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Employment Policies for Roma

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	7
CHAPTER 1. THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF ROMA POPULATION LIVING IN ROMANIA.....	9
1.1. Employment, trades and professions in Roma population in dynamics during 1992-1998.....	10
1.2. Employment situation in 2002.....	12
1.3. Employment data at the level of Roma population as resulted from the 2002 census.....	20
1.4. The behavior of Roma population on the labour market.....	25
CHAPTER 2. FACTORS WHICH IMPEDE THE ACCESS OF ROMA TO THE LABOUR MARKET.....	35
2.1. Lack of Incentives, Support Networks.....	36
2.2. Educational disadvantages and lack of skills.....	37
2.3. Low Mobility.....	42
2.4. Illicit employment.....	44
2.5 Discrimination.....	44
CHAPTER 3. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR ROMA.....	47
3.1. Policies promoted by public institutions targeting the professional integration of Roma.....	47
3.2. Nongovernmental sector approaches.....	59
CHAPTER 4. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FUTURE INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN UNION.....	62
4.1. European employment policies.....	63
4.1.1. <i>The Amsterdam Treaty – the legal foundation of the European Employment Strategy.....</i>	63

4.1.2. <i>The new configuration of the European Employment Strategy after 2005</i>	69
4.2. Financial instruments for European employment policies.....	71
4.2.1. <i>Structural funds – general overview</i>	71
4.2.2. <i>The European Social Fund – the financial instrument for the implementation of European Employment Strategy</i>	75
4.3. Roma ethnics - a target group for European employment policies?	76
CHAPTER 5. CASE STUDIES.....	83
5.1. “Incentives for local administrations and public services to employ Roma public servants”	83
5.2. Centers for professional inclusion of the Roma, job shops for the Roma - “Împreună” Community Development Agency.....	88
5.3. “Training social workers of Roma ethnicity to work within Local Councils” Giurgiu County Council.....	92
CHAPTER 6. PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	96
ANNEXES	104
GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY	121

INTRODUCTION

The Roma population has been, for the last hundred years, suffering from a process of exclusion from the labour market. Two stages can be identified in this process of exclusion. During the socialist regime the process of "modernization" resulted in the elimination of a great part of the traditional means Roma used to earn a living. On the other hand, the modernization has contributed to increasing the level of education and implicitly to employment in better working conditions and generating relatively stable incomes. Also, it has led to a change in the dwelling conditions and to an improved standard of living. After the 90's a high percentage of Roma ethnics found themselves jobless, losing a great deal of what they had earned as a result of modernization.

The level of education and the employment rate which were both very high during the socialist regime have lost their value within only a few years. For the last 16 years, almost two thirds of the jobs Roma were employed in have simply disappeared. Most of the Roma lost their jobs and joined the category of long-term unemployed because the trades they were skilled in became worthless on the labour market. Changes on the labour market were taking place very fast for everyone but it is obvious that Roma ethnics, as a group, suffered the most from these changes.

Popular explanations of differences between Roma and non-Roma behavior are culturally based. Typically, Roma are supposed to behave sub-optimally because of their different cultural heritage, and the culture is supposed to have large inertia banning individuals to adapt to new circumstances. In contrast, economists assume that people behave individually optimally and adapt quickly. In fact, each of the two above mentioned approaches account, to a smaller or larger extent, for the explanation of the process of exclusion Roma are suffering on the labour market.

The present work provides information and data regarding the employment situation of the Roma and their access to labour market.

In Chapter 1 a series of socio-economic data is presented regarding the dynamics of Roma population in relation to the labour market, analyzing their evolution between the years 1990-2005.

In Chapter 2 we describe and analyze the factors which block the access of Roma to the labour market: the unfavorable general economic context, the health condition, lack of incentives caused by the structure of Roma extended family, educational disadvantages and skills that are no longer required on the labour market, low mobility, illicit employment, and discrimination.

Chapter 3 presents some of the programmes which have been implemented in recent years with a focus on the role played by central and local public institutions, by civil society as well as international institutions.

Chapter 4 is focused on the relation between employment policies at the European level and the situation of Roma. The stress is on the role played by structural funds in the context of the future integration of Romania into the EU.

In Chapter 5 several case studies are presented in order to evince the way targeted projects have been implemented.

In chapter 6 are shown a part of general solution and recommendations and also, recommendations focused on increase roma access to labour market.

Important data regarding employment and access to labour market are presented in the annexes.

General bibliography enumerates the sources we have used in producing the present material.

CHAPTER 1: THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF ROMA POPULATION LIVING IN ROMANIA

The employment situation of Roma population in Romania has been an issue of marginal concern both in terms of studies conducted in this field as well as the measures taken so far to improve their access to labour market or their employment situation.

In recent years, studies on Roma population in Romania have been constantly conducted but very few of them focused mainly on the employment situation of the Roma. Below we are mentioning several such studies:

- *Țiganiii între ignorare și îngrijorare*, ICCV, - Gypsies between Ignorance and Concern, coordinators Elena and Cătălin Zamfir, Alternative Publishing House, 1993;
- *La periferia societății - Romii și serviciile publice în România*, - At the Brim of Society – Roma and Public Services in Romania, Ina Zoon, Resource Center For Roma Communities, 2001;
- *Romii în România*, ICCV, - Roma in Romania, The Research Institute on the Quality of Life -coordinators Marian Preda and Cătălin Zamfir, Expert Publishing House, 2002;
- *Avoiding the Dependency Trap, A Regional Human Development Report, The Roma in Central and Eastern Europe*, Andrey Ivanov (coordinator), United Nations Development Programme, Bratislava, 2002;
- D. Ringold, *Roma and the Transition in Central and Eastern Europe*, Washington, DC, The World Bank, 2000;
- Dena Ringold, Mitchell A. Orenstein, Erika Wilkens, *Roma in an Expanding Europe: Breaking the Poverty Cycle*, World Bank, 2003;
- S. Cace, G. Duminiță, M. Preda, coordinators, *Evaluarea programelor pentru comunitățile de Romi din România – Assessment*

Report on Roma Community Programmes, UNDP and the Community Development Agency "Împreună", 2006;

- G. Duminiță, coordinator, *Accesul Romilor la servicii sociale*, - The access of Roma to Social Services, Community Development Agency "Împreună", 2006;
- S. Cace, M. Ionescu, *Politici publice pentru Roma, Evoluții și perspective, Public policies for Roma, Evolutions and Perspectives*, Expert Publishing House, 2006.

The present chapter presents the employment situation of Roma population, analyzing a series of data resulted from the above mentioned studies. Also, the data resulted from the population census in 2002 has been of great use.

1.1. Employment, trades and professions in Roma population¹ in dynamics during 1992-1998

Participation of the Roma on the labour market

The employment rate of the Roma population in Romania is smaller than that of the population at national level (47% compared to 61.7%). The percentage of housewives is over 4 times higher with the Roma than at national level and it shows the weak participation of Roma women on the labour market.

An important part of the Roma has no occupation (13.2%). Still, the percentage of unemployed persons living on unemployment benefits registered in 1998 at national level was bigger than in the case of Roma (6.3% compared to 0.5%). The percentage of registered unemployed is so low amongst the Roma because only a few of them completed vocational schools or high schools. On the other hand, few of them were legally employed on a work contract basis. Moreover, many of them have long over-passed the legal period of receiving unemployment benefits, and became long-term unemployed, a situation that is not mentioned in the official statistics regarding unemployment.

Out of the total occupied Roma population, approximately 2/3 of them are men (65%) and less than one third of them are full-time employees. They usually come from communities where Roma live together with

¹ The above mentioned studies conducted by the Research Institute on the Quality of Life. For comparative data and tendencies please see Annex No. 1.

Romanians. This fact may be an indication of a higher degree of Roma integration when they adopt the behaviour of the majority population.

The high percentage of day-labourers, 41.7% of the total population, indicates that Roma are facing a difficult situation regarding employment and, implicitly, provision of minimum income necessary to cover for the basic needs.

There are tight connections between the professions of Roma and their employment situation, as their profession usually determines their current occupation or lack of occupation. The low vocational training accounts for the fact that Roma have very few qualifications meant to support their entrance on the labour market. As a consequence they are forced to exploit marginal resources for providing the necessary incomes to earn a living.

Vocational training is an important indicator of the Roma participation to the social and economic life of Romania. Depending on this, Roma can more easily integrate into the labour market and financially support the families that they come from. A little over half of the Roma people have no profession or practice activities that do not require qualification in the formal system of vocational training. Thus, 33.5% of the Roma have no qualification, 14.3% work in agriculture and 4.6% are day labourers. Modern qualifications are to be found in 37.3% of the cases and traditional ones in 10.3% of cases.

We cannot speak of major differences between the residence environments, respectively rural and urban. However, men are qualified in a bigger percentage than women, and the percentage of women with no profession (37.1%) is significantly bigger than that of men (15.3%).

The type of community in which Roma live has a profound influence on their qualifications. Thus, specific for the Roma individuals coming from compact and somehow isolated communities is the lack of qualifications and the preservation of traditional skills. As they move away from such communities Roma become more qualified, and usually in modern professions.

An analysis on several generations reveals a change in the pattern of qualifications at the level of the Roma population. If, for the grandparents, the traditional crafts were representing the main occupation, they are less and less encountered in the generation of parents and become very rare in the young population.

In the case of modern professions, the trend is just the opposite, as these are more present with the young population, which is quite normal if we consider the economic and structural changes that have been taking place on the labour market for the last 50-60 years.

Importantly and of great concern for the authorities should be the fact that the number of young persons with no profession overcomes that of the adults, which means that after 1990, an important part of the young Roma did not qualify in any profession.

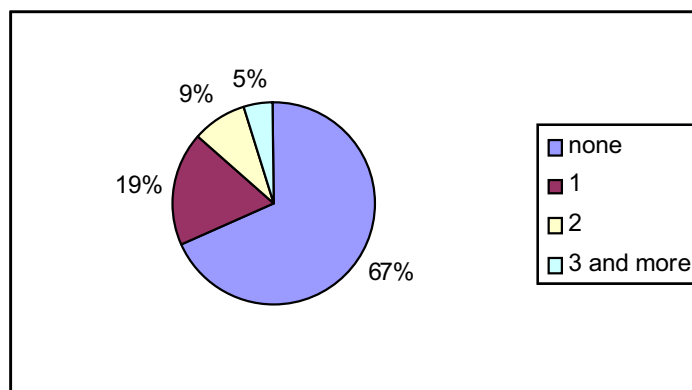
The Roma population has a different age structure than the population at national level. It is a very young population, around 1/3 of the total being under 15, in comparison with the total population where only 1/5 of the total is under 15. This situation shows that in the following years an important number of Roma people will enter the labour market. Unfortunately, lack of qualification will probably determine most of them to choose "inferior" jobs in terms of remuneration or social status.

1.2. Employment situation in 2002¹

Traditionally, Roma communities are characterized by households where families are composed of several generations. Under these circumstances, the number of family members is very high. Usually, the income per household is very low and the number of working members (income earners) is also small. Out of the total of direct respondents (1511 persons) included in the sample, we noticed that in 67% of the households none of their members were working (1) and in 19% of them only one member was employed (2). Two or more employed members were found in only 14% of the households.

¹ *This data is part of a research conducted by the Center for Health Policies and Services and the Open Society Institute New York at national level in 2002. Within this research, several questions were included regarding the relationship of Roma population with the labour market and their access to specialized services, both at national and local level. For methodology, please see Annex No. 2.*

Chart no. 1.1 Working members (households)



Although households are composed of many members, their permanent incomes resulted from working activities are very low and the number of working persons per household is relatively small.

Number of working members in a household according to the residential environment (rural - urban).

Table no. 1.1. Number of working members in a household and the residential environment

No of members / residential environment	Urban (% of the total)	Rural (% of the total)
none	22	45,7
1	8,4	10,3
2	4,2	4,8
3 and more	2,5	2,2
Total urban rural 100	37,1	62,9

Out of the above presented data it is clear that in 45, 7% of the rural households, none of their members are working whereas in the urban area the same situation is encountered in 22% of the households. The percentage of rural households where one or more members are working is relatively higher than in the case of urban households - 17, 2 % as compared to 15, 1%.

We can have a clearer idea of the situation if we measure it against the total per residential environment.

Table no. 1.2 Number of working members per household against the total per residential environment

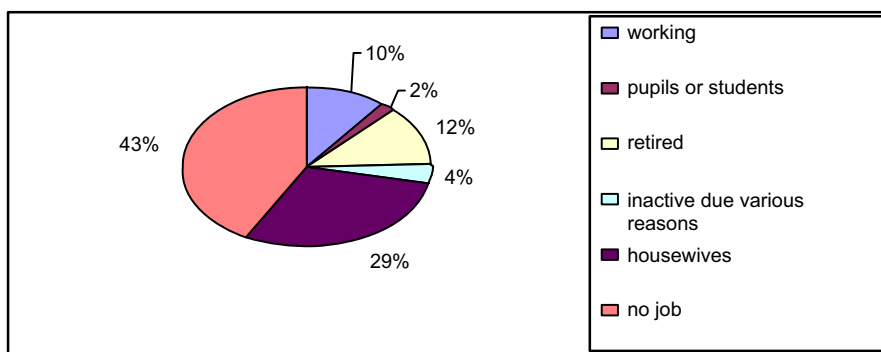
No of members / residential environment	Urban (% of the residential environment)	Rural (% of the residential environment)
None	59,2	72,7
1	22,7	16,4
2	11,4	7,6
3 and more	6,7	3,3
Total	100	100

Out of the total Roma population living in the urban area we have noticed that in 59,3% of the households nobody is working. In 22,7% of the households at least one member has a job and 18,1% are households where at least two persons are working. The percentage of households where none of their members are working is higher in the rural area (72,7%). In 16,4% of the households at least one person is working and in 10,9% of the cases more than two persons have a job.

The situation in relation to the labor market

Now that we have seen the situation of working members per household it is useful to have a look also on the situation of the members of the Roma community in the investigated sample in relation to the labour market (several variants, grouped according to their own statements).

Chart no. 1.2. The situation in relation to the labour market (total respondents in the sample, 1511 persons)



First of all we should notice that, only 10% of the population is working, the rest of it being retired (12%)¹, pupils or students (2%) and earning a random income. 43% of the interviewed persons have no job and tend to become dependent on various forms of financial support granted by central and local government. To this percentage we should add the housewives (approximately 29%). The percentage of housewives is much higher at the level of Roma population than at national level and it indicates the weak participation of women on the labor market. Three main factors are contributing to this situation: the first one has to do with the traditional pattern of the Roma family where the husband is the main income generator; the second factor is given by a significantly lower level of education in women. But probably the most important explanatory factor is given by the great number of children Roma women give birth to and which “forces” them to stay home and breed these children.

Profession

Another aspect of the present research is discussing the trades (skills) Roma have. Out of the total of 7990 individuals about whom we were able to collect information, a number of 4866 were representing the active population.

Table no. 1. 3. Professions / skills

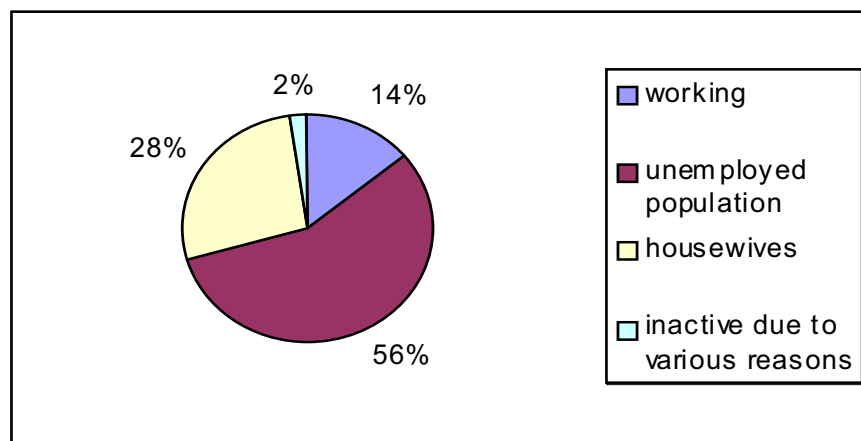
Professions / skills	Absolute values	Relative values (%)
Unskilled worker	2184	44,8
Skilled worker	724	14,8
Technician	15	0,3
Clerk	17	0,3
Profession requiring medium level education	45	0,9
Profession requiring higher education	13	0,2
Specialized in traditional crafts	34	0,6
Salesman	16	0,3
Without occupation	1706	35
Total	4866	100

¹ The percentage of retired persons amongst Roma population is significantly lower than that of the national population (12 % compared to 49,2%). These figures can be explained as a consequence of a much lower percentage of employed Roma compared to the percentage of employees at national level and also due to a significantly lower life expectancy in the case of Roma population.

Out of the total active population, 16, 5% is skilled in modern professions, almost half of them declared they were unskilled workers and very few of them (0, 6 %) have specialized in traditional crafts. We should make the distinction between “unskilled worker” (which means that he/she is probably working or has worked within the formal system on the labour market) and “without occupation” which means that he-she is not participating on the labour market at all.

The degree of employment can be deducted based on the following chart.

Chart no.1.3. The degree of employment



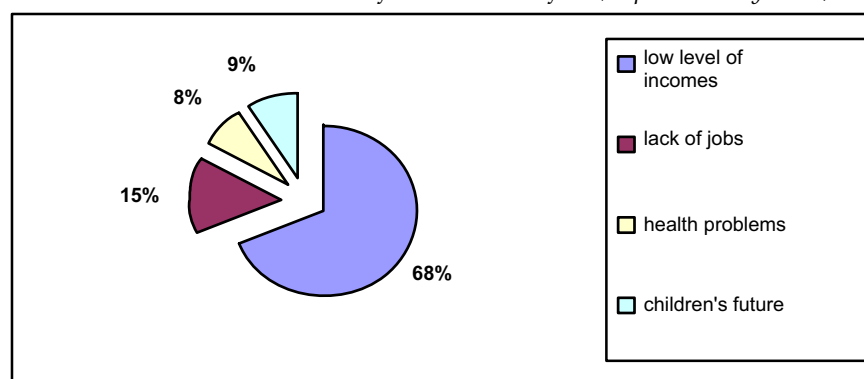
The highest percentage is given by the unemployed population (56%), followed by the category of housewives (28%) and the inactive population due to various reasons. The real percentage of active population is 14% (representing a number of 599 persons). We have taken into consideration other aspects such as the type of employment: legally employed on a labour contract and therefore contributing to social insurances funds or working on a parallel segment of the labour market.

Table no. 1.4. Employed on a labour contract basis

On labour contract	Absolute values	Relative values (%)
yes	369	61,6
no	230	38,3
Working Total	599	100

The perception of the problems they face

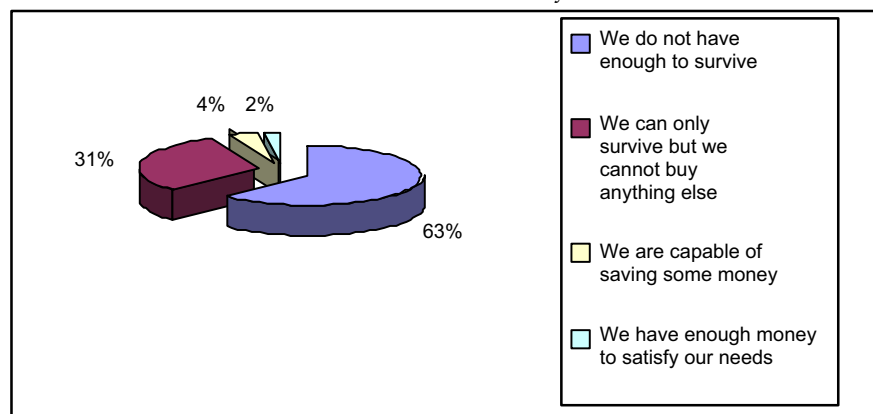
An important aspect is given by the problems Roma families have to face.

