzerland responded to the questionnaire, but the data provided was not relevant to the categories shown in this table. Where fields are left empty in the table, no relevant data was provided about the items in question. All funding amounts are approximate. Kosovo reported 12.8 million euros for implementation of their Roma integration strategy; 12.5 million euros from the EU.

2 Outside of what was mentioned in their response to the ODIHR questionnaire, France indicated in information provided to ODIHR on 7 September 2010 that 8.2 million Euro in "humanitarian assistance" was provided to Roma who voluntarily returned back to their country of origin in 2009.

Country	National Roma Integration Strategy	Combined funds for implementation of Roma Strategy	Earmarked budgets for Roma	EU Funds for Roma	EU Funds for excluded/ disadvantaged communities	Lists of programmes /projects
Lithuania	x	1 million euros	x	x	x	x
Moldova	x	80,000 euros	x	x		x
Montenegro	x	2.8 million euros	x	x		x
Norway	x					
Poland	x	51 million euros	x	x		x
Portugal	x					
Romania	x	121 million euros <sup>3</sup>	x	x	x	
Russia	x					
Serbia	x	25.3 million euros	x	x		x
Slovakia	x	51 million euros	17 million euros	34 million euros		
Slovenia	x	20 million euros	x	x		x
Spain	x	over 148 million euros <sup>4</sup>	49 million euros	x	x	x
Sweden	x	5.35 million euros	x			
Turkey						x
Ukraine	x	100,000 euros	x			x
United Kingdom	x	69 million euros	x			x

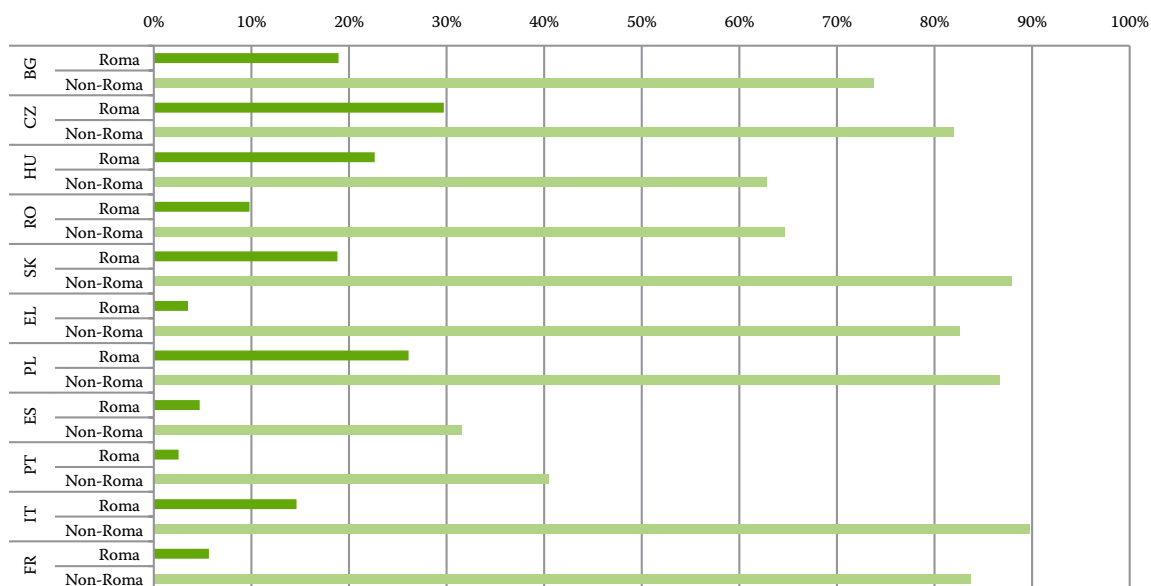
3 In their response to the ODIHR questionnaire, Romania did not give specific funding amounts for their many Roma-targeted projects. According to data available on the official website of the Managing Authority for the European Social Fund in Romania, the country made available 121 million euros for 43 projects earmarked specifically for Roma.

4 Apart from the national budget devoted to Roma programmes indicated in the responses to the ODIHR questionnaire from Spain, they also indicated that over 100 million Euro in EU funds went to partner NGOs working on Roma issues during the reporting period.

## APPENDIX VI

### FRA Statistics on Roma

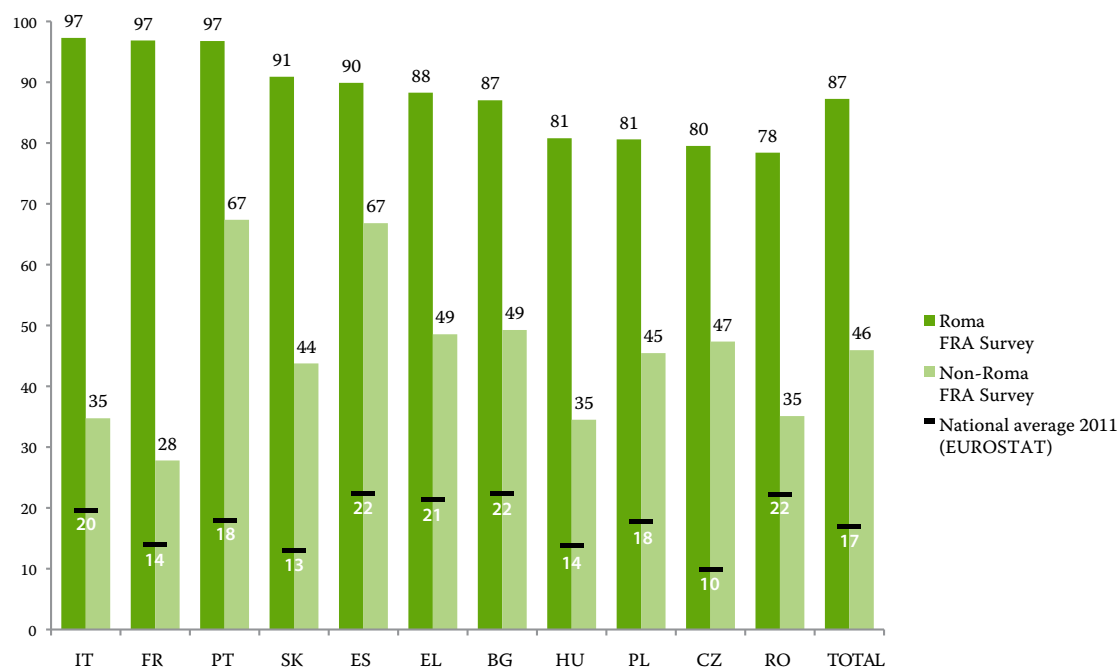
#### Household members aged 20 to 24 with at least completed general or vocational upper-secondary education (pooled data) (per cent)



Source: FRA Roma pilot survey, 2011;

note forthcoming "Data in focus" publication on Roma education at the beginning of 2014.

#### Persons living in households at risk of poverty (per cent)



Source: FRA Roma pilot survey, 2011;

note forthcoming "Data in focus" publication on Roma employment at the beginning of 2014.