Chart no. 1.4. Problems Roma families have to face (as perceived by them)

We have noticed that the first position on the list of mentioned problems is held by the **low level of incomes**. The most common explanation for this fact has to do with the lack of jobs and the implicit impossibility to earn a relatively constant income. On the second position, **lack of jobs** is mentioned which completes the negative image of the socio-economic problems faced by Roma families. Health problems and their children's future are another two major worries Roma families are experiencing.

Regarding the **personal estimation of their incomes** we have the following situation:

Chart no. 1.5. Personal estimation of their incomes



For over 90% of the Roma included in the sample, providing for a decent living is a difficult task.

If, in terms of measuring the accumulated wealth, things are quite easy because most of the times the wealth is materialized into properties “on the sight”, in return, the income analysis has led us into a delicate zone. The perception (based sometimes on prejudice but sometimes on real facts) is that Roma people are either very poor, living in improvised, precarious conditions, on the brim of society and labour market and therefore not having much to declare, or, they are acting illegally which means their declaration of incomes is obviously restrained.. But in between these two extremes a variety of intermediate situations can be identified including the case when members of a household are practicing a trade, be it modern or traditional, abiding by the law and being able to ensure the survival of the family and even to keep in line with the community standards. The frailty of the data regarding the incomes of the Roma population is probably an explanation of why there are so few studies on this topic and why when a researcher focuses on the economic characteristics of Roma population he is, most of the times, resuming to just analyzing the inherited occupations and the social impact resulted from practicing these trades.

Two main categories of income were identified – **regular incomes** and respectively, **irregular incomes**.

Regular incomes were considered those incomes which once gained they were constantly contributing to the household budget. These incomes sum up salaries and other forms of social transfers such as pension benefits due to age limit, ill health or disability, agricultural and successor pensions, allocations for children or unemployment benefits, scholarships, birth allowances, allowances granted to the attendants of disabled persons, deportee pensions. It is true that the salary may be lost as well as the right to receive the allowance for children or the unemployment benefits but as long as they are not lost these are the only sources of income known and which the family can rely on.

Unlike the above mentioned incomes, **irregular incomes** may vary in time both in terms of source and size. We have identified two subgroups of irregular incomes: **incomes resulting from freelance activities** and **occasional incomes**. The first are the result of practicing trades or having a business as a freelancer. The others are obtained as a result of activities facilitated mainly by circumstances which are external to the individual. In our analysis, occasional incomes include earnings resulted from day labour, various products obtained in return of their work, as well as those incomes resulted from “occasional activities” such as wood cutting, selling various products, small trade (with bottles, berries, etc), from work performed abroad, from practicing various unskilled works or works requiring minimum skills, or from illegal activities. As we can see, the above mentioned sub category is quite heterogeneously composed both in terms of sources of income and in terms of amounts of income generated.

Brief remarks

- 10% of the population is working, the rest of it being retired (12%), pupils or students (2%) and earning a random income. 72% of the interviewed persons have no job and tend to become dependent on various forms of financial support granted by central and local government.
- Out of the total active population, 16, 5% is skilled in modern trades, almost half of them declared they were unskilled and very few of them specialized in traditional crafts.
- The highest percentage is given by the segment of unemployed population (56%), followed by the category of housewives (28%) and the inactive population due to various reasons. The real percentage of active population is 14% (representing a number of

599 persons out of whom only 369 persons are employed on a labour contract basis).

1.3. Employment data at the level of Roma population as resulted from the 2002 census¹

A data analysis is presented below regarding the 2002 census of Roma population. The focus is on the degree of their participation on the labour market, on employment and the fields in which Roma work most frequently.

We have used the following indicators, synthesized below as defined by the National Institute for Statistics:

- **Total population** – all individuals censused during the reference week 11-17 March 2002.
- **Inactive population** – all individuals, regardless of age, who declared they perform any social-economic activities during the reference week.
- **Active population** – all individuals able to work and *aged 14 and over* and who represented the available labour force for producing goods and services during the *reference week*. The **active population** included both the employed population and the unemployed. The employed population included all the individuals aged 14 and over and who were having an income generating occupation during the *reference week*. They were either performing a social or economic activity based on a labour contract or they were involved in a free lance enterprise (on their own)).
- **The unoccupied active population** – all the individuals who declared they were unemployed (and looking for a job). *Unemployed* were considered those individuals who were able to work and aged between 14 and the legal age limit for retirement and who declared that they were jobless – not employed on a labour contract basis or not involved in any free lance activities for the reference week – but who were ready to start working, regardless of their being registered or not with the Employment

¹ *The most important data processed from the 2002 Population Census is presented in Annex No. 3.*

Agencies (receiving or not unemployment benefits, or other type of social support) and who were actively looking for a job. The following categories of unemployed were included among the unoccupied active population: *unemployed looking for another place of work and the unemployed looking for their first job.*

- **Occupation** – represents the type of the socio-economic activity performed by an individual and which is income generating (either money or products). In other words, by occupation we understand the function or trade exerted effectively at the work place and not the profession obtained as a result of completing educational or vocational studies.
- **Professional status** – represents the position held by an individual in relation with the socio-economic activity performed and with the form of obtaining incomes based on exerting the respective occupation at the work place. Depending on their declared professional status, the occupied persons were grouped into the following categories: employee, business owner, private investor, freelancer, member of an agricultural society/cooperative, or working in their own household

Table 1.5. The structure of inactive population

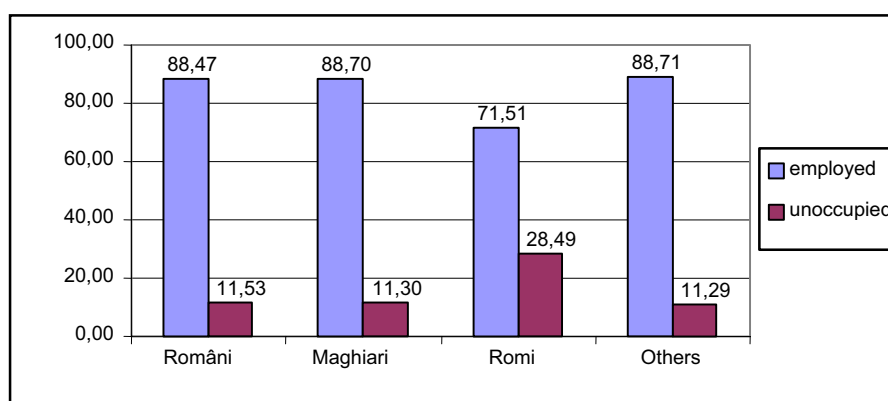
Total/ ethnicity	Pupils	Retired	House- wives	Supported by other persons	Supported by the state by other private organizations	Other situations
Romanians	30,20	40,03	12,58	14,18	0,78	2,23
Hungarians	23,31	47,93	11,18	12,97	0,88	3,72
Roma	22,08	7,42	22,72	32,75	3,72	11,32
Others	24,51	41,87	14,86	13,74	1,14	3,87

Regarding the inactive population, we were able to make the following remarks:

- The percentage of retired amongst Roma is significantly lower than that of Romanians (7. 42 % compared to 40. 03 %). This situation can be explained as a consequence of a lower proportion of Roma employees compared to the national level and also due to their significantly lower life expectancy.

- The percentage of housewives is over two times higher amongst the Roma population than in case of Romanians and it indicates a week participation of women on the labour market.
- The week participation of Roma in the educational process is evinced by a low percentage of pupils and students (22, 08 % compared to 30,209 % in case of Romanians) although the percentage of youngsters is much higher at the level of Roma population.
- The degree of relying on other persons or institutions is very high amongst Roma (approximately 36,5 %).

Chart 1.6. The structure of active population



We can easily notice the differences between Roma and other ethnics. Approximately 30 % of the Roma population is unoccupied, which represents 2,5 times more than the percentage of unoccupied Romanians or Hungarians.

Table 1.6. The population structure by occupation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Romanians	4,31	9,32	10,62	5,11	8,78	25,51	19,12	9,80	6,90	0,54
Hungarians	3,83	6,65	10,61	4,96	10,32	14,86	27,09	12,79	8,25	0,66
Roma	1,50	0,33	1,13	0,50	4,02	41,16	15,13	4,37	31,54	0,33
Others	11,91	9,49	8,86	3,71	7,85	27,83	15,07	7,62	7,23	0,42

1. Total/ ethnicity
2. Legislators, executive members in public administration and in political or social-economic units
3. Experts with intellectual or scientific professions
4. Technicians, and similar professions
5. Administrative public servants
6. Operative workers in trade services and similar
7. Land workers skilled in agriculture, fishing, and forestry
8. Craftsmen and skilled workers
9. Equipment and plant operators
10. Unskilled workers
11. Other situations

Approximately 73 % of the Roma population is involved in occupations which require minimum skills or no skills at all compared to only 33 % of Romanians who are in the same situation. Also, the percentage of Roma involved in occupations requiring high school graduation or higher education studies is very low compared to that of Romanians (3,5 % compared to 29% in case of Romanians).

Table 1.7. Professional status

Total/ ethnicity	Employ-ees on a pay roll	Business owner or private investors	Free lancers	Members of agricultural societies/ cooperatives	Working in their own household	Other situation
Romanians	70,52	1,90	11,38	0,16	15,41	0,63
Hungarians	79,14	1,91	8,40	0,11	9,54	0,90
Roma	33,99	1,18	29,80	0,25	21,48	13,30
Others	61,33	7,73	10,57	0,09	19,54	0,74

Out of the above presented data we were able to draw the following conclusions:

- Out of the total of occupied population only 33.99% are Roma employees compared to the percentage of Romanian employees (70.52 %) and to that of Hungarians (79.14 %). This fact is an indication that only one third of the Roma are able to earn a regular income based on salaries or profits.
- The status of business owner is encountered in relatively close proportions both at the level of Roma population (1.18 %) and in Romanians (1.90 %) or Hungarians (1.91 %).
- Most of the Roma are freelancers or working within their own households (approximately 50 %). Therefore, half of the total Roma population finds itself in a difficult situation regarding the means to earn an income.
- Only one third of the working Roma earn regular incomes out of salaries and profits.

Table 1.8. The unemployed by ethnicity and duration

Total/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	Between 6-9 months	Between 9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	20,68	21,27	25,15	32,89
Hungarians	25,62	20,84	25,39	28,16
Roma	21,31	11,78	16,63	50,27
Others	19,66	19,98	27,78	32,59

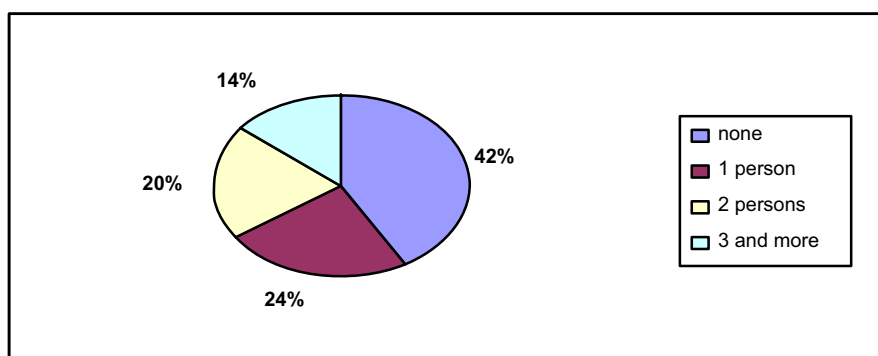
As we can notice, two thirds of the unemployed Roma can be included in the long-term unemployed category, whereas only 50% of the Romanians and Hungarians find themselves in this category.

1.4. The behavior of Roma population on the labour market¹

Number of household members looking for a job

We were interested in identifying the intention to look for a job.

Chart no. 1.7. The percentage of household members looking for a job



In 58% of the members belonging to the investigated households we have noticed the affirmed intention to look for a job. In 42% of the total sample we have registered a passive behavior where the wish to find a job in order to make a living is absent. There are situations when none of the members of a household wishes to be employed in order to make a living. But there are also families where at least one member is looking for a job (24% of the investigated households) or even two persons are looking for a job (20%).

Distribution by gender:

¹ This data is part of a research conducted by the Center for Health Policies and Services and the Open Society Institute New York at national level in 2002. A series of questions targeting the relationship of Roma population to the labour market and their access to specialized services at national level was included in this research. For methodology please see Annex.

**Table no. 1.9. Number of persons in a household looking for a job
(by gender)**

No. persons looking for a job/ gender	Men (% of the total)	Women (% of the total)
None	23,3	18,3
1 person	14,2	9,5
2 person	13,4	7
3 and more persons	9,2	5,1
Total (men and women) 100	60,1	39,9

In Roma women we have noticed a lack of interest regarding the finding of a job. This situation can be accounted to the traditional pattern of Roma families where women stay at home taking care of the household, of the children, etc. The situation is in turn very serious for those men who, in many cases, are unconcerned with work. In almost one quarter of the interviewed men we have clearly noticed a lack of interest towards work. But there are also households where men (one or more than one man) show an active behavior on the labour market by trying to find themselves a job

Number of members in a household looking for a job by residential environment against the total residential environment.

**Table no. 1.10. Number of persons in a household looking for a job
(by total residential environment)**

No. members/residential environment	Urban (% of the residential environment)	Rural (% of the residential environment)
none	42,7	41,7
1	23,8	23,8
2	18,6	21,6
3 and more	14,9	12,9
Total	100	100

About the urban households we can say that almost half of the interviewed persons are not even concerned with finding a job. And the situation is very much alike in the rural environment.

They are looking for a job?

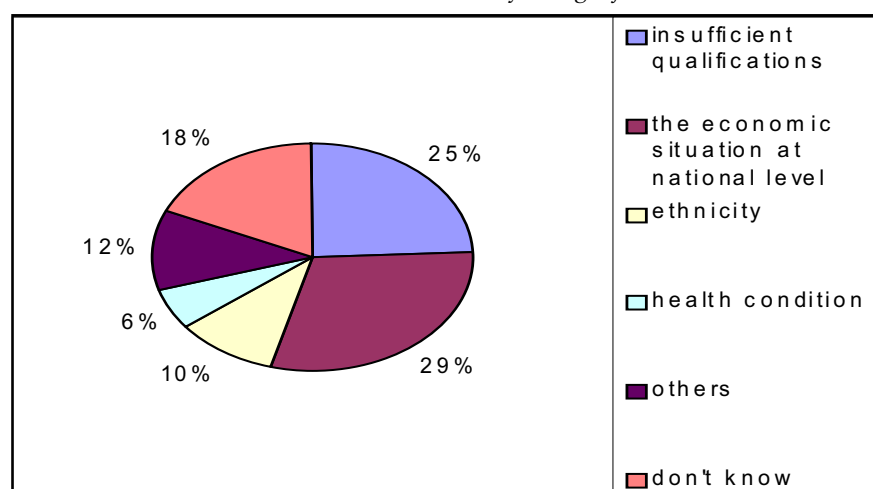
Three quarters of the interviewed persons who declared they were jobless at the time, were in fact looking for a job.

Table no. 1.11. Persons looking for a job

Answer	Absolute Values	Relative values % of the total valid answers
Yes	414	74,19
No	144	25,8
Total valid ¹	558	100

Barriers in finding a job

Chart no. 1.8. Barriers in finding a job²



¹ Out of the total sample we have eliminated the following categories of population: retired, housewives, disabled, pupils, students and these who declared they were already working.

² These aspects are to be discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

We have received various answers in this respect. Out of the interviewed persons¹, about 25% admitted they were having **insufficient qualifications**. Lack of skills and a low qualification are elements which keep them away from the labour market. They can only engage in seasonal activities or day labour.

The economic situation at national level is perceived by 29% of the interviewed persons as being another determining factor for not finding a job.

The **health condition** is, for 6% of the respondents, another cause. They have invoked various ill conditions and a precarious health as a barrier in finding a job. **Age, gender, and bad luck** are also mentioned as limiting factors when it comes to finding a job (12%).

Ethnicity, very often recognized as a discriminatory element, is mentioned in 10% of the cases.

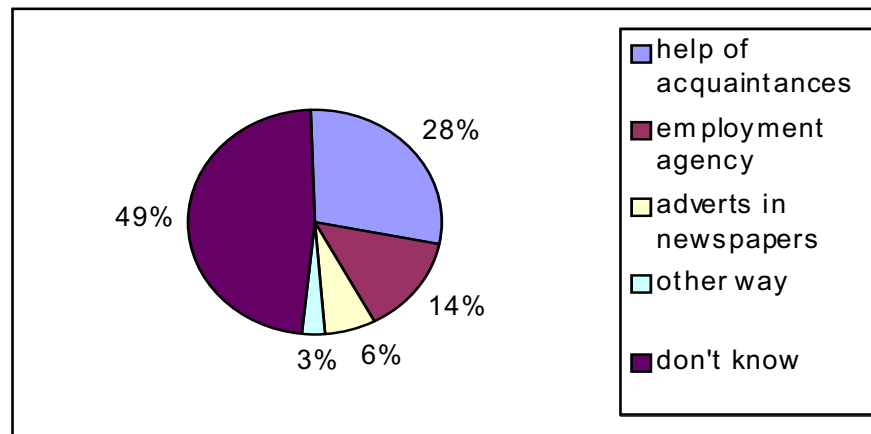
Therefore, those who declare themselves as being of Roma ethnicity believe that Romanian institutions (companies, factories, construction sites, etc) usually treat them differently. In addition, Roma are more exposed to ethnic prejudices manifested at the level of the entire population. The perceived discrimination differs from a residential environment to another and those who live in a rural area feel they are subjected to a different treatment. The rural environment is more favorable to interpersonal acquaintances than the urban one and that is why it is easier to categorize here. In other words, those who live in a village are more inclined to accept discrimination in terms of access to a place of work. But discrimination can appear also in the urban area and in a variety of situations. Fact is that those living in a village will certainly feel more discriminated than those living in a city. Also, discrimination will be felt more acutely by those who live in a compact community where there are tensions and conflicts against the majority population. And young persons with a higher level of expectations regarding society will perceive the treatment they receive as being discriminatory. What appears to be, at the surface, a discriminatory element (the ethnicity), in reality, it can be considered as a barrier, and a justifiable one, in the process of getting employed. Not only the members of Roma ethnic group are unable to find a job on the labour market but also the entire unskilled and untrained population, people with a precarious health, population in rural areas where the economic activities are under

¹ Only those who declared they were jobless.

represented. Generally, those who have a low level of education and income will perceive the behavior of public institutions' employees as being differentiated towards Roma as compared to the majority population. Practically, the lack of material and human resources reduces the individual's capacity to easily adapt to certain situations and on these grounds the individual will perceive the respective environment as being a hostile one.

Modalities to look for a job

Chart no. 1.9. Modalities to look for a job



We have previously seen which barriers in finding a job can be encountered, according to the investigated sample. Subsequently, it would be interesting to see also to which modalities Roma resort to in finding a job.

Very few of them have even thought to this aspect and they have indicated various modalities to look for a job: with the help of acquaintances (28%), or of specialized institutions (14%), adverts in newspapers (6%), directly at the employer or asking the local mayoralities for vacancies (1.1%). Those who proved to be completely unconcerned with finding a job make up an alarming percentage – 49%. The present study is revealing a ratio of almost 1: 3 between the persons interested in finding a job and those who are completely unconcerned with this aspect.

The prevalence of this type of behavior, completely passive in relation to work, may be given several explanations:

a) Low educational level. It is commonly accepted that the access to education is directly connected with the standard of living (in Romania approximately 90% of the children who find themselves outside the educational system come from poor or extremely poor families). Other factors influencing the access to education have to do with: vicinity, proficiency in the official language of the country or even the declared nationality.

Another very important factor for school participation is given by the existence of isolated communities, which are exclusive and do not allow for a good command of the official language. Too many of the Roma children are able to speak the official language only after the first few years in the elementary school. The lowest percentage of illiterates is encountered at the level of the mature generation and the highest level of illiteracy is registered at the level of the elderly. The explanation of this phenomenon has to do with compulsory education imposed by the communism regime after the 70's. Meanwhile, the younger generation is confronted also with a high rate of illiteracy as compared to the "mature" generation.

The distribution by gender among the illiterates shows a higher incidence in women of middle and old age unlike the situation of youngsters where the percentages are balanced.

The level of education in Roma population as noticed in time is accountable for their limited aspirations. The highest percentage of Roma has graduated from elementary and secondary schools, although such an education does not provide for a decent job. Same as in the case of illiteracy, the elderly have the lowest level of education, the mature generation has a relatively high level of education whereas the youngsters prove a tendency to turn back to lower educational levels. The educational policies before the 90' have led to such differences because in the past Roma were encouraged to participate in school education.

Lack of educational investments and the impact of prejudices have restricted the access to the labour market and, implicitly, have deepened poverty amongst Roma communities. In the case of Roma population, education is considered to be a means to solve their individual and group problems, as well as an important resource to modernize and develop this ethnic group. Education is also part of the solution meant to solve the social conflicts which this ethnic group is confronted with. But the impact of

formal education upon the social problems which a large segment of the population is confronted with should not be considered absolute. Policies to increase school participation and the educational level in Roma population should be correlated with active policies to combat unemployment as well as job creation policies in order to improve the socio-economic situation of this ethnic group.

b) Lack of identity papers is also generating multiple negative effects, including the lack of occupation. An important number of Roma does not have identity cards or birth certificates. Due to this reason, several malfunctions occur at the social, economic and administrative levels: adults cannot participate in elections, do not benefit from social protection, cannot buy or sell properties and their children cannot benefit from lawful allowances and other forms of social support.

c) Lack of qualification in professions demanded on the labour market

d) The perpetuation of the pattern of former generations. (the choice belongs to the individual, cultural pattern, lack of interest, various other elements related to personal choices which determine the individual to make his/her own choice to accept or reject a certain form of social participation.).

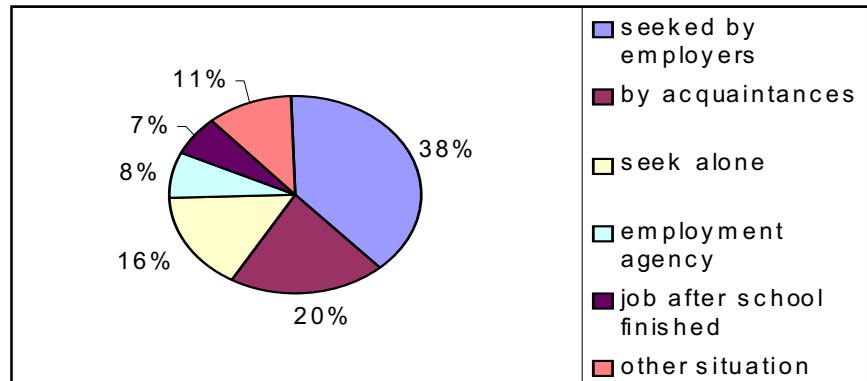
All the above mentioned elements may gradually lead to a phenomenon which otherwise has been very often invoked in relation to this minority group – the phenomenon of exclusion where:

- The system itself is determinant and it leads to a structural exclusion (there are no adequate social policies and the social system does not respond to a certain need).
- Territorial/community membership of an individual which makes him unable to satisfy a certain need because there are no resources in the respective community in spite of the fact that the system is offering a formal solution which otherwise is working very well for other communities.

Modalities by which they have found a job

As we have already mentioned, only 10% of the population included in the sample is employed.

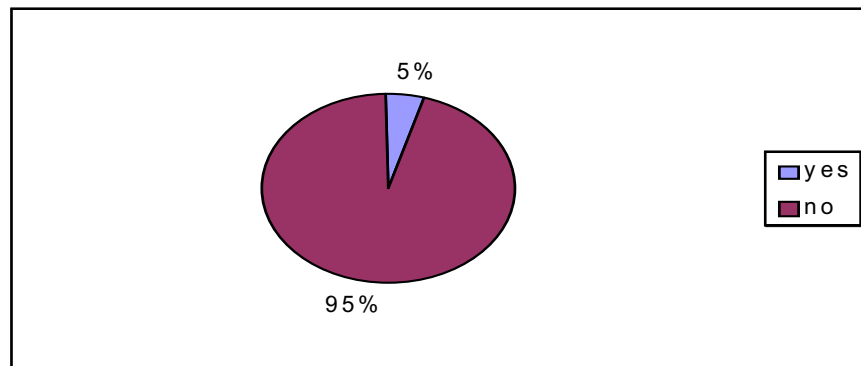
Chart no. 1.10. Modalities by which they have found a job



It is noticed that in very few cases they have succeeded to find a job through formal means available on the labour market (The Employment Agencies). As expected, finding a job is easier when resorting to the informal system. In the "other situations" category we have included those persons who opened their own business, those practicing traditional trades and those who take care of disabled children.

Participation in vocational training

Chart no. 1.11. Participation in occupational/vocational training programs



It is not a common thing among the Roma to participate in vocational training courses. Only 5% of the investigated population has participated in various vocational training programmes. Such courses have been organized by County Agencies for Employment, by various public institutions (County Councils, Cultural Establishments, etc), by companies (0.2% have completed in-training courses at their work place), by NGOs, by The Party of Roma, or by various craftsmanship cooperatives. Out of the total number of persons who participated in such training courses, only a small part of them (52 persons representing a percentage of only 3,4 % of the total sample) considered their participation as being beneficial and increasing their chances to find a job.

As we have shown above, the active behavior where there is an obvious interest for work and for achieving skills is present only in an extremely reduced segment of the investigated population. Over 75% of the population included in the sample has shown a totally passive behavior.

Brief remarks

A passive behavior is noticed in 42% of the total sample where there is no intention to get a job and earn an income as a result of their work. There are situations where none of the members of a household is willing to get a job. There are families where at least one person is looking for a job (in 24% of the cases), or even two persons (20%).

Looking for a job and barriers encountered: approximately three quarters (71, 19%) of those who declared they were unemployed were actually looking for a job. The reasons invoked most often for their failure to find a job were: **insufficient qualifications (25%), the economic situation at the level of the entire country (29%), their health condition (6%), age, sex, bad fortune (12%), and ethnicity** in 10% of the cases.

How are they trying to find a job: resorting to acquaintances (28%), to specialized institutions (14%), reading adverts in newspapers (6%), asking directly to various enterprises or to local mayoralities (1. 1%), not interested in finding a job (49%).

How they were able to eventually find a job: for the 10% of the **employed** population included in the sample resorting to formal means available on the labour market (i.e. to the Employment Agencies) was in very few cases successful. Resorting to the informal system was a much frequent option.

Participation to vocational training courses: Only 5% of the investigated population has participated in various training programmes. Furthermore, out of those who attended such courses only a small number (52 persons, that is 3, 4% of the total sample) appreciated the training programmes as being beneficial and increasing their chances to get employed.

CHAPTER 2. FACTORS WHICH IMPEDE THE ACCESS OF ROMA TO THE LABOUR MARKET

We shall use the above presented framework to analyze the problems of Roma and the role of public institutions that set the rules of the game and whereby can cause or prevent the suboptimal outcomes regarding the exclusion of Roma ethnics from the labour market.

Analyzing problems of Roma is a precarious task. Generalization is a necessity for any analysis, yet they are especially dangerous in the case of sensitive Roma issues.

Roma are certainly comprised of a heterogeneous population and thus following sentences such as, "Roma are less educated than non-Roma" are to be understood in a statistical sense, for which however no statistical evidence based on representative samples exists.

Yet, such statistical observations are needed for recognition of the true mechanisms behind the social failures and for identification of a remedy.

The unemployment rate among Roma is notably larger than those of non Roma and they usually work in unqualified positions and earn less. The inferior position of Roma on the labor market has many mutually interacting causes, including:

- The general unfavorable economic context;
- Health status;
- Lack of incentives caused by the structure of Roma extended families;
- Educational disadvantages and skills no longer required on the labour market;
- Low mobility;
- Illicit employment;
- Discrimination.

As we have pointed out in the previous Chapter, these factors were also revealed by the field research and we shall further detail the most important of these factors.

2.1. Lack of Incentives, Support Networks

The smaller effort of Roma to participate on the labour market is a consequence of their family structure, which in turn is an adaptation to a risky environment in which the social system fails to fulfill its insurance function.

Roma are famous for maintaining support networks within their extended families.

Economically, such networks serve as an informal insurance against temporal fluctuations of income and against many other hazards endangering poor families. Most of the Roma nuclear families count on help of other closely related nuclear families that lend them money, food or provide shelter in times of a sudden misery. Actually, as poor Roma lack savings which could be used as buffers against a dropout of income, the mutual help is quite common; money flows in all directions and many nuclear families would hardly survive for a month without this income smoothing service. Naturally, the support networks distribute the incomes in an egalitarian way and thus richer nuclear families are giving more than receiving. This egalitarian consequence of solidarity demotivates members of the network from working, as the fruits of the employment are shared with all while the burden of the effort is not.

While such a demotivating effect of the support networks may look like a failure of Roma families, they should not be blamed as the network formation is the best reply to the environment shaped, to a large extent, by government policies. Poor families are especially vulnerable to income fluctuations since a negative income shock can easily expose a family even to temporal starvation and hence an insurance against such income fall-outs is absolutely necessary. Theoretically, the state provides such insurance by means of unemployment, health and social insurance and by the guarantee of minimal living standards. Yet, in practice, the social benefits to a large extent fail to fulfill their insurance function. The social system is complicated, nontransparent and its implementation depends on local customs and personal opinions of local administrators.

Thus, while usually generous, the system occasionally fails and the recipients are left without cash. Typically, long periods of smooth income are occasionally interrupted by sudden drop-outs or fluctuations and in precisely such situations the informal support network of extended family is indispensable.

For instance, a nuclear family is eligible for certain benefits only if all the family members are eligible. This requires all unemployed family members to cooperate with an unemployment office, which is hard to achieve for large Roma families with several unemployed members. Being poor, chances are that at least one family member has problems with alcohol, drugs, or gambling and thus, with high probability, at least one member drops out of the unemployment office.

As for the role of the eligibility, many allowance decisions are taken on a subjective basis of administrators' opinions about the family. Administrators may provide additional allowances to usual benefits, such as extra allowances for a baby-coach, a washing machine, coal or other expenses. Another drawback of the social system's complexity is that some of the eligible recipients are simply so stressed by the uneasy bureaucratic process that they simply opt out of the system.

The complexity of the social system leads to its unpredictability and thus to an urgent need of an additional insurance which Roma achieve through informal support networks within their extended families. Such networks however, lead to sharing of incomes. The members of such networks have, in comparison with individually organized non-Roma majority, lower incentives to raise their incomes by individual efforts. When balancing the properties of the social system, the state must not forget its original insurance function.

2.2. Educational disadvantages and lack of skills

Roma are less educated compared to majority members which limits the access of Roma to the labor market as the demand for unqualified labor has fallen dramatically during the transition period. While coarse methods of discrimination, such as allocation of Roma pupils to special schools for the mentally ill, are slowly diminishing partly thanks to international pressure, other, more intricate causes of low educational attainment remain. Standard basic schools in many localities have started to support Roma pupils by creating what is often called a community atmosphere. Many

have introduced preparatory classes, Roma assistants, and free-time activities attractive to Roma, such as dancing classes.

Besides the lack of information, Roma parents and children do not have necessary incentives to search for better schools. While most of the non-Roma ethnics have some educated peers with high incomes, Roma do not, and hence they lack a direct experience with the benefits of education. Moreover, success of Roma is much less correlated with attained education than success of non-Roma. As Roma often work in a shadow economy, wealth of their successful peers was attained on the basis of their connections, talents and personal qualities, education typically not being decisive. Also, too much education may lead to the loss of a family member.

Moreover, socially deprived family peers often fail to provide an environment in which education may be fully utilized. The skepticism over the usefulness of education is furthermore deepened by anticipated discrimination in the labor market. Given the low incentives, most Roma families eventually accept the situation, with exception of the most successful families struggling for transition to the middle class.

The returns on primary and secondary education are lower for Roma than non-Roma while returns on higher education are very high in the case of Roma. Educational strategies of Roma families are consistent with this statistical observation; incentive to obtain secondary education is low and the higher education is beyond limits for most of the Roma families.

To fight school drop-out and its consequences, incentives of both parents and schools have to be changed. The schools should receive extra subsidies proportional to the number of "socio-economically handicapped" pupils. Educational incentives of Roma have to be increased. Unfortunately, such measures may backfire if not applied with caution. Roma parents may be reinforced to choose segregated schools as the good grades are easier to obtain there and the absences are often tolerated. Thus, if financial bonuses and/or penalties are to be of any help, they must be based on measures comparable across schools, which only united tests allow. Moreover, the united tests would allow Roma parents and experts to evaluate the true educational achievements of community schools.

Higher education is necessary for success on the labor market, but the educational level among Roma is improving way too slowly. Public institutions should focus not only on pedagogical support of Roma pupils but also on creating incentives for schools and Roma to overcome the school drop-out.

A comparison between generations of Roma population shows that the incidence of lack of school education is the smallest in the case of the mature population and the highest in the case of the elderly. The biggest differences appear between the old and newer generations. The communist school system seems to have significantly reduced the incidence of lack of school education amongst this social segment. This tendency is maintained also today.

Table no. 2.1. Lack of school education, by generations

The transition generation (7-16 years)	The young generation (17-25 years)	The mature generation (26-45 years)	The old generation (over 46 years)
18.3%	17.0%	15.2%	26.7%

Source: *Social Investigation of the Roma*, ICCV, 1998.

Better school performance of the Roma during the communist period was also accompanied by a higher access to the labour market. Thus, the period of 1980-1990 is one of a maximal degree of integration into the labour market, the percentage of Roma who worked as employees being of 45% (ICCV, 1998). Later on, during the transition period, along with the degradation of their overall school performance, the percentage of Roma employees out of the total occupied population decreased to 34%.

For all the generations,¹ the level of schooling reached by most Roma individuals at elementary and secondary schools are under the level required for achieving a minimal position on the labour market. Thus, in the case of the young, as well as of the mature generations, graduation of only 8 grades (or less) cannot guarantee access to qualified jobs. The same thing happens in the case of the mature population, where graduation from elementary school only can, at best, guarantee access to an unskilled work.

The tendency to increase the level of school education for young and mature generations correlates with a tendency to increase the requirements for school education levels needed to achieve a qualified position on the labour market. Thus, in the case of all generations, school performance of

¹ For a more detailed analysis of the school education of Roma, see Mihai Surdu, "Educația °colară a populației de romi" [*School Education of Roma Population*], 2002, *Romii în România*, Editura Expert.

the majority of individuals is much lower than the requirements of the labour market.

Orientation towards graduating from a vocational school is more accentuated in the case of mature generation. Almost 10% managed to graduate from a vocational school which allowed them to obtain certain qualifications. Also, the highest percentage of high-school graduates is to be found in the case of the mature generation, when compared to other generations. Graduation from higher education institutions is present only in isolated cases.

At the level of the entire Roma population over 16 years of age, there are very important differences in school education by gender. Thus, while the percentage of those who lack school education reaches 14.5% in the case of men, it raises to 23.5% in the case of women. The most important gender difference regarding the lack of education is present in the case of the old generation, where the percentage of women who have never attended school is over two times bigger than that of men. In the case of the mature generation, this difference tends to decrease a little, although the percentage of women who have never attended school is still almost twice larger than that of men. As concerns the young generation, the differences between women and men who have attended school are very small. On the one hand, there is a slight tendency towards emancipation of women (the percentage of uneducated women decreases from 19.5% to 16.4%); on the other hand, the percentage of men who lack school education increases as compared to the mature generation (from 10.9% to 17.5%). A possible explanation for such behavioral patterns displayed by the young generation could be the tendency towards the modernization of Roma family—the abandonment of the traditional role distribution whereby women are housewives and men provide incomes for supporting the entire household.

Significant gender differences also appear in the case of vocational schools graduates of all generations, although these are quite slim in the case of the old and mature generations compared to the young generation. If in the case of the old generation, the ratio between men and women graduating from vocational schools was of 5:1, at the mature generation this ratio decreases to 3:1, only to reach less than 2:1 with the young generation. The higher number of men graduating from vocational schools, compared to women, can reflect the persistency of a traditional family model in which the man is oriented towards a profession, while the woman discontinues school education before obtaining a qualification, in order to deal with

household duties. This inequality between men and women with respect to the achievement of a profession (by means of graduation from a vocational school) tends to decrease with the young generation.

Associated with the low level or absence of school education, illiteracy represents a major impediment in the integration of Roma into the labour market, especially in obtaining qualified jobs. One of the most important indicators in the comparative analysis of generations is represented by the incidence of illiteracy, for we believe that the assimilation of minimal abilities (such as reading and writing) represents the foremost acquisition for a population with low levels of school education. The lowest incidence of illiteracy is to be found at the level of the mature generation, where approximately 30% of the subjects can be considered illiterate (read with difficulty or not at all), while the highest incidence of illiteracy rests with the older generation. Thus, in the case of the old generation, 45% of the subjects declare that they read with difficulty or not at all, and the increased number of persons who refuse to answer probably represents non-declared cases of illiterates, due to the negative social connotation associated therewith. If we were to also consider the non-respondents, it would mean that over 60% of the older generation is illiterate. In regards to the young and transition generation, it is noted that the illiteracy tendency is increasing, when compared to the mature generation.

In the case of the old generation, women are illiterate in a higher percentage than men, the number of women who cannot read being almost double that of men. Also, a higher percentage of illiteracy among women remains with the mature generation, although there is a slight decreasing tendency in the percentage of illiterate women, comparing to men. Starting with the young generation, we notice an almost equal distribution of the number of illiterates by gender; moreover, the number of illiterate men slightly over-passes that of illiterate women. In the transition generation, these differences are being maintained, with the number of illiterate men being larger than that of illiterate women.

As a result of the low level of school education, a sizeable part of the Roma population has no professional qualification. There is a tendency to revive traditional crafts, on the one hand, due to the economic recession that led to the dismissal of Roma from productive units and their return to traditional crafts, and on the other hand, due to initiatives of Roma NGOs targeted at stimulating traditional crafts.

Table no. 2.2. Professions of the Roma population in Romania 1992-1998 (percentages)

Profession	Roma at national level 1992	Roma at national level 1998
No profession	79.4	52.4
Traditional crafts	3.9	10.3
Modern professions	16.1	37.3

Sources: *Roma in Romania*, 2002, and Elena Zamfir, Cătălin Zamfir, "*Țiganii între îngrijorare și ignorare*" [Gypsies between Ignorance and Concern]. Bucharest: Alternative Publishing House, 1993.

Amongst the modern professions, the most encountered qualifications are constructions (mason, house painter, and smith man), mechanic locksmith, auto mechanic, welder, driver, and tailor.

The traditional crafts are related to the specific of the Roma groups and are transmitted between generations, without involving the formal educational system, with the exception of programs undertaken by NGOs in partnership with schools, for the revival of traditional crafts. Most often, Roma who exercise traditional crafts are fiddlers, coppersmiths, blacksmiths, brick makers, tin men, and silversmiths. The percentage of traditional crafts is higher in rural areas, due to higher degrees of preservation with respect to specific cultural traditions in compact Roma rural communities than in Roma communities of the big cities. As the city Roma adapted faster to modernity, almost 3/5 of the Roma exercising traditional crafts are in the rural area.

In rural areas, although the Roma were eligible for being given ownership of lands, the local authorities, claiming the insufficiency of the agricultural land, did not give land to the Roma, except in some isolated cases. The lack of agricultural land excludes the Roma from the most frequent occupation in the rural area, that of farmer. Moreover, the closure of the agricultural cooperatives for production (also known as 'kolhozes'), the main employer of the Roma before 1989, makes the economic situation of Roma families even more difficult.

2.3. Low Mobility

Low mobility is a general problem of the labor market in Romania. On a regulated housing market it is difficult to find housing in areas with

high working opportunities. Consequently, the unemployed are trapped in economically depressed areas, fact which disproportionably affects the Roma. Though Roma are often considered to be mobile due to their tradition, they in fact face more obstacles to mobility than the non-Roma. As previously described, Roma depend economically on their family network and thus seldom move unless they have relatives in the new locality. Another main cause of low mobility of the Roma is the heavy discrimination they face on the housing market; decent dwelling is the most burning problem of Roma families. Typically, if Roma move, it is not for better jobs, but because they have lost their dwelling. Hence, they move to depressed areas where the dwellings are more available but the jobs are rare.

Because the primary housing market fails for Roma families, a secondary market has developed on which small dwellings typically built as lodging houses for manual workers are offered. Such dwellings are not protected by state regulations and hence the rent evaders can be moved out quickly. This allows the tenants and landlords to draw enforceable contracts and thus allows the secondary market to function. Often families not paying rent for years under a regulated contract, start to pay (typically, much higher price) under the unregulated contract. Another "solution" in the absence of a legal environment has evolved: mafia, using violence, instead of malfunctioning state enforcement has no problems with collecting rents. Because of such "solutions" of the market failure, Roma tend to be concentrated in unattractive outskirts and the unregulated rents for small dwellings are extraordinarily high as Roma have nowhere else to go. A chance to move for better jobs is minimal.

The mobility of Roma is dramatically lowered by the high discrimination they face on the housing market. The discrimination is, to a large extent, a consequence of a market failure, caused by the notoriously slow legal system and subsequent unenforceability of rent contracts and the subsequent market failure. The functioning legal environment would force Roma families to pay the rents and the landlords would not have reason to discriminate. Many local authorities tend to dispose of Roma families by moving them out of their cities. This proves that the local level is not appropriate for solving the housing problems of Roma and the central government should play a more active role.

2.4. Illicit employment

Many officially unemployed Roma actually work under illicit contracts which are frequently tolerated by local authorities as they often consider illicit work superior to a total apathy. Still, the orientation to the illicit labor market has many negative consequences. Along the direct drawbacks, such as the lack of safety controls, there are important indirect drawbacks. Illicit contracts are unenforceable within the legal system and so the workers are often left without their salaries. The unfulfilled payments are only the tip of the iceberg; many potentially beneficial contracts are not concluded at all as the parties have no trust in each other. Missing the contract enforcement machinery of state, workers can trust only long-term partners. Thus, the importance of connections is larger compared to non-Roma which further decreases mobility of Roma workers. Moreover, the illicit job opportunities are largely unqualified and thus the specialization on the illicit market hampers the transition to the qualified sector.

2.5 Discrimination

Roma are heavily discriminated on the labor as well as other markets. Although the state tries to fight the discrimination, its possibilities are limited as discriminatory practices are almost impossible to prove. In order to help abolish discrimination, it is important to understand the various motives behind it. Some employers may refuse to employ Roma for xenophobic reasons but in the context of Romania, individually rational motives of discrimination are likely to prevail. There are cases where the employers pay the Roma workers less than to non-Roma because the former, being discriminated, are in a worse bargaining position than the latter. The employers simply maximize their profits without detesting the discriminatory practice. Other employers may simply refuse to employ Roma, because they are not able to recognize the quality of the worker, and, in a statistical sense, being Roma is a negative signal. While no official statistics exist, the general belief is that Roma have on average worse skills, working morals, etc. The danger of such statistical discrimination is that it is self-enforcing.

Expectation of future discrimination lowers incentives to attain skills or working habits and thus the negative beliefs of the employers may be confirmed in equilibrium.

Though the statistically based discrimination is individually rational, it precludes integration of Roma and thus it is harming to all in the long run. However, as the individual incentives to discriminate are high and the means of the state to prove such practices are low, the discrimination is to be expected to cease only if the statistical reasons vanish. Meanwhile, the state has to provide artificial monetary incentives for Roma to attain higher education, and other qualities.

Brief remarks

Transition from centrally planned economies to decentralized markets is hard for most citizens, but the burden of Roma was multiplied by their specific socio-economic situation and by discrimination. Most of the problems Roma face, they share with all other citizens.

The unemployment rate among Roma, though distinctly higher than among non-Roma, is correlated with the rate of the whole population, and thus unemployment of both populations seems to share the same roots. Unfortunately, problems caused by inadequacies of legal and economic environments tend to multiply in the case of Roma, because, unlike the non-Roma, whole networks of families are often exposed to these inadequacies. For instance, non-Roma families dependent on social benefits typically have social connections to people independent of the social system, while in the case of Roma, the whole family network depends on the benefits, with little connection to families which do not depend of the social system.

Though Roma share the core of their problems with the non-Roma population, they also face specific obstacles that call for specific measures. Roma have low incentive to gain education, as they can expect discrimination on the labor market, and their return to education is lower than in the case of the non-Roma population. To overcome the absence of sufficient natural incentives, the state must create artificial ones.

Another fundamental Roma specific problem is their discrimination on the housing market. Ambitions to fight the discrimination directly are hopeless as it is virtually impossible to observe and prove. Rather, the state should outbalance the discrimination by a network of social flats intended for Roma families with ambition and ability to move from low to middle class. Ownership and allocation of social flats is now executed by local authorities that have an incentive to move out Roma to other cities and get rid of the burden. Only a centralized approach to the allocation of social

flats can internalize such externalities. Inability to rent flats severely limits physical and social mobility of Roma.

Only a combination of general improvements of legal and economic environment with certain Roma specific measures especially in cases of education and housing can succeed in the process of Roma integration into the labor market and other economic aspects of life.

CHAPTER 3. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR ROMA

3.1. Policies promoted by public institutions targeting the professional integration of Roma

Although almost five years have gone by since the implementation of the Government's Strategy to Improve the Situation of Roma¹, the actual results are quite modest. We have been able to identify several positive aspects and fields where concrete actions were taken and enforced. It is the case of the Ministry of Education and Research which has been promoting a consistent programme to grant Roma children the access to education. Also the Ministry of Health has been implementing a programme to promote the profession of sanitary mediator amongst Roma communities whereas the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity has addressed the issue of vocational training for employment of Roma ethnics. Such actions may have a low impact on the short term but in the long run their impact shall be sustainable. With 123 measures, the Plan of Action of the above mentioned Strategy in the field of economic development and social security is quite generous in mentioning several measures to be taken in order to increase the access of Roma to vocational training programs and their employment rate. Unfortunately, an analysis of these measures and of their impact indicates that their concrete outcomes are minimal. On the other hand, several reports on the Strategy have recommended its revision in content and especially the revision of its Plan of Action. Notwithstanding such recommendations, the Strategy has remained only a reference document forgotten in the office drawers of Romanian public institutions². In the table below we have selected the measures targeting employment at the level of Roma population as presented in the Plan of Action. Out of the total of 123 measures, only 11 of them are directly addressing this issue.

¹ Gov. Ordinance No. 430/2001 to endorse the Romanian Government's Strategy to Improve the Situation of Roma

² Report „The Protection of Minorities. Assessment of the Romanian Government Strategy to Improve the Situation of Roma, Programme to Monitor the Process of Adheration to EU, Open Society Institute, 2002 page 138

No.	Measure	Deadline	Responsible institution	Remarks
33	Conducting a study on the market of professional offers in order to define the niches favouring Roma in view of their further professional training and reconversion	20.09. 2001	MMSS	This study has not been realized within the established time framework. On the other hand, Romania is still lacking excellence in terms of adapting professional training programmes to the actual needs of the labour market. We still have occupational and professional training programmes implemented at the level of local authorities as a result of labour market analysis and consultations with social partners within County Agencies for Employment (and finally endorsed by The Administrative Council of the National Agency for Employment)
34	Designing, in cooperation with NGOs and Roma organizations, of an annual programme for professional training and reconversion in trades demanded on the labour market and adapted to Roma's level of education.	15.01. 2002	MMSS, ANOFM	The Romanian Government Report regarding the stage of Strategy implementation and published in June 2003 is mentioning that professional training for adults has been regulated by law No. 375/2002 endorsing Ordinance No 129 / 2000. Still, such a regulation has not been accompanied by annual programmes for professional training and reconversion as initially stipulated in the Strategy Moreover, we can not speak of the participation of Roma NGOs in the identification of trades which are highly demanded on the labour market and adapted to Roma educational level.

No.	Measure	Deadline	Responsible institution	Remarks
35	Designing a programme to train and monitor the staff of county and local agencies for employment regarding measures taken to facilitate the access to the labour market for Roma ethnics and especially for those who have already completed vocational courses.	15.02.2002	MMSS, ANOFM	Although this aspect has been approached through short training programmes for the staff of the County Agencies for Employment, the implementation of this measure is at least incomplete. Modular training for a longer period of time and in cooperation with representatives of Roma civil society may lead to the creation of partnerships with a positive impact on the degree of employment among Roma ethnics. Roma NGOs have repeatedly requested that County Agencies for Employment hired personnel from among Roma ethnics in order to ensure a better knowledge of the problems encountered in their access to the labour market and to be able to adapt specific measures.
36	Designing an annual programme to support young Roma graduates on their way to employment and to monitor the professional evolution of Roma University graduates.	10.04. 2002	MMSS, ANOFM MEC	Most of the measures taken in this respect bare a general character and do not target especially Roma population but they were adopted with the purpose to stimulate the employment of those categories which encounter difficulties on the labour market. Examples of such regulations meant to stimulate the employment of young graduates are: - 0 Law no. 76/2002 regarding the system of unemployment social insurance and incentives for employment -1 Law no. 116/2002 to prevent and combat social marginalization; with the help of the National Agency for Employment

No.	Measure	Deadline	Responsible institution	Remarks
				a social accompaniment is achieved in a personalized manner: young people aged between 16 and 25 and who find themselves in a difficult situation, at risk of being professionally excluded are helped to get a better access to the labour market and find a job.
54	Formulating proposals regarding fiscal facilities granted to those employees hiring Roma ethnics.	15.09.2001	MIMMC MFP, MIR	This measure has never been put into practice as it is rather demagogical. The Ministry of Public Finances has claimed that granting such facilities, on a selective base, to encourage only a certain category of individuals is not beneficial at all. It would only lead to discrimination against other social categories and to an infringement of the principle of fiscal equity. In addition, such measures are not agreed by the international financial institutions with which the Romanian Government has signed agreements.
55	Presenting, in cooperation with Roma leaders and their NGOs, a set of measures to partly finance projects based on income generating activities and on establishing small family enterprises for Roma families and their community.	10.03. 2002	MIMMC MFP,	This measure has been partly approached through the implementation of the Phare RO 2002/000-586.01.02 ¹ programme which included a component of vocational training as well as the development of income generating activities. Unfortunately, the NGOs had a limited access to these funds since the Funding

¹ RO 2002/000-586.01.02, *Support for The National Strategy to Improve the Roma Situation.*

No.	Measure	Deadline	Responsible institution	Remarks
				<p>Memorandum signed by Romanian Government with EU in 2002 clearly stipulated that only public institutions can apply to these funds. Roma NGOs have complained about this formulation but without being capable to alter it. In the end, the solution came from the introduction in the funding guide of the programme of a new eligibility criterion requesting the direct participation of Roma communities in the respective projects. Roma communities are to be represented by communitarian initiative groups. Such groups are still to be legally registered as foundations or associations in order to become the final beneficiaries of the investments resulted from such income generating projects.</p>
56	Presenting by the leaders of Roma communities of a project to partly finance craftsmanship enterprises within Roma communities to produce and merchandise home appliances and handmade objects and to regenerate traditional crafts.	30.01. 2002	MIMMC MFP, CMixt	This measure has never been executed but there are legal regulations regarding the financing of income generating projects and the establishment of small and medium enterprises. One of the objectives included in the Phare RO 2002/000-586.01.02 programme is targeting the establishment of such enterprises to regenerate Roma traditional crafts.
57	Presenting a set of measures designed to stimulate landownership and agricultural activities in Roma communities.	30.06.2002	MAAP, MAP	Government Decision No 256 was issued on 4 th of March 2003 to endorse the Programme to design normative acts needed to pass several agricultural lands into the ownership to Roma ethnics.

No.	Measure	Deadline	Responsible institution	Remarks
				<p>Until present, none of the Roma families has been given landownership following this programme and no financing source has been yet identified for the acquisition of such agricultural land by the public authorities.</p> <p>Moreover, Roma communities in rural areas, whether organized or not as family associations or agricultural exploitations have not been able until present to access SAPARD programmes targeting rural development.</p>
58	Supporting, under the current legislation in force, the Small and Medium enterprises established by Roma ethnics through a system of profitable banking loans.	On going	MIMMC Interdepartmental Committee	<p>This initiative is part of a set of general measures adopted to stimulate small and medium enterprises. The system of banking loans is functioning itself based on general criteria and it is unlikely that special criteria will be established for Roma enterprises. Especially in the case of commercial banks, it is highly unlikely that such measures will be put into practice.</p> <p>A viable solution may consist in the implementation of business development programmes or programmes to assist Roma enterprises in achieving performance indicators.</p>
59	Presenting a pack of measures to include disadvantaged Roma communities into the general programme for disadvantaged areas.	14.12. 2001	MAP, Interdepartmental Committee	<p>Such an initiative has no grounds since the criteria in declaring an area as being disadvantaged are clearly defined¹.</p> <p>These criteria include: the existence of mono-industrial productive structures, collective massive loss of jobs as a</p>

¹ Government Ordinance No. 24 issued on 30th of September 1998 regarding the regime of disadvantaged areas.

No.	Measure	Deadline	Responsible institution	Remarks
				consequence of liquidation, restructuring or privatization of the economic agents and which have affected at least 25% of the employees residing in the respective area; the employment rate is 30% over the average at national level; isolated areas lacking communication means and where the infrastructure is under developed. Taking into account the above presented criteria, the inclusion of Roma communities into such programmes may only be a guiding principle and not a compulsory condition.
60	Promoting projects to create jobs designed for Roma women.	Ongoing	Interdepartmental Committee, MMSS	Such a measure is being currently implemented but again it has a general character and it is not addressing Roma women in particular. Within the Phare Programme entitled „Support for the national strategy to improve the situation of Roma”, promoting women is a priority.

The national Plan for Employment 2004-2005 is another programmatic document of the Romanian Government. It contains an analysis of the current employment situation and it is mentioning the same Government Strategy to Improve the Situation of Roma as being one of the few measures taken so far to improve the access of Roma ethnics to the labour market. The above mentioned strategy stipulates among other measures: granting fiscal facilities to those enterprises hiring Roma ethnics, financing projects based on income generating activities and on the establishment of small enterprises for Roma families and communities,

granting profitable loans for Roma businessmen, favoring job creation projects for Roma women.¹

Although the above mentioned Strategy recognizes the difficulties Roma ethnics encounter in their access to the labour market, no specific objective is stipulated for the members of Roma communities. There are rather general objectives included in the **Guideline 7 – promoting the integration of and combating the discrimination against people at a disadvantage on the labour market**, such as:

- “Supporting the integration into the labour market of people with disabilities who may have an unexploited working potential and with the aim to increase the degree of employment in this category;
- Promoting the integration of people with difficulties in accessing the labour market and increasing employment opportunities in order to prevent discrimination;
- Ensuring the access to the labour market of foreigners who were granted a form of protection in Romania.
- Ensuring the access to education for disadvantaged groups and decreasing with 15% the rate of school drop-out at the level of compulsory education.

At the same time, we have to mention a few concrete measures set out by the National Action Plan on Employment 2004-2005², and respectively:

- Increasing with 1,5% the percentage of Roma ethnics employed on a labour contract basis out of the total number of persons programmed to be employed;
- Organizing, on annual basis, job markets to address especially these categories of people; following this measure, a job market for Roma ethnics will be organized in April this year and in May a job market will be held for people with disabilities;

¹ *National Action Plan on Employment 2004-2005, Guideline 7 – Promoting integration and combating discrimination against disadvantaged persons on the labour market, pages 27-28*

² *Idem 13, pages 53-55.*

- Organizing professional training courses where at least 1.5% of the registered unemployed shall be of Roma ethnicity and at least 0.3% shall be unoccupied people with disabilities;
- Organizing vocational training for the labour force upon the request of employers and addressed to low skilled workers; the aim is to increase with at least 5% the number of persons included in this category. Such vocational training courses are financed from the unemployment insurances budget.

The institution responsible with the implementation of all the above presented measures is The National Agency for Employment.

Other programmes

The Phare 2001 RO 0104.02 Programme - „**Access to education for disadvantaged groups with a focus on Roma**”, is aiming at improving the access to education for disadvantaged groups and especially for Roma ethnics in order to eliminate social exclusion and marginalization. It also aims at promoting human rights and equality of opportunities which are relevant factors in increasing the accessibility and improving conditions in preschool education. The final objective is to stimulate early enrolment in school units, providing children with incentives to finalize their compulsory education (preventing school drop-out) and offering “second chance” education for those persons who did not graduate from compulsory schools (correcting school drop-out). **Responsible institution: Ministry of Education and Research**

The Phare RO 2003/005-551.01.02 Programme „**Access to education for disadvantaged groups**”, aimed at enlarging the group of disadvantages youngsters/children by the inclusion of those coming from special schools and who need to be integrated into mass schools as well as the inclusion of children/youngsters coming from social-economic disadvantaged areas. **Responsible institution: Ministry of Education and Research**
 The project “**Center for professional inclusion of Roma Ethnics in Bucharest**” with the objective to provide vocational training in traded demanded on the labour market for a number of 150 Roma ethnics in Bucharest. **Responsible institutions: The Agency for community development “Împreună” and the National Agency for Employment.**

Outcomes

According to the data provided to us by the National Agency for Employment, we have summarized the following outcomes as a result of the implementation of employment programmes designed for Roma ethnics:

In 2001 a number of 5188 Roma ethnics were employed; 270 Roma ethnics participated into professional training courses; 273 of them graduated and 205 further managed to get employed. The most demanded professions on the labour market were: plumber, iron-man, painter and mason.

In 2002 a number of 5535 Roma ethnics were employed; 282 Roma ethnics were included in professional training courses; 80 of them were further employed on a labour contract basis. The most demanded professions in which Roma were skilled: tailor, car mechanic, flower grower, cooker, operator in garments industry and mason.

In 2003 a number of 8781 Roma ethnics were employed, out of whom 2396 were Roma women; 202 Roma ethnics participated into vocational training courses, and 91 of the graduated were further employed. The main professions they were skilled in were: mason, painter, tractor operator, vegetable grower, textile worker and animal breeder.

In 2004 a number of 9.079 Roma ethnics were employed; 282 Roma ethnics were included in vocational training courses and 98 of them were further employed. Most of these Roma ethnics participated into vocational training programmes on the following professions: merchant, mason, animal breeder, textile worker, industrial operator in garments industry, carpenter, and plant grower.

In 2005 a number of 10.366 Roma ethnics were employed out of whom 2.503 were women. A number of 1601 Roma ethnics were included into professional training programmes out of whom 561 were women. They were skilled in the following professions: mason, stone man, painter, textile operator, merchant, waiter, construction worker,

For 2006, the main outcome foreseen by the National Plan for Employment of the Labour Force is the employment of 10000 Roma ethnics as a result of incentives offered by the Employment Agencies whereas the National Plan for Professional Training stipulates the participation of 1500 Roma ethnics to such training courses.

With the aim to consolidate the partnership with Roma representatives and to better promote at local level the actions implemented

by Ministry of Social Solidarity and Family, as well as to perform an assessment of these actions, a meeting was held on 3rd of October 2002 at the headquarters of the National Agency for Employment. The representatives of the above Ministry met with Roma experts from County Offices for Roma and decided to organize a job market for Roma ethnics. In March 2004, cooperation protocols were signed with the Roma expert within the Prefectures at local level. Other organizations addressing Roma issues were also attracted in this partnership. The protocols were renewed in 2005 for an undetermined period of time. Through these protocols, main actions were set in view of a better cooperation between Roma communities and public local institutions and with the aim to improve the access to the labour market for as many Roma ethnics as possible. They will be updated as many times as necessary.

Starting with 2003 job market has been organized each year for Roma ethnics.

Besides the objective to create adequate conditions for employers to satisfy their employment needs and at the same time to facilitate the employment of Roma ethnics, The Job Market for Roma Ethnics has also meant a great opportunity to campaign for the fact that Roma ethnics are interested in work so that the employers would come to accept them as future employees. Also, Roma ethnics had the opportunity to discuss with representatives of economic agents and find out which are the requirements for getting a job. Even if not all of them have been finally employed, from that point on they will know on which elements they must insist in order to acquire the skills and abilities required by employers.

Noticeable, the number of vacancies at national level reached in 2004 to approximately 8000. The National Agency for Employment appreciated that the participation of economic agents was better (678 economic agents were registered and 57 of them were of Roma ethnicity.) One of the problems Roma encountered was given by their reduced access to information about the job market. Direct cooperation with Roma organizations at local level was not very effective and that is why a large number of Roma ethnics were not able to participate. On the other hand, even if the job offer was much diversified, and it included positions requiring minimum studies as well as medium and higher education, the number of vacancies was not totally covered because the candidates failed to fulfill all the requirements criteria in terms of either qualifications or education.

Therefore, following the Job Market events, the outcomes in terms of employed Roma ethnics were as follows:

- in 2003 – a number of 1523 Roma ethnics were employed
- in 2004 – a number of 2257 Roma ethnics were employed
- in 2005 – a number of 1129 Roma ethnics were employed

In addition to these actions, in August 2005, The National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) in cooperation with The National Agency for Roma and other Roma NGOs initiated and conducted the *“Employment Caravan for Roma”* with the purpose to inform Roma ethnics about the rights and duties they have as well as about the services they may access in order to become employed.

Within this context, a number of 913 Roma communities were visited and the number of Roma participants to this event was of 20.933 out of whom 7.712 were women.

“Employment Caravan for Roma” has been extended to the period of 01 November -31 December 2005 as well as for the whole year of 2006.

Workshops and round tables have also been organized at local level in order to identify obstacles and find the best solutions for the employment of Roma population.

- In October 2005, ANOFM in cooperation with The National Agency for Roma organized training workshops – meetings at local level with the participation of representatives of local agencies and the Roma expert within the Prefecture. The aim was to strengthen partnerships at local level. A protocol signed by National Agency for Employment and National Agency for Roma is functioning at central level to initiate and implement joint actions to improve the situation of Roma population.

Several difficulties were encountered throughout the implementation of the above mentioned activities and they were related to:

- The fact that Roma did not declare their true identity which made it difficult to evaluate the implemented actions;
- Many of them live in rural communities where there are no job vacancies and in order to get employed they have to travel long distances to urban areas;
- Many of them are confronted with lack of education which impedes on their employment or which makes them earn the minimum wage per economy when and if they are employed.

The problem of Roma ethnics is a complex one because it does not relate only to employment but also to education, health, dwelling, and that is why the approach must be comprehensive and tackling simultaneously each of the above mentioned aspects in order to reach an equality of opportunity with the rest of the population.

For the future, ANOFM intends to improve the outcomes of its actions addressed to Roma ethnics, mainly by:

- **making local level partnerships more efficient** – partnerships with Roma NGOs to conduct activities focused on Roma communities by organizing joint training sessions (ANOFM and NAR) as well as by involving other institutions/organizations interested in improving the Roma situation;
- **externalizing several services** currently provided by ANOFM to various external service providers (Roma NGOs) specialized in counseling, mediation or professional training services strengthening at the same time their capacity to take over such attributions. Such externalization is meant to increase the provision of these services and bring them closer to the community and to citizens of Roma ethnicity;
- **participating**, either as applicant or as a partner in various projects aiming at improving Roma situation.

According to the partnerships concluded with the County Agencies for Employment / Bucharest Agency for Employment for the year of 2006, an action is foreseen to inform on a monthly basis a minimum of five communities where Roma live with regard to the rights they have and services they may access under the current legislation in force.

3.2. Nongovernmental sector approaches

The initiatives of NGOs in this field are focused especially on job creation for Roma ethnics, on income generating activities and supporting private investment initiatives of Roma ethnics. Within this context, the main line of action is the initiation of active employment measures for Roma population by implementing positive discriminatory practices in favor of Roma ethnics, as institutionalized by law as well as by common practice. Supporting such positive discriminatory practices represents a necessary reparatory measure and it may lead to diminishing the social polarization

between Roma ethnic group and the majority population and in the end to the improvement of the economic situation of Roma families.

Active measures to integrate Roma on the labour market have been undertaken also by NGOs. The most active NGO in this sense has been the Open Society Foundation (OSF), through its special program dedicated to the Roma ethnic group, which also has an economic component. In the objectives of the projects funded by OSF are to be found: vocational training for young people who did not reach a satisfactory level of school education, orientation towards relevant professions for the Roma, intensive qualification of young Roma in professions that allow their access to the labour market, entrepreneurial education and basic legal training.

One initiative, funded by the OSF, has been launched through the project "Stimulation of employment of Roma public servants in public administration and public services". Through this project, a partnership network has been established between local authorities and Roma communities, in 7 counties of the country. The project aimed at providing training for a number of 140 Roma in the practice of public administration, and their employment in the local public administration, through open competition. In our opinion, this project represents the first attempt to institutionalize positive discrimination, in favor of Roma, on the labour market.

Projects initiated by Roma NGOs¹ in the category of economic programs have as objectives income generation, job creation and vocational training. Usually, these are projects focused on special issues, meant to improve the situation of employment in some of the Roma communities. In a typology of projects, we can identify the following categories:

- Job creation through the initiation of small businesses;
- Vocational training for Roma in jobs demanded on the labour market;
- Supporting Roma in establishing small businesses;
- Brokerage for the labour force.

The above-mentioned categories are not exclusive, as many projects represent a combination of two, three or all of these categories. As an example of best practice for job creation, we would mention the project

¹ For a more detailed analysis, see *Mariea Ionescu and Sorin Cace, Best practices in Roma Communities, Bucharest, 2000*

“Construction of a Bakery”, implemented by the Agency for Community Development “Together” in partnership with a private commercial company, for the benefit of the Roma community in Traianu village. One of the immediate effects of the project has been the employment of 6 Roma individuals in the new bread factory. Similar projects have been developed by other Roma NGOs, through opening brick-making manufactures, wood processing or textile confections units, producing objects for home improvement, handicraft, etc.

An example of a project whose objectives combined the professional formation with actions taken regarding employment of labour force and support for the Roma in the initiation of small businesses is the project “New Qualifications for Young Roma”, implemented by the Amare Phrala (Our Brothers) Association in Cluj-Napoca. The beneficiaries of the project, 20 young Roma with no qualifications, attended courses in shoe repairing, and some of them also were supported for further employment in specialized units and the others for obtaining the necessary authorizations in order to open their own shoe-repairing shops.

Another example of a successful project is the project “Qualification of Roma by economic agents in jobs required on the market”, implemented by the General Roma Union of Deva. The project was developed in the localities of Petrosani, Hunedoara, Brad and Calan, with the purpose of supporting young unemployed looking for a job and registered with the Offices for Labour Force and Unemployment. Over three years, 120 persons have concluded pre-employment contracts at the beginning of the project, followed by their employment for vacant position at the end of the courses, or have expressed their wish to initiate businesses on their own. The qualification courses have been organized with the approval and cooperation of the Office for Labour Forces and Unemployment and the General Department for Labour and Social Protection of the Hunedoara County.

Beyond these specific projects, the merits of Roma NGOs lay in their collaboration with the Government on drafting a strategy for the improvement of the situation of Roma. This strategy also contains an economic component and, despite the fact that it does not establish specific costs and responsibilities, it stipulates for the first time, officially, the main measures that could improve the situation of the Roma, such as the introduction of positive discrimination on the labour market or the granting of property rights to Roma in the rural area.

CHAPTER 4. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FUTURE INTEGRATION INTO EUROPEAN UNION

According to a study funded by the European Commission in 2004¹, Roma ethnics in Europe are the most excluded group on the labour market and at the level of the entire enlarged Europe (the 25 Member States and Romania and Bulgaria). Romania, the European state with the highest number of Roma ethnics, has adopted a series of employment policies aimed at improving the Roma access to the labour market, combating all forms of discrimination, affirmative measures, etc. Nevertheless, employment policies in Romania cannot be conceived without taking into account the policies developed at the level of EU.

The European Union has developed a communitarian framework in the field of employment and adopted financial instruments (mainly the European Social Fund) to facilitate the fulfillment of the objectives set by these general European employment policies. That is why it is important to have an overview of the main European employment policies and of the funding instrument available.

In the first part of this chapter we shall focus on explaining the context in which these policies were developed based on the new communitarian framework adopted by EU leaders in July 2005. In the second part of this chapter, we are briefly presenting the main European financial instruments adopted for the implementation of employment policies and with a special focus on The European Social Fund.

In the third part, we analyze the connection between these European policies and instruments and Roma issues. In the end, we address several recommendations to both public and private authorities responsible with the evaluation and implementation of employment policies for Roma.

¹ *European Commission, DG Employment & Social Affairs – The Situation of Roma in an Enlarged European Union, Brussels, November 2004, http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/pdf/pubst/Roma04_en.pdf*

4.1. European employment policies

For Romania, a country which intends to become a member of the European Union in 2007, accepting European employment policies is a task included in the communitarian aquis. But what exactly is this communitarian framework to which Romania must adapt its policies? An analysis of the main European provisions in the field of employment is necessary to answer the question.

4.1.1. The Amsterdam Treaty – the legal foundation of the European Employment Strategy

The Amsterdam Treaty has given European Institutions more power in the field of employment. At European level, the main contributions brought by this Treaty are translated into:

- The obligation of Member States to develop a joint strategy for employment (European Employment Strategy);
- article 127, introduces the concept of „mainstreaming” the employment policies into all the other European polices;
- The introduction of a new framework to monitor Member States – article 128. Employment policies at the level of each Member State are examined by the Commission and the Council through a Joint Employment Report. In addition, at the proposal of the Commission, the council is to adopt each year Employment Guidelines, based on which Member States are to develop a National Action Plan on Employment. Also at the proposal of the Commission, the Council is to adopt several recommendations for each Member State alone;
- The establishment of a permanent, legal mechanism: The Employment Committee;
- The creation of legal premises for the commission and the Council to initiate innovative measures in the field of employment (art. 129);
- The decisions in the field of employment are taken based on qualified majority within the Council.

Based on these new provisions, The **European Council in Luxembourg**, in November 1997¹, adopted the *European Employment Strategy*, driven by the ambition to bring substantial changes in the field of employment throughout a five years period. It was agreed upon working on priorities grouped on four large categories and which were further detailed in the main Strategy Guidelines. Each year, each Member State has to design a National Action Plan on Employment based on Strategy Guidelines. National Action Plans are further analyzed by the Commission and Council in the Joint Employment Report. The report consists in a detailed analysis of the employment policies promoted in each Member State and in making recommendations for each Member State, based on Guidelines.

a. Subsequent amendments to the European Employment Strategy

The main objective set by the Strategy was to decrease the employment rate within the European States during the next five years. A *mid-term review* of the *European Employment Strategy*, was performed in 2000² in order to assess the efficiency and functionality of the new working framework initiated in Luxembourg. The assessment was focused on three main directions:

- examining the relevance that the process initiated in Luxembourg was having both at European level and at the level of each Member State;
- examining the *European Employment Strategy*, to see if it corresponds to the new message sent out by the European Council in Lisbon;
- Implementing a new process, more efficient and simpler to achieve one of the major objectives set out by the Lisbon Strategy: „more and better jobs“.

Both strengths and weaknesses were identified:

● **strengths:**

- the process initiated in Luxembourg has led to the creation of a joint framework for action towards conducting structural changes. Member States have joined their forces to achieve some of the common objectives;

¹ Luxembourg Extraordinary European Council on Employment, 20-21 November 1997, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00300.htm

² http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/develop_en.htm#4

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- an increased number of actors from all decision making levels (European and national) were involved in the designing, implementation and assessment of the *European Employment Strategy*;
 - the process of design and implementation of European employment policies has become more transparent;
 - The political will of all Member States to implement employment policies has increased significantly.
 - **weaknesses:**
 - The labour market in all Member States it still is suffering from regional disparities which affect the whole process of socio-economic cohesion of the EU;
 - The implementation of the four pillars of the Strategy has been performed in a disparate manner, lacking an efficient coordination of all the guidelines. Successes have been registered only in terms of “employment”, whereas for instance the guideline on “adaptability on the labour market” has been left behind;
 - A low degree of involvement from the side of regional and local actors in formulating and implementing employment polices.

In 2002, the European Commission performed an evaluation of the first five years in the implementation of the European Employment Strategy. The document was based on impact studies from each Member State¹. The Commission also performed Macroeconomic analysis in order to evaluate the strategy and all these documents were summarized into a Synthesis Report on the current situation on the labour market as well as on its future tendencies at European level².

Strengths in the European Employment Strategy:

- It improves the European labour market by creating 10 millions new jobs (starting with 1997) and it decreases the number of unemployed with 4 millions.

¹ European Commission, DG Employment & Social Affairs – „Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Taking stock of five years of the European Employment Strategy”, COM (2002) 416 final, Brussels, February 2002, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0416en01.pdf

² The document can be accessed also at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/eval/papers/technical_analysis_complete.pdf

- Important changes took place in the national employment policies since each Member State has endeavored to accomplish the objectives set by the Strategy (for instance, the policies implemented by public employment services were reshaped with a better focus on prevention; the taxation system in many Member States was adjusted to allow a friendly business environment; life learning education was given a more important role, etc.)

Weaknesses in the European Employment Strategy:

- Democratic changes have affected employment policies;
- Lack of skilled labour force in key fields of a knowledge based economy;
- The enlargement process towards Eastern Europe;
- Globalization;
- Lack of a joint immigration policies

Based on the above mentioned evaluation, the Commission recommended changes in terms of effectiveness and procedures in order to achieve a better correlation of employment policies with macro-economic policies. The recommendation was aiming at bringing *The European Employment Strategy* closer to the *Lisbon Strategy*.

Besides simplified procedures and guidelines, the commission has also recommended a component of stability given by the reformulation of guidelines every three years. In September 2002, The Commission released a Communication¹ on *Streamlining the Annual Economic and Employment Policy Coordination Cycles*. This communication clearly stipulates that the *implementation package* of employment policies (including the *Joint Report on Employment* and the *Report on the Implementation of General guidelines of Economic Policies*) is to be prepared in advance and ready for the Spring European Council². Immediately after the Spring European Council, the *package of measures* on economic and employment policies is submitted to

¹ European Commission, DG Employment & Social Affairs - Impact evaluation of the European Employment Strategy. Technical analysis supporting COM(2002) 416 final of 17.7.2002 ("Taking stock of five years of the EES"), http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/eval/papers/technical_analysis_complete.pdf

²As a rule, government and state leaders assemble four times a year, at the beginning and the end of the presidential term of each Member State. Spring European Council takes place in March-April every year.

The Economic and Financial Council (ECOFIN) to adopt the new guidelines in June. Member States are to prepare *National Action Plans on Employment* until October and the Commission is to evaluate their implementation until December.

Following the 2002 evaluation and the release of Commission's Communication on *Reorganizing the Annual Process to Coordinate Economic and Employment Policies*, the Commission adopted another Communication on *The Future of EES*¹, in January 2003. The document presented a first draft of the EEU stating concrete objectives and targets. Key objectives mentioned there were: full employment, quality and productivity at work, cohesion and an inclusive labour market. The stress was also on better governance. Based on this Communication, the Commission adopted on 8th of April 2003 a new set of guidelines on employment policies and a list of recommendations for 2003².

Following conclusions drawn at the Spring European Council on March 2003, the EU decided (art. 44) the establishment of a *European Employment Task Force* whose leader was Wim Kok (ex-prime minister of the Netherlands)³. The task force was assigned with the identification of key challenges in the future implementation of employment policies. Four priorities of action were identified for all Member States:

- The need to increase adaptability in enterprises and their workers;
- The need to attract more people into the labour market;
- The need to increase investments in human resources;
- The need to implement employment policies through better governance.

¹ *European Commission, DG Employment & Social Affairs - Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the committee of the Regions: "The future of the European Employment Strategy (EES) - A strategy for full employment and better jobs for all", COM(2003) 6 final, Brussels, January 2003, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2003/com2003_0006en01.pdf*

² *This document can be accessed at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/prop_2003/gl_en.pdf*

³ *The Task Force has become operational in April 2003 when and its main results were presented in November 2003. Main recommendations formulated by the Task Force were included in the Joint Employment Report 2004/2005. The document can be accessed at:*

- Recommendations made by the Task Force laid the foundation for key Recommendations in the Joint Employment Report 2004/2005¹ as well as for the new configuration of the EES after 2005.

b. The Process of EU enlargement and employment policies

Ever since the beginning of EU cooperation with Eastern European Countries the focus was to ensure that their main socio-economic developments are in line with the developments in the other Member States. All the efforts, both financial or of other nature were directed towards preparing candidate countries to meet the requirements of the unique European market. Pre-accession programmes were adopted in order for the candidate countries to get used with EU rules.

In the field of employment the Commission initiated, in 1999, cooperation with candidate states. The concept of cooperation was tightly connected to the need to adapt pre-accession financial programmes as well as the implementation mechanisms of structural Funds and bring them in line with the European employment priorities. In a first stage, candidate countries designed *Joint Assessment Papers (JAP)*, based on preliminary studies conducted by the European Commission and the *European Training Foundation*. JAP's were formulated following a long process of cooperation between responsible public institutions and social partners. First JAP's were signed at the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001 with Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia and Estonia. It followed, at the end of 2001 and the beginning of 2002, Malta, Hungary, Slovakia, Cyprus and Lithuania. Romania, Bulgaria and Latvia signed the JAP's in the fall of 2002². Immediately after the signing of the JAPs, the Commission has started a process to monitor the policies undertaken by each signing country. During the spring of 2002 the Commission performed its first evaluations. A whole series of evaluations followed and lasted until the spring of 2003 under the form of technical seminars.

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/pdf/etf_en.pdf

¹ The document can be accessed at: <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st07/st07010.en05.pdf>

² Documents may be downloaded at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_analysis/japs_en.htm

Once the 10 new Member States have joined the EU, first National Action Plans on Employment were designed for the annual exercise of 2004/2005¹.

4.1.2. *The new configuration of the European Employment Strategy after 2005*

At Lisbon, in March 2000, European leaders set as strategic goal for the EU to become, during the next decade, “to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”². One of the objectives was to raise the employment rate to as close as possible to 70% and to increase the number of women in employment to more than 60% by 2010. In Stockholm (March 2001), European leaders set intermediate targets for employment rates across the Union as a whole for 2005 of 67% overall and 57% for women and increasing the average EU employment rate in older women and men to 50 % by 2010³.

In 2005, a *High Level Group* chaired by Wim Kok, produced a mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy. The document was entitled “Facing the challenge”⁴, and it was released in November 2004. Basically, it suggested a reforming of the Strategy with a focus on two key directions: providing a sustainable and stable framework for economic growth and more and better jobs. Based on its conclusions, The Spring European Council in March 2005⁵, decided to re-launch the Lisbon Strategy and re-focus on growth and employment. A new governance cycle was launched to produce a complementary effect amongst all available European instruments. Therefore, the EU economic priorities were coupled with employment

¹ National Action Plans may be consulted at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/04_national_en.htm

² European Council - Lisbon European Council, 23-24th March 2000, Presidency Conclusions, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00100-r1.en0.htm

³ European Council - Stockholm European Council, 23-24th March 2001, Presidency Conclusions, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/00100-r1.%20ann-r1.en1.html

⁴ Report of the High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok – Facing the Challenge: The Lisbon strategy for growth and employment, Brussels, November 2004, <http://www.eu.int/growthandjobs/pdf/2004-1866-EN-complet.pdf>

⁵ European Council – Brussels European Council, 22nd-23rd March 2005, Presidency Conclusions, http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/84335.pdf

priorities. In April 2005, The Commission presented the document *Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005-2008)*¹, which was later endorsed by the Council in July 2005². For the first time, European macro and micro economic policies were attached to employment policies into a single document that laid the foundations for the renewed Lisbon Strategy.

The new cycle of governance stipulated:

- Based on the 24 integrated guidelines (6 addressing macroeconomic policies, 10 for microeconomic policies and 8 for employment policies) Member States were to design *National Reform Programmes* for the period of 2005-2008;
- Each autumn (2006, 2007, 2008) Member States are to report on progress in the implementation of their *National Reform Programmes*;
- At the beginning of each year, The Commission shall analyze progress reports in each Member State and general tendencies at the level of the entire EU.

Therefore the European Employment Strategy has come to the following structure:

- *Integrated Employment Guidelines*: based on Commission proposals the Council adopts each year a series of Guidelines which are further adopted by each Member State;
- *National Reform Programs*: each Member State designs a programme on the implementation of these guidelines at national level;
- *Joint Employment Report*: The Commission produces a document on progress in the implementation of employment policies at the level of each Member State. The Joint Employment Report becomes an integrated part of the new Lisbon strategy;

¹ European Commission, DG Employment & Social Affairs – Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005-2008), COM (2005) 141 final, Brussels, April 2005, http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/prop_2005/prop_2005_en.pdf

² European Union Council – Council Decision on Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, 12 July 2005, 2005/600/EC, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriSrv/site/en/oj/2005/l_205/l_20520050806en00210027.pdf

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- *Recommendations*: at the proposal of the Commission and based on qualified majority, the Council decides whether or not specific recommendations are to be imposed on each Member State;
 - *EU Annual Progress Report*: Commission evaluates progressed made at national level in the achievement of employment objectives.

The European Employment Strategy also meant the implementation of a new work methodology - the *open method of coordination*, based on the following principles: subsidiary, convergence, *mutual learning*, integrated approach, efficient management by objectives.

The new guidelines for employment policies gather around three priorities: to attract and retain more people in employment, increase labour supply and modernize social protection systems; improve adaptability of workers and enterprises, to increase investment in human capital through better education and skills. The New European Employment Strategy has been recently launched and it is too early to analyze its effect until next year. For the time being, the National Reform Programmes have been launched and the Commission is to produce the Joint Employment Report to be released at the beginning of 2006.

4.2. Financial instruments for European employment policies

In order to achieve the objectives set by the European Employment Strategy, several financial instruments are available both at European level and at the level of each Member State. Depending on its political will and resources, each state has developed its own “tradition” in promoting employment policies. We shall not go into details by analyzing financial instruments available in each Member State but rather concentrate on financial instruments developed at European level.

Briefly, the European instruments developed in view of fulfilling the objectives of EES are structural funds, mainly the European Social Fund.

4.2.1. Structural funds – general overview

Structural funds are financial instruments at hand of the European Union to achieve economic and social cohesion. Resources are targeted at actions in order to bridge gaps between the more and the less developed

regions and promote equal opportunities between different socio-economic groups.¹ The four European Structural Funds are:

- *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)* – it supports the less developed regions by financing investments in productivity, infrastructure, education, health, local development and small and medium enterprises to contribute to the social and economic conversion in regions confronted with structural gaps. .
- *European Social Fund (ESF)* – is designed to support the European social policy and finances employment measures and human resources developments. It also contributes to promoting employment opportunities (by increasing the mobility and adaptability to industrial changes of the unemployed and disadvantaged groups) and to the implementation of the European Employment Strategy.
- *The European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)* – finances the common agricultural policy. It is divided in two sections – Guarantee Section (non-structural) and Guidance Section. It supports rural development and agricultural modernization measures.
- *Financial Instruments for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)* – a fund designed to support community policies in the field of fishery, to increase competitiveness in this field and at the same time to ensure a sustainable balance between available resources and fishing capacity.

The types of interventions performed by European structural funds for the period of 2000-2006 may be grouped as follows:

a. **Setting priority objectives** (Council Regulations No 1260/1999 on 21 of July 1999):

- *Objective 1 (territorial)*: to *promote* regional development and structural adjustments in regions with delayed development by providing them with basic infrastructure and encouraging investments in economic activities. This objective receives funding from all four European structural funds (ERDF, ESF, IFOP, FIFG

¹ *European Council* – Council Regulations 1260/1999 on 21 of July 1999 regarding general provisions on Structural Funds, 1999/1260/EC, <http://www.mmssf.ro/prezentari/Regulament1260.pdf>

and EAGGF-Guidance Section. It works for regions whose GDP per head is below 75% of the EU average.

- *Objective 2 (territorial)*: to promote the social and economic conversion of regions confronted with structural challenges. Financial support comes from ESF and ERDF. It covers areas adjusting to change in industrial and services sector, rural areas in decline, urban areas in difficulty and economically depressed areas heavily dependent on fisheries.
- *Objective 3 (thematically)*: to help adapt and modernize policies and systems of *education*, training and employment. It is funded through ESF and it covers the entire EU territory except for the areas already covered by Objective 1.

b. *Communitarian initiatives*:

- INTERREG III: promotes transfrontalier cooperation (measure A) and transnational cooperation (measure B) in order to stimulate *regional* economic development and encourage balanced regional planning. It also co-funds interregional cooperation (measure C) between regional partners with no common frontiers but with similar socio-economic characteristics and willing to share experience. (funded by ERDF)
- URBAN II: it focuses on *promoting* innovative strategies to revigorate declining cities and regions. (funded by ERDF)
- LEADER+: promotes capacity building in local entities and in rural areas and *encourages* the introduction of an integrated strategy for sustainable rural development. (funded by EAGGF -Guidance)
- EQUAL: promotes the development of human capital in an equal opportunities *environment* and by eliminating inequity and discriminatory factors on the labour market. (Funded by ESF).

c. *Innovative actions* to stimulate regional administrations to experiment new ideas and approaches in a challenging informational society to help transform their economies into competitive ones. Three strategic topics are to be funded by ERDF for the period of 2000-2006:

- Regional economies based on knowledge and technologic innovation;
- eEuropeRegio: the information society at the service of regional development;
- Regional identity and sustainable development.

d. *Technical assistance* to ensure the accomplishment of those measures dedicated to prepare, monitor and assess the implementation of structural changes by:

- Research and studies;
- Experience and information exchange between the final beneficiaries and the general public;
- Making management, monitoring and assessment more effective by using computerized systems;
- Improving evaluation methods and information exchange.

For the next period of 2007-2013, The European Commission has proposed a new funding framework¹. The structural funds reform is now addressing three great challenges: a new European solidarity framework in an enlarged Europe, the globalization process and the development of a knowledge based economy. The new structural funds will be based on three renewed objectives:

- *Convergence* (funded by ERDF, ESF and Cohesion Fund) – it is quite close to the old objective 1 set for 2000-2006. The aim is to accelerate the economic *convergence* of underdeveloped regions (whose GDP per head is below 75% of the enlarged EU average) by: increasing employment opportunities and economic growth, investing in human capital, supporting innovative projects on knowledge based economy, increasing adaptability to social and economic changes, protecting the environment, a better governance, etc. This new objective is expected to have a major impact on new Member States which find themselves long behind Western countries.
- *Regional Competitiveness and Employment* (funded by ERDF and ESF) – It addresses those regions which were not included in the *Convergence* Objective. A new method is proposed. First of all, the Regional Development Programme is designed to strengthen regional competitiveness and make these regions more attractive by anticipating economic and social changes, promoting innovative programmes as well as entrepreneurship, protecting environment,

¹ *European Commission, DG Regional Policy - Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Financial Perspectives 2007 – 2013, COM (2004) 487 final, http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2004/com2004_0487en01.pdf*

etc. Secondly, the national or regional programmes funded by ERDF will help enterprises and their workers, as stipulated in the European Employment Strategy, to better adapt to socio-economic changes and at the same time will promote labour market development with a stronger focus on social inclusion;

- *Territorial cooperation* – the main purpose is to promote cooperation on three levels: transfrontalier – by mutual *cooperation* programmes, transnational and at the level of the whole European Union by establishing cooperation and information exchange networks. Transfrontalier cooperation shall cover those regions inside the borders of EU as well as a few regions outside its borders.

4.2.2. *The European Social Fund – the financial instrument for the implementation of European Employment Strategy*

Created in 1957, the ESF is the EU's main source of financial support for efforts to develop employability and human resources. It helps Member States combat unemployment, prevent people from dropping out of the labour market, and promote training to make Europe's workforce and companies better equipped to face new, global challenges. The ESF spends European money on the achievement of the goals agreed in the *European Employment Strategy*.

Member States together with European Commission prepare a multi annual programme (7 years). As soon as the general framework is set, the implementation of this programme begins at the level of each Member State by means of some specialized bodies (public or private). Starting with 1st of January 2007, a new action framework will be in place for ESF¹. By funding the two objectives - *Convergence* and *Regional Competitiveness and Employment*, ESF shall contribute to anticipate and control socio-economic changes in the European society. In addition, it is likely to have a major impact in the accomplishment of strategic objectives stipulated in the European

¹ *European Commission, DG Regional Policy – Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, COM(2004)492 final, Brussels, July 2004, [http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2007/general/com\(2004\)492final_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/pdf/2007/general/com(2004)492final_en.pdf)*

Employment Strategy which, in turn, is a component of the new Lisbon Strategy. The main areas for intervention will be:

- Increasing the degree of adaptability of both enterprises and their employees;
- Promoting access to and active participation on the labour market;
- Increasing social inclusion through programmes to combat discrimination and facilitate the access of vulnerable groups to the labour market;
- Promoting partnerships to reform employment and social inclusion policies.

In each operational programme on the development of human capital¹, designed by each Member State, promoting and extending innovative activities is an important chapter.

ESF does not target one disadvantaged group or another, each Member State has to set its own priorities for intervention and which target groups are to be offered support. . Romania has identified the following target groups as being extremely vulnerable: young persons aged over 18 and who are forced to leave out the state system for child protection, and people with disabilities². Therefore, all the measures funded by ESF shall be directed to these vulnerable groups.

4.3. Roma ethnics - a target group for European employment policies?

After we have seen which are the main European instruments for employment a natural question arises: is there a connection between those instruments and Roma ethnic group? We already know that, at European level, Roma ethnics constitute the most at risk group and especially in relation to the labour market. In all Member States there is a series of structural problems which impedes the access of Roma to the labour market

¹ *Each Member State has to design a National Development Plan where priorities are identified in key sectors of the society. For each identified priority, an operational programme is formulated and based on this document funds are granted and the implementation begins.*

² *According to Priority IV (development of human capital) in the National Development Plan, adopted by Romania in December 2005. The document can be accessed at: <http://fonduriue.mfinante.ro/pnd/documente/pnd/pnd2007final.htm>*

and their remaining there. As it has already been stated, Roma ethnics issues must not be treated only from the unemployment perspective. Integrate solutions must be sought in order to allow this group to undergo a sustainable process of inclusion into our contemporary European society.

European employment policies are indications for action and each Member State must adopt its own concrete solutions to act in each indicated direction. Employment policies are tightly connected with Lisbon Strategy, with the creation of a competitive and inclusive Europe and that is why each Member State must reach the concrete outcomes in the field of employment and economic growth. Both European and national financial instruments are meant to help State Members to implement measures and programmes adopted at national level.

According to the new Lisbon Strategy, The European Employment Strategy is an integral part of the reforming process and a joint effort is needed from the side of all Member States to adopt viable solutions and transform Europe into “the most competitive knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of offering more and better jobs”.

On 12 of July 2005, the European Council adopted the Integrated Employment Guidelines¹, based on which Member States further developed National Reform Programmes in October 2005². These programmes will be analyzed only in 2006, when the Commission will formulate the Joint Employment on how the guidelines set in 2005 have been implemented so far.

We may have a look now on how Roma issues have been mainstreamed into the above mentioned guidelines. Based on the National Action Plan on Employment 2004/2005³ and the Joint Employment Report2005⁴ we may analyze in detail the employment guidelines and their implementation.

The main Romanian documents in this field are: *The National Development Plan 2007-2013* (formulated based on the latest changes brought to the *Lisbon Strategy* and the *European Employment Strategy*) and *The*

¹ Guidelines can be accessed at the website of EU GD for Labour and Social Affairs: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2005/l_205/l_20520050806en00210027.pdf

² All reform programmes can be found at the following site: http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/pdf/nrp_2005_en.pdf

³ http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/04_national_en.htm

⁴ <http://register.consilium.eu.int/pdf/en/05/st07/st07010.en05.pdf>

National Employment Plan 2004/2005 (formulated based on guidelines adopted by the Commission at the beginning of 2004).

In October 2002¹ Romania signed the *Joint Assessment on Employment Policies* (JAP). The document was meant to determine Romania to formulate employment policies in view of acquiring the status of an EU Member State and progressively adapt its institutions and policies to European standards in order to subscribe to the larger communitarian programme on employment. Another objective was to ensure the funding of priorities formulated in the JAP by means of available and future financial instruments and especially by European Social Fund. Among priority objectives Romania has set we are mentioning the implementation of a sustainable employment strategy for minorities with a focus on Roma ethnic group. Although the European Commission has recognized in its Annual Progress Reports that Romania has its merits for adopting various mechanisms to integrate Roma ethnics into the labour market so far, and especially for its Strategy to Improve the Roma Situation in 2001², as well as for its educational programmes focused on this minority, still, the degree of implementation of the undertaken responsibilities is low.

The first *National Action Plan on Employment* was designed in 2002³, based on employment guidelines formulated by EU in 2001⁴. The second document came as a consequence of the reformulation of the European Employment Strategy in 2003 and of its new guidelines set by the European Commission⁵. Key measures adopted by the Romanian government were related to horizontal objectives stipulated in the *European Employment*

¹ *Romanian Government, the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family – Joint Assessment on Employment Policy Priorities in Romania, Bucharest, 28 of October 2002*, <http://www.mmssf.ro/prezentari/evaluare.pdf>

² *Romanian Government – Romanian Government Strategy to Improve the Roma Situation, Gov. Decision No. 430/25, April 2001, published in the Official Journal No. 252, on 16 May 2001*, <http://www.Romacenter.ro/informatiutile/strategia.doc>

³ *Endorsed by Romanian Government Decision No.759/2002, on 18 July 2002. The document was also published in the Official Journal No. 637/29 in August 2002.*

⁴ *Council of Ministers of the European Union – “Council Decision of 19 January 2001 on Guidelines for Member States' employment policies for the year 2001”, 2001/63/EC, Official Journal L 022, 24/01/2001, pp. 0018 – 0026, Brussels, January 2001*, <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32001D0063:EN:HTML>

⁵ <http://www.mmssf.ro/PDF/NAPE.pdf>

Strategy of 2003: full employment, increased quality and productivity at work and strengthening cohesion and social inclusion.

Measures adopted by Romanian Government as stipulated in the *National Action Plan on Employment 2004/2005* and with a direct impact on Roma ethnic group are:

- Guideline 4 (promoting investment in human capital and long life learning);
- Guideline 7 (promoting the integration of and combating the discrimination against people at a disadvantage on the labour market);
- Guideline 9 (transform undeclared work into regular employment).

Possible solutions were suggested for each of the above guidelines and we are mentioning here:

- Guideline 4:
 - Increasing the number of persons looking for a job, with the help of Employment Agencies and the network of Adult Regional Centers For Vocational Training which are to provide professional training courses for them;
 - Formulating a national policy for continuous professional;
 - Increasing the flexibility and adaptability in the supply of vocational and technical schools by adjusting to the demand of the labour market. Increasing their number of graduates;
 - Developing a standard procedure to recognize and certify skills and competences acquired both in the official and the informal system.
- Guideline 7:
 - Promoting the integration of people with difficulties in accessing the labour market and increasing their chances to find a job by preventing all forms of discrimination;
 - Ensuring access to education for disadvantaged groups and decreasing with 15 % the rate of school drop-out at the level of compulsory education;
- Guideline 9:
 - Continue the implementation of incentive measures for employment as stipulated in Law No.76/2002 on the system of

unemployment social insurances and stimulating employment by granting employers fiscal/financial facilities;

- Simplify the bureaucratic procedures to authorize individuals or families to perform economic activities by modifying Law no. 507/2002 on the regime of economic activities organized and performed by private persons.

Another key document related to the implementation of employment policies in Romania is the National Development Plan 2007-2013. It contains a strategic planning and a multi-annual financial programming and it has been formulated by the responsible public authorities in cooperation with various social actors. This document has set the main directions for the socio-economic development of Romania in line with the European Union's policy of cohesion. Key sectors of the Romanian society are identified there and funding mechanisms are established for each of them. For the period of 2007-2013, priorities set in the NDP are to be co-funded mainly by European structural funds (75%).

Six national priorities have been identified in the NDP 2007-2013 but we shall focus only on priority IV: "Developing human resources, promoting employment and social inclusion and strengthening administrative capacities." Under this priority, Roma ethnics are a privileged target group together with people with disabilities and young people who are forced to leave foster centers after they turn 18.

The analysis on Roma situation has shown that they are confronted with several problems such as: low educational stock, lack of qualifications and experience on the labour market, insufficient participation in formal economy, a large number of children in a family, lack of identity papers, precarious dwelling conditions or lack of a dwelling, poor health as compared to the rest of the population and for those living in rural areas we may as well add the problem of land ownership documents. "Roma population is the victim of a vicious circle: their marginalization as a consequence of the multiple deficits in their condition feeds prejudices and discriminatory attitudes. Further on, social exclusion is deepened, their participation in education is affected and their chances to integrate into the labour market are diminished."¹ All the measures taken by Romanian government are in line with the new European Employment Strategy

¹ *National Development Plan 2007-2013*, p. 286, <http://fonduriue.mfinante.ro/pnd/documente/pnd/pnd2007final.htm>

adopted in 2005 as well as with the new guidelines set by The European Social Fund in July 2005 (especially in terms of promoting the access to and the active participation on the labour market, strengthening social cohesion by developing programmes to combat discrimination against and facilitate the access to the labour market for vulnerable groups).

The general objective of priority IV is to „develop human capital an increase its competitiveness on the labour market by ensuring equal opportunities for lifelong learning and by creating a modern, flexible and inclusive labour market which shall lead to the sustainable integration of a number of 900.000 by 2015”¹.

Sub-priorities are:

- Developing human capital;
- Promoting full employment;
- Promoting social inclusion;
- Building administrative capacity and a better governance.

Three sub-priorities are essential for the integration of Roma ethnics into the labour market as well as for combating all forms of discrimination. Any project applying for funding to the European Social Fund must subscribe to one of those three sub-priorities. We believe that the following issues are essential to be addressed by such projects (either separately or altogether):

- Investments in Roma human capital (especially adult vocational training, continuous professional training, “second-chance” programmes for the reinsertion of Roma young people aged between 18-25, projects targeting the access of Roma to quality education, to primary and continuous education and projects targeting Roma in rural areas);
- Promoting full employment (projects aimed at improving transition from school to work, promoting entrepreneurship amongst Roma, projects to integrated long term unemployed into the labour market, the establishment of Roma adult centers for professional inclusion, etc.);
- Combating social exclusion (projects to combat all forms of discrimination against Roma, projects targeting Roma women with

¹ *National Development Plan 2007-20013*, p. 288, <http://fonduriue.mfinante.ro/pnd/documente/pnd/pnd2007final.htm>

a high degree of social exclusion, affirmative measures for the employment of Roma ethnics, etc.)

Although the legal framework to integrate Roma ethnics on the labour market is in place (NAPE 2004/2005 and NDP 2007-2013) not all the measures have been yet implemented. In many of its reports the European Commission¹ has pointed out the incapacity of Romanian authorities responsible with the implementation of existing public policies. It depends on Romanian authorities, either public or private and at all levels, how they will spend the European money.

¹ http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/Romania/key_documents.htm

CHAPTER 5. CASE STUDIES

5.1. “Incentives for local administrations and public services to employ Roma public servants”

1. Background

The Alliance for Roma Unity is an apolitical organization whose members include Romanian citizens (mainly Roma ethnics) and various Roma organizations, associations, unions, local communities without excluding individuals of a different ethnicity.

Amongst the main objectives set out by ARU we can enumerate: organizing groups of Roma intellectuals to establish and evince priorities in promoting the social and economic status of the Roma and their socio-professional emancipation; the affirmation, preservation and enrichment of the Romani language through artistic and cultural activities; the improvement of school participation.

The accomplishments of ARU so far are given by its participation into building houses for the Roma living in Mihail Kogălniceanu locality (Constanța county), the implementation of an educational programme in a kindergarten located in Cerăt (Dolj county) as well as granting material aids (clothes and medication) to communities where Roma live.

The project “Incentives for local administrations and public services to employ Roma public servants” was implemented between 10th of May 1999 and 10th of May 2000 in the counties of Ialomița, Buzău, Iași, Cluj, Timiș, Dolj as well as in Bucharest.

The project was intended to initiate institutional changes based on a partnership between local and county authorities, nongovernmental organizations and Roma communities. Starting from the premise that an incentive to hire Roma in public services and local administrations would contribute to increasing public trust in these institutions and would

effectively solve the specific problems of Roma ethnics, the project has proven to be of a great use and adapted according to the situation of this minority

Creating bridges of communication and cooperation between public authorities and Roma communities was one of the main objectives set out by this project. Among other important objective we can mention: increasing the degree of tolerance as well as encouraging cultural diversity; changing the perception and mentality of public services and local authorities with regard to Roma population; diminishing the lack of trust and hostility; combating stereotypes and stimulating the employment of Roma ethnics within local administration and public services. All the above mentioned objectives were addressing in fact the larger problem of Roma social inclusion.

Specific objectives targeted by the implementation of the planned activities in this project included: organizing and developing a network to inform and prepare Roma ethnics in 7 counties; developing competences to work in local administrations and public institutions by training them for public servants job requirements; ensuring the work practice stage within public administration institutions; hiring at least 50 Roma in the position of public servants following a contest organized according to the law; monitoring the planned activities and discovering alternative strategies to solve the problems; assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme; identifying ways to extend such activities to other counties with a high percentage of Roma in the total population

2. Local/institutional context of the project

For the last years, the Roma population has been facing a slow socio-professional integration and it be accounted for two major problems specific to Roma ethnicity: a low level of education (the rate of illiteracy is of 44% in men and 59% in women) and a reduced access to the labour market.

Because of a low income, lack of occupation and the low level of education, Roma ethnics are frequently interacting with the social protection system. That is why Roma are the main beneficiaries of the social protection services.

Also, the isolation experienced by Roma communities has resulted in an increased difficulty for local authorities to exert their role and functioning inside these communities. On the other hand, the lack of communication has led to degradation in the communitarian relationship

and structure. It has been stated that “If, for the year of 1992, the situation was worrying, for 1999 it has become alarming and calling for concrete measures to solve the problems.”

3. Methodology

Four coordinators were assigned to this project, one for each of the four network knots: the counties of Iasi, Cluj, Dolj, Timiș cumulated in one knot, and Ialomita, Buzau and Bucharest independently. In addition, a consultant was assigned to supervise the implementation of the project in all 7 counties.

During the first stage of the project, consisting in the establishment of the support and monitoring group, the main task was to establish groups of representatives of local authorities and public services as well as representatives of Roma communities. Key persons from the local administration and public services were attracted in this project (Mayor, Prefect, Secretary, President of the County Council, and Director of the Labour Department).

The support and monitoring groups have planned work sessions to ensure coherence to the programme and to see that its objectives are fulfilled. The frequency of their meetings was dictated by each specific stage of the programme.

In the recruitment and selection stage the contribution of ARU, through its territorial structures as well as that of the Social Assistance Faculties were crucial. Candidates were selected only from among those Roma ethnics who had graduated at least 12 grades.

In recruiting the eligible candidates who were to attend the courses established in this project, local and national mass-media advertisements were used, as well as informal networks at the level of local authorities and posters in public places of special interest for the project (Labour Departments, high schools and vocational schools, universities, etc.).

The selection interview was centered on the following four topics: motivation to attend the courses, the candidates' abilities which recommended them to participate and to be further employed in local administration – all candidates considered this aspect to be the most important problem for the Roma population – which position they would like to be hired in and what they would be able to do for their peers if they were hired in such a position. Following the analysis of the applications and after the interviews, 146 candidates were accepted.

Four hours courses were held daily by professors within the Social Assistance Faculties (in those cities where such faculties existed) by specialists from within the institutions involved in this project and by research experts in social and public policies field. The courses lasted for four months and the curricula were established as follows:

1. Legislation in the field of local administration and public services as well as their organizational structure;
2. Interpersonal relations and elements of the theory of communication and behavior;
3. Notions with regard to office management, secretariat and administration;
4. Elements of community development;
5. Social assistance theory and practice.

At the end of the courses students were handed a graduation certificate based on results obtained at the final examination and on their attendance. During their training, students were granted monthly scholarships and all their related expenses were supported by the programme.

After the first month of training, the support and monitoring group tried to orient the candidates towards jobs newly created as a consequence of this programme or towards jobs which were already available.

At the end of the training courses and work practice, local and county authorities organized public contests to which also the graduates in this programme participated.

4. Outcomes/results/impact

At the end of the training courses and work practice hours, county and local authorities identified the opportunity to organize public contests for the following positions:

1. Department for Child Protection – social worker;
2. Mayoralty (Social Assistance Service, Legal Guardianship) – social worker, public guard;
3. Prefecture – special inspector, university graduate;
4. Labour and Social Protection Department - monitor for labour market (to ensure that the labour demand and offer for Roma ethnics are correlated);

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5. Labour and Social Protection Department – delegate for the distribution of community works among the recipients of unemployment benefits, support allocations and social assistance;
 6. Prefecture, Mayoralty, Labour and Social Protection Department – legal counselor (to promote legislation, issue various authorizations, and help Roma ethnics to fill in requests);
 7. Culture Inspectorate – cultural inspector and trainer (responsible with maintaining Roma traditions);
 8. County Health Departments, Department for Child Protection, Mayoralty, Prefecture, Labour and Social Protection Department – delegate responsible with family planning, AIDS and drug problems;
 9. Foster Center for Minors, County Inspectorates for People with Disabilities social workers;
 10. County Council - special inspector within the Commercial Regulation Service.

The general objective of the project was 80% fulfilled since not all the graduates in this programme have been employed.

At the end of the project it was noted that the training of 146 Roma youngsters in the field of public administration and civil society was successful; also, a great part of them got hired; local authorities and public services representatives became aware of the necessity to hire Roma public servants; the graduates from these courses gained self-confidence; more efficient communication channels were created between Roma ethnics and administration representatives.

At the level of local authorities, the reluctance of several mayors was noted regarding the proposal to supplement the personnel diagram in order to create jobs for Roma ethnics. Also, it was noted their preference for university graduates and the fact that smaller remunerations were offered for positions within those services where Roma ethnics were to be hired.

5. Sustainability/continuity

To make participants in these courses accepted in work practice stages, to promote this programme and the proposal to hire these graduates in local administration it still requires lobbying influential persons in order to determine the supplementation of personnel diagrams designed for

Roma ethnics. Due to decentralization and restructuring processes the employment opportunities for Roma ethnics have diminished considerably.

5.2. Centers for professional inclusion of the Roma, job shops for the Roma - "Împreuna" Community Development Agency

One of the most important programmes implemented by the "Împreuna" Community Development Agency consisted of three projects funded by the EU and started in 2002.

The programme started with a small project (2,500 Euros, EU, 2002) with the objective to set up an agency to find jobs for the Roma people. Given the pilot type project, the budget was small, and therefore, only a small urban disadvantaged area was selected (Plopeni, Prahova County). The general objective of the project was to pilot a job shop for the Roma. A diagnostic evaluation was performed in the Roma community to identify the demand for jobs, as well as a market study of the employment opportunities. In 2003, the first job shop was organized for the Roma; there were 12 employers and a few hundred people looking for a job. The representatives of the local authorities and of the decision-makers were also invited to participate.

The second project, "Facilitating the access of Roma ethnics to the labor market" was implemented in Bucharest, Cluj, Galați, Craiova and Iași, where job shops were held. The project was implemented by **Împreuna Agency** in partnership with **ANOFM** (which was responsible for the coordination with local labor offices) and four organizations responsible for organizing re-training courses in the counties as follows:

- Cluj – Association for the Emancipation of Roma Women;
- Iași – Romanitin Association of Young Roma;
- Galați – Alliance for Roma Unity Galați;
- Craiova – Romano-Eurodrom Association.

The general objective was to create support for the integration of the Roma people on the labor market. Starting from the premise that it is not only the mismatch between the demand and the supply that leads to the poor representation of the Roma on the labor market, but there are also a series of exclusion factors acting in the communities, a market study was conducted. This study identified the major trends in the demand for jobs in

the five localities, and the specific conditions in each area. The study set up the measures that were afterwards taken in the project without including the establishment of some artificial mechanisms, but taking into account the characteristics of the free competition-based market. This is probably the most important element that contributed to the continuity of the results obtained in the project.

The second component of the project, the vocational qualification of the Roma, had 220 Roma beneficiaries (of whom 40% were women), who completed courses in the occupations that were required on the market: waiter-cook, PC operator, brick-layer, plumber, and dressmaker. The costs for training per person amounted to 370 Euros, as compared to the estimated price of ANOFM, 800 Euros for each person that is re-integrated on the labor market.

The third project, funded by the EU with 18,000 Euros, the Roma Inclusion Center, included a solid component of social intervention. The model of intervention was borrowed from Spanish and Irish organizations that experimented with similar structures and which aimed at facilitating the registration of the Roma in the databases of ANOFM, so that they could benefit from the lawful rights granted to a person looking for a job. The project was implemented in Bucharest and the beneficiaries were 150 Roma ethnics and the staff of the partner institutions (The Municipal Agency for Employment, the Sector Agencies for Labor in the 6 sectors of Bucharest, and the local experts in Roma issues working at the sector city halls).

The intervention targeted three levels:

- Institutions with responsibilities in the field of employment – the employment agencies;
- Persons looking for a job;
- Employers.

Like in the previously described project, the intervention was based on a study conducted in Bucharest (“Young Roma – looking for a job”. The dimensions of Roma participation in the labor market – case study conducted in Bucharest).

The following sections, impact and continuity, will refer to all three projects that we have presented above, as their influence is inseparable. In fact, the manner these projects built into this coherent program is a case of good practice for the service providers and decision-makers in the employment field. In the monitoring reports on the implementation of the

Roma Strategy, the chapter on employment refers to these projects as good practice models.

Results/effects/impact

1. The intuitive interventions that most social projects rely on was replaced with a diagnostic study which was present in all the three projects, and which ensured good knowledge of the target groups and of the specific conditions in which the interventions were implemented.
2. Based on the studies, recommendations were made to public institutions in order to improve the employment of the Roma.
3. Within the project "Facilitating the access of Roma ethnics to the labor market", 220 Roma people completed qualification courses in occupations that were demanded on the labor market, 150 Roma ethnics only participated into the training, and 120 Roma ethnics were supported to find jobs within the project "Roma Inclusion Center".
4. The premises for developing further national actions to improve the employability of Roma were created, thanks to the durable partnership between the non-governmental Roma organizations involved, and the National Agency for Employment.
5. The organization had an important contribution to the elaboration of legislation in the field of employment. Thus, Law 76/2002 modified the definition for 'unemployed' by adopting an extended concept. An unemployed person is not only a person that receives an unemployment benefit, but also a person that is looking for a job. The recommendation was accepted by MLSSF, which included it in the law, and made it possible to ensure a legal framework for the development of support measures for the Roma. In addition, measures were taken to modify the legislation that regulates the independent professions. The most important recommendation says that, for the traditional crafts, it is not necessary to have proof of education and training in the field, but the qualifications should be granted based on testing the skills of the person.
6. The three projects had a significant component of dissemination concerning the results and innovative methods. The members of the implementation team were always in touch with the mass media.

7. Through the inclusion center, durable partnerships were established between public institutions and Roma organizations. For instance, in each agency in the areas where the project was implemented, there is a Roma representative who mediates the discussions between the unemployed Roma persons and the employment agency.
8. The job shops for the Roma were adjusted to the fluctuations of the labor market and they took into account the seasonal aspect of some jobs.
9. The organization was a member of the commission that coordinated the job shops organized by the National Employment Office at national level.
10. The organization is a partner of the MLSSF, and its representatives are members of the Ministerial Commission for the Roma.

Continuity

1. An efficient work model was created due to the collaboration between Roma NGOs and the National Agency for Employment a model which can be multiplied in other joint initiatives.
2. The partner institutions took up the responsibility to ensure support for the beneficiaries even after the funding was no longer available. The Roma organizations are to monitor the project beneficiaries, and the ANOFM is compelled by law to pursue the careers of those who completed the courses for 6 months after their graduation, in order to ensure that they have a job.
3. The inclusion centers are integrated in a network of institutions that includes social service provision – offices of Local Councils, NGOs that provide such services (e.g. for the Roma ethnics that do not have identity cards). Unfortunately, the limited financial resources do not allow for the continuation of these services within the inclusion centers.
4. According to the plans in the field of employment, the organization will set up a network of inclusion centers in 2005-2008. Their extension will be done in stages, and it will focus especially on urban areas where the percentage of the Roma is significant. After functionality of the centers is ensured, they will be passed on to ANOFM.

5. The job shops were started in each county. The job shops were not one-off events, and they facilitated the establishment of some mechanisms to encourage the access of the Roma to the labor market.
6. The organization will submit a new proposal that will focus on an extremely disadvantaged target group: the Roma women. The project takes into account the particularities of the target group: status, little education, absence of qualifications. The intervention will focus on more than just employment, and it will attempt to introduce an element of emancipation, to counterbalance the traditional way of life of the Roma woman.

5.3. "Training social workers of Roma ethnicity to work within Local Councils" Giurgiu County Council

Funded by: PHARE / Civil Society Development 2000, Component 4

Applicant: Giurgiu County Council

Partners: Giurgiu Prefecture, County Agency for Employment, Democratic Association of Roma Ethnicity in Giurgiu

Budget (the total amount spent): 23,400 Euro out of which 15,826 Euro funded by EU and 8,540 Euro represent the partners' contribution.

The specific objective of the project consisted in the training of 25 social workers who were to represent the Roma communities in relation with public authorities. In selecting the administrative units the main criterion was dictated by the percentage of Roma ethnics in local communities (over 5%).

The selection of the participants in the training courses was performed by the Democratic Association of Roma Ethnicity in Giurgiu which was further involved in the employment of social workers within local mayoralty. Starting with January 2003 first actions were taken towards contracting The House of Didactic Personnel in order to arrange for the trainers. Courses were held during February – March 2003 and they included also a practical approach where real cases were discussed and analyzed. The curricula were centered on intervention methods and techniques in the field of social assistance and legislation. Training materials were designed by AJOFM which was also responsible for preparing the documentation regarding the application of the participants

to these courses. The training was followed by a work practice stage monitored by the team of the Local Council of Giurgiu.

Throughout the work practice stage, the local council of Giurgiu has initiated actions to employ social workers at the end of the training courses. In the case of Local Councils in Găușan, Slobozia și Frățești special offices were organized and equipped to receive the new social workers.

At the end of the project, 17 social workers were employed out of the 24 trainees who graduated (one participant dropped out because of health problems). All the graduates from these courses are considered to be of great value for the mayoralties that hired them. They were assigned the responsibility to manage social assistance activities (Minimum Granted Income, allocations granted to single parent families, child protection attributions) at the level of the entire community and not only with regard to Roma communities. In addition, the interventions of these new employees are not limited only to social work but they also took up the responsibilities to mediate and to plan for intervention activities at communitarian level. At the level of four of the Local Councils, projects are currently being designed to address disadvantaged communities. For example, in Slobozia commune, a project has already been drawn up (infrastructure) and submitted for funding.

Part of these employees are maintaining connections with the County Council requesting information about funding or asking for clarifications regarding the ambiguous legislation recently adopted.

Difficulties in the implementation of the project:

- The selection base of potential candidates was extremely narrow. Only in one locality it was possible to identify more than two persons, high school graduates, who were willing and able to participate in these training courses. Because Roma high school graduates were not identified, non-Roma candidates were accepted in the case of five local councils. In those localities where at least two applications were received, the Mayor or the employees within the local councils organized selections. For example, in Slobozia, three persons participated in the selection and the Mayor chose the one candidate based on a written paper on the subject of designing social projects for Roma communities.
- Problems were encountered regarding the modality to employ social workers after the completion of the training courses, fact which led to a delay in the implementation of the project.

- Another problem was given by the reluctance Mayors and representatives of local councils expressed in the first stage of the project with regard to the successful future professional integration of the trainees.
- Local councils were lacking financial resources necessary for the remuneration of an employee with exclusive responsibilities in social assistance.

Impact

1. The development of a sustainable partnership between public local administration and Roma NGOs. Cooperation between public institution at county and local level and various NGOs made the project successful and ensured sustainability. Also, the partnership has proven to be functional since the involved institutions continue to maintain connections even after the funding has ceased.
2. persons were trained in the profession of social worker and 17 of them were employed within local administrations and on the payroll of local councils. It is a confirmation of the quality of the professional training these social workers received, as well as of the relevance of the project. .
3. All 17 local councils which hired social workers had vacancies for this job but initially such responsibilities were taken over by the agricultural agent or taxation operators. The employment of a person with exclusive attributions in social assistance has brought a significant improvement in the quality of social assistance benefits management, has made the communication with DPC-SPAS more efficient and also, has led to the development of new projects at the level of local council or the community.
4. Minimum working conditions were ensured for newly hired social workers at the level of three local councils and project partners were provided with the necessary equipment to continue specific activities after the funding had ceased (office electronic equipment and furniture purchased and distributed: one set of office furniture and one PC to the Giurgiu Prefecture, a fax machine to the Democratic Association of Roma Ethnic in Giurgiu and on PC to each of the mayoralties Slobozia, Fratesti and Găujani).

Sustainability

1. Out of the 17 social workers employed immediately after completing the training courses, 14 of them were still exclusively on the payroll of local budgets at the time of the project evaluation.
2. At present, the Democratic Association of Roma Ethnicity in Giurgiu is monitoring the network of social workers and ensures the mediation with county institutions.
3. The County Council provides counseling and technical assistance to social workers in the field of social assistance and project designing.
4. After their employment, social workers, supported by the institutions and organizations involved in this project, participated in other training courses on various subjects such as social assistance or computer skills or on specific topics related to the situation of Roma ethnics.

CHAPTER 6. PROBLEMS, SOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2007 Romania shall become a full member of the European Union and therefore its employment policies must be correlated with policies in western countries. Romania is committed to bring its political, social and economic standards in line with the European ones

In Romania, the employment rate in Roma population is quite low as compared to the majority population and urgent measures are needed, both at national and local level, in order to promote their access to the labour market. Job creation is an important component in the process of Roma's social inclusion. Their difficult access to the labour market has several causes. Some of them are related to the general economic system while others have to do with lack of professional skills which makes them vulnerable against other social categories. The general socio-economic situation in Romania has been in recent years a difficult one and many people have lost their jobs and remained outside the formal labour market. Under such circumstances, the situation of Roma is a very serious one. Their access to the labour market is difficult not only because they lack formal qualifications required on the labour market (most of them have been already skilled in various professions but failed to obtain a diploma to certify their competences) but also because many employees discriminate them on ethnic grounds. Another problem is the attitude of some of the members of Roma community who refuse to work simply because social services allow them to remain in a state of permanent inactivity. Several measures are needed in order to regenerate human resources available in Roma communities.

European employment policies are only indications for action and Romania has the mission to formulate concrete measures for the integration of Roma ethnic group. There are plenty of measures Romanian authorities must adopt in order to bring our country in line with the European standards in this field.

Problems

- Young and unskilled population exploiting on marginal resources to obtain incomes.
- Major gaps between men and women in terms of their participation on the labour market.
- Because of the diversity of situations concrete actions for intervention must be taken following a pertinent analysis of each local context. Local partnership between public and private institutions and NGOs may contribute to a better integration of Roma ethnics on the labour market.
- Project and programmes in the next years must focus on issues related to young populations. Young people exert pressure on the labour market and such pressure is likely to increase in the future given the low educational level and the high percentage they hold in the total population

Possible solutions*Of a general nature*

- Increasing cooperation between public administration structures and Roma NGOs base on signed partnerships.
- Implementing projects in **partnership with** local authorities may increase the degree of success or may even be the key to a successful implementation at community level. Some of the oldest and most acute problems encountered in Roma communities may be solved in this manner (**local infrastructure problems** such as water supply, electricity, roads, etc);
- Resolving the problem of legal ownership of the dwellings or lands, by issuing property documents in partnership with local authorities may contribute to the elimination of stereotypes, reduce hostility and mistrust and create a basis of mutual respect and cooperation;
- If Roma ethnics are present in local administration and political structures it may be a better argument and convince public authorities of the necessity and advantages of implementing several projects. Such projects must be presented as being of interest for the whole community and at the same of great

importance for solving the acute problems Roma communities are confronted with;

- Changing the discriminatory attitude some authorities may manifest in promoting and implementing projects addressing Roma community.

Job creation for Roma ethnics

- The most needed projects are those targeting job creation but they are also the most difficult to implement and achieve. Their usefulness lies in the fact that they may, to a certain extent, compensate for the discriminatory and biased provisions of the Funciary Fund Law and the Social Protection Law;
- The need to overcome the stereotype of Roma traditional crafts and the need to skill them in modern trades;
- Actions and measures to overcome discrimination at the work place;
- Replication of projects and good practices already implemented in the field of professional training.

Recommendations

a. Changes in the general policies for Roma

The improvement of Roma situation requires a joint effort from the side of public and private authorities to adopt programmes focused on the basic needs of Roma communities. A first step may be taken by public authorities based on available public instruments. Although the Strategy to Improve the Roma Situation has been adopted ever since April 2001, its implementation has remained behind. General policies, besides being formulated, must be also implemented. In addition, Policies designed for Roma should be conceived in an integrated manner and in a unified context. New policies may be formulated to be correlated with employment policies:

- Ensuring an **inclusive system of education** where all society members can benefit from equal opportunities and without discrimination;
- Strengthening the existing general framework to ensure **equality of opportunities** ;

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- **Designing an adequate policy in the field of housing** to address the needs of Roma ethnics (in fact, this field is the only one left behind out of the four priorities identified in The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015).

b. Changes at national level

The National Agency for Roma

Developing a mechanism to formulate, implement and evaluate public policies - starting from the premise that NAR is the most competent institution to take measures in favour of Roma ethnics at national level. This mechanism should not come against other measures taken by the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family. On the contrary, it should be a complementary instrument. The NAR has the necessary expertise in Roma issues while the Ministry has the competence to take general employment measures at it is unlikely that these measures will take into account the specific aspects related to Roma population.

Designing public policies especially in the field of employment and in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social solidarity and Family and the National Agency for Employment (ANOFM) – we cannot conceive disparate employment policies from the unique perspective of Roma ethnics. They must be thought as part of a complex mechanism to formulate national public policies.

Designing a permanent mechanism to monitor European employment policies – The *European Employment Strategy* sets common objectives for all Member States to further implement them at national level. Each year, the Commission formulates recommendations to each Member State in the field of employment. A permanent mechanism to monitor the implementation of such recommendations is needed. The National Agency for Employment may be the most competent institution in providing a complex monitoring of employment policies focused on Roma.

Transforming the National Agency for Employment into an intermediate instrument for the administration of European funds, and especially the European Social Fund – the main administrator of ESF is, for the time being, the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family but there are other various bodies which can administer European money directed to various target groups. According to Priority 4 in the national development Plan of Romania 2007-2013, Roma are considered a privileged target group. By developing a mechanism to formulate, implement, monitor

and evaluate public policies, The National Agency for Employment may very well take over the management of European fund especially with regard to specific measures adopted for Roma. Transforming NEA into an intermediate organism would allow a better adjustment of public instrument to the needs of Roma communities.

Civil Society

Designing a mechanism to monitor and evaluate employment policies – civil society is fairly considered a living mechanism of protecting the citizens' interests in relation to the state. The state may develop its own mechanisms to monitor and evaluate its policies but such mechanisms will always be biased. Civil society permanently monitors and evaluates public policies, drawing attention when there are slips. Also in the case of Roma issues, a *guardian* is needed to monitor and criticize public authorities for wrong policies addressing Roma. For the past few years, many Roma organizations have been established which points out to a strong civic spirit in Roma ethnics. These organizations should now act in a coordinated manner to establish a unique mechanism to monitor and assess all policies and especially public measures addressed to Roma ethnic group.

Transforming at least two Roma NGOs into promoters of projects funded by European Social Fund

The "*mutual learning*" component included in the new European Employment Strategy has a special significance and it is promoted by European institutions at all levels. Roma civic organizations may develop projects in partnership with various other organizations, either Roma or non-Roma, active in other European countries.

The need to promote "innovative" projects – new innovative projects shall have the highest chances of success according to the provisions stipulated in the *European Employment Strategy*.

c. Changes at local level

Most of the problems faced by Roma ethnics are encountered at local level. No matter how many programmes or policies are adopted at national level, if they are not implemented also at local level and made accessible to common people, they are useless. Local authorities play a great role in the implementation of European policies and programmes and they should adapt to the new context of 2007. Are local authorities, be it public or

private, ready to implement the new European policies and financial instruments? To this question we do not have a clear answer yet. Certain changes are needed:

- Creating a *framework for the implementation of the European social fund*, at local level;
- *Dividing responsibilities* between local level and national level: most of the times, policies (any kind of policies) cannot be implemented because competences are not clearly assigned to and divided between public authorities at all levels. Although the general framework for the implementation of structural funds have been adopted¹, in terms of employment policies there still are misunderstandings amongst the key responsible public authorities.;
- *Designing training courses, as an urgent matter, addressed to local public servants* to help them better understand the role of structural funds as well as the responsibilities assigned to each public institution.

Concrete recommendations

- Initiating national and local training programmes for Roma ethnics to start working within public administration and services;
- Employing Roma ethnics within de-centralized institutions under the jurisdiction of various Ministries:
 - County Departments for Child Protection;
 - County Agencies for Employment;
 - County Public Health Departments;
 - School Inspectorates, etc.
- Re-establishing the former position of Roma Inspector within the Ministry of Labour as well as at the level of its territorial structures and within the national Agency for Employment;
- Concluding partnerships between public administrations and Roma communities representatives for a successful programme implementation;

¹ *Romanian Government – Gov. Decision No. 497/2004 on setting up the institutional framework to coordinate, implement and manage structural instruments.*

- Assessing the needs on the labour market in order to identify professions accessible to Roma ethnics and taking into account their current qualifications;
- Establishing counseling/resource centers within local communities to the purpose of training Roma ethnics and facilitating their access on the labour market;
- Formulating and implementing affirmative measures in the field of professional training and employment;
- Programmes to increase the trust of Roma Ethnics in associative structures both at local and regional level;
- Involving mass media to present an accurate image about Roma ethnics;
- Formulating and implementing short term local development programmes to the purpose of achieving a sustainable development;
- Identifying Roma “mediators” to maintain the connection between Roma communities and local administration;
- Establishing Roma small and medium enterprises to access the financial resources available;
- Cooperation between Roma’s enterprises and specialized structures on job creation;
- Organizing and conducting continuous training courses for experts on Roma issues.
- Providing state funded counseling in the field of agriculture via specialized or private individual counseling companies;
- Giving land ownership to Roma ethnics and granting incentives for agricultural activities in Roma communities;
- Granting fiscal facilities for employers hiring Roma ethnics coming from families in difficulty, with a large number of children and lacking other means of subsistence;
- Disseminating good practices and successful projects and multiply them at national level;
- Conducting a study to identify professional niches favoring Roma from the perspective of their professional training and reconversion;

- Developing, based on the consistent participation of Roma civil society, an Action Plan to facilitate the access of Roma to the labour market and organizing a public debate on this topic. The Romanian Government has already pledged to take measures in this direction under the international initiative on the Decade of Roma Inclusion, the Lisbon Strategy, etc.;
- A higher openness of the central and local institutions in the field of employment;
- Actively involve the National Council to Combat Discrimination in the elimination of all forms of discrimination against Roma on the labour market.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Relevant data on employment as resulted from studies ICCV

Professions and occupations

Table 1 Percentage of types of professions in total population over 16

	1992 investigation	1998 investigation
Modern professions	15,75 %	37,7 %
Traditional professions	7,14 %	10,3 %
No profession	77,1 %	52 %

Note: In 1998, the accuracy of the question referring to qualifications was much higher, fact which determined a significant change in terms of modern type qualifications or lack of such qualifications. Another explanation may be that Roma felt the need to undertake more secure revenue-generating activities in the time interval between 1992 and 1998.

Table 2 Percentage of type of professions, on generations, 1992

	Grandparents	Parents	Reference couple
Modern professions	3.3 %	11.7 %	18.07 %
Traditional professions	14.0 %	5.8 %	5.86 %
No profession	82.7 %	82.5 %	76.07 %

Table 3 Percentage of type of professions, on generations, 1998

	Grandparents	Parents	Reference couple
Modern professions	33.3 %	35.9 %	40.14 %
Traditional professions	8.3 %	7.9 %	11.49 %
No profession	58.4 %	56.2 %	48.37 %

Table 4 Employment status of population over 16 years old, 1992 and 1998

	1992 investigation	1998 investigation
Full-time employees	23.4 %	12.9 %
Business owners	0.8 %	0.5 %
Freelance activities	22.1 %	33.6 %
Retired	5.3 %	7.1 %
No job	46.8 %	40.7 %
In school	0.5 %	2.5 %
	In prison 1.1 %	Other situations 2.7 %

Table 5 Degree of qualification of employees

1992 investigation		1998 investigation	
Unskilled workers	60.4 %	Unskilled workers	45 %
skilled workers	37.8 %	skilled workers	51.4 %
Mid and high level employees	1.8 %	Clerk, supervisor, occupations requiring higher education	3.6 %

Table 6 Structure of population, on professional status, 1998

Employed	27.5 %
Business owner	0.8 %
Freelancers in:	71.7 %
Trade (sales)	10.1 %
Traditional crafts	6.4 %
Agriculture	12 %
Occasional labour abroad	1.5 %
Day labour	41.7 %

Annex 2. Methodological note

Objectives of the study

Assessment of the degree of employment in Roma population and their access to employment services (the degree of employment, identification of main factors affecting access, building relations with institutions in the field of employment, factors which block the access to employment services);

Premises

- The degree of employment of the Roma population is in general lower than that of the Romanian population;
- The access of Roma population to the labour market services is difficult both because of institutional barriers and because of the socio-economic situation of this ethnic group (lack of identity cards, lack of decent incomes, and lack of a steady residence).

Research method: quantitative research, investigation based on questionnaires.

Research universe: the Roma population in Romania

Selection of population to be interviewed: national sample

The volume of the sample was of 1,511 households including 7,990 individuals.

Sampling method: Multi-layer probabilistic sample

Layers were selected considering:

1. the residential environment (urban-rural);
2. the historical provinces: Muntenia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Banat, Crisana, Dobrogea and Bucharest;
3. type of locality: large cities exceeding 100,000 inhabitants, towns exceeding 30,000 inhabitants, small towns under 30,000 inhabitants and communes.

A map of the localities was made, taking into consideration the density of the Roma population. Each locality was divided, with the support of local public authorities, into 3 areas:

- Areas with a majority of Roma population (compact areas);

- Ethnically heterogeneous areas (a relatively equal proportion is maintained between the Roma population and the major population or other ethnic groups);
- Areas with a minority of Roma population (Roma households spread amongst households of other ethnic groups).

After the locality was divided into areas, the households of the interviewed subjects were selected at random. The interview operators knew exactly the proportion of Roma households repartition in the areas. They were aware of the percentage of Roma households investigated in each of the areas (the sources for this data are the population census and past years statistical data, as well as information gathered from each locality provided by different local actors). The research instrument was the standard questionnaire. The collected data refers both to the head of the household and to all other persons in the household.

**Annex 3. Relevant employment data resulted
from the 2002 Census**

Inactive population by gender

Male/ ethnicity	Pupils	Retired	House- wives	Supported by other persons	Supported by the state or other private organizations	Other situation
Romanians	35,00	41,09	1,16	17,55	0,92	4,28
Hungarians	27,31	47,45	0,71	16,45	1,08	7,01
Roma	26,04	8,35	2,82	37,98	4,53	20,29
Other	29,96	43,12	1,35	17,02	1,35	7,31
Female/ ethnicity	Pupils	Retired	House- wives	Supported by other persons	Supported by the state or other private organizations	Other situation
Romanians	26,56	39,23	21,22	11,63	0,68	0,68
Hungarians	20,35	48,29	18,92	10,40	0,74	1,29
Roma	18,88	6,67	38,81	28,51	3,07	4,06
Others	20,41	41,03	25,04	11,26	0,99	1,28

Total Active Population

Total/ ethnicity	% of active population out of the total population	% of employed population out of the total active population	Unemployed		
			Total	Looking for a new job	Looking for their first job
Romanians	41,59	88,47	11,53	63,62	36,38
Hungarians	37,95	88,70	11,30	70,16	29,84
Roma	22,90	71,51	28,49	35,78	64,22
Others	37,59	88,71	11,29	59,96	40,04

Active population by gender

Male/ ethnicity	% of active population out of the total population	% of employed population out of the total active population	Unemployed		
			Total	Looking for a new job	Looking for their first job
Romanians	48,32	86,75	13,25	63,46	36,54
Hungarians	45,07	86,75	13,25	70,29	29,71
Roma	31,99	69,46	30,54	37,92	62,08
Others	46,67	87,06	12,94	60,45	39,55
Female/ ethnicity	% of active population out of the total population	% of employed population out of the total active population	Unemployed		
			Total	Looking for a new job	Looking for their first job
Romanians	35,19	90,71	9,29	63,92	36,08
Hungarians	31,36	91,29	8,71	69,89	30,11
Roma	13,56	76,48	23,52	29,02	70,98
Others	28,41	91,47	8,53	58,72	41,28

Employed population by Gender

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Romanians	5,08	8,27	6,83	3,11	5,78	25,70	25,04	12,37	6,87	0,96
Hungarians	4,74	5,97	5,94	2,59	5,14	17,30	35,32	13,67	8,20	1,13
Roma	1,71	0,30	1,12	0,43	2,78	38,88	18,34	4,56	31,41	0,47
Others	16,04	8,81	5,71	2,31	5,38	25,03	19,44	9,30	7,31	0,68

1. Male/ ethnicity; 2. Legislators, executive members in public administration and in political or social-economic units; 3. Experts with intellectual or scientific professions; 4. Technicians and similar professions; 5. Administrative public servants; 6. Operative workers in trade services and similar; 7. Land workers skilled in agriculture, fishing, and forestry; 8. Craftsmen and skilled workers; 9. Equipment and plant operators, manufacturers; 10. Unskilled workers; 11. Others

Professional Status by gender

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Romanians	3,34	10,63	15,35	7,61	12,52	25,29	11,72	6,58	6,94	0,01
Hungarians	2,68	7,51	16,51	7,94	16,87	11,78	16,70	11,67	8,33	0,01
Roma	1,03	0,39	1,15	0,65	6,77	46,17	8,05	3,95	31,82	0,01
Others	5,39	10,57	13,85	5,93	11,76	32,26	8,17	4,97	7,10	0,00

1. Female/ ethnicity; 2. Legislators, executive members in public administration and in political or social-economic units; 3. Experts with intellectual or scientific professions; 4. Technicians and similar professions; 5. Administrative public servants; 6. Operative workers in trade services and similar; 7. Land workers skilled in agriculture, fishing, and forestry; 8. Craftsmen and skilled workers; 9. Equipment and plant operators, manufacturers; 10. Unskilled workers; 11. Others

Male/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own house- holds	Other situation
Romanians	69,21	2,30	15,51	0,18	11,91	0,89
Hungarians	74,67	2,48	11,86	0,12	9,55	1,32
Roma	32,41	1,34	35,41	0,27	16,55	14,02
Others	60,61	10,73	13,30	0,11	14,27	0,98

Female/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own house- holds	Other situation
Romanians	72,16	1,40	6,23	0,14	19,76	0,31
Hungarians	84,78	1,18	4,03	0,09	9,54	0,38
Roma	37,46	0,81	17,42	0,22	32,37	11,72
Others	62,47	2,99	6,26	0,05	27,87	0,36

Professional Status total by gender in urban area

Total urban/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own households	Other situation
Romanians	93,44	2,77	2,72	0,03	0,93	0,11
Hungarians	92,20	2,69	4,14	0,04	0,75	0,18
Roma	67,63	3,15	20,41	0,11	4,45	4,25
Others	80,45	13,29	4,83	0,02	1,28	0,13

Male urban/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own households	Other situa- tion
Romanians	91,77	3,53	3,61	0,03	0,89	0,17
Hungarians	89,1	3,77	5,83	0,04	0,96	0,30
Roma	62,68	3,61	24,51	0,11	4,27	4,82
Others	74,71	18,09	5,88	0,02	1,12	0,18

Female urban/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own households	Other situa- tion
Romanians	95,24	1,95	1,75	0,03	0,98	0,05
Hungarians	95,53	1,53	2,34	0,03	0,52	0,05
Roma	77,66	2,22	12,11	0,10	4,81	3,10
Others	90,10	5,24	3,07	0,01	1,54	0,04

Professional Status total by gender in rural area

Total rural/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own households	Other situa- tion
Romanians	42,48	0,83	21,97	0,32	33,13	1,27
Hungarians	61,94	0,88	14,01	0,19	21,13	1,85
Roma	21,52	0,44	33,27	0,31	27,81	16,65
Others	40,10	1,56	16,95	0,16	39,81	1,42

Male rural/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own households	Other situa- tion
Romanians	45,23	0,99	28,15	0,33	23,65	1,65
Hungarians	58,70	1,06	18,55	0,20	19,04	2,45
Roma	21,60	0,53	39,31	0,32	20,94	17,30
Others	44,17	2,15	21,95	0,21	29,61	1,91

Female rural/ ethnicity	Em- ployees	Business owners, private investors	Free- lancers	Members of agricultural/ cooperative societies	Family workers in their own households	Other situa- tion
Romanians	38,41	0,59	12,77	0,31	47,22	0,70
Hungarians	67,06	0,60	6,80	0,18	24,45	0,91
Roma	21,33	0,25	19,55	0,27	43,43	15,17
Others	34,08	0,68	9,55	0,09	54,91	0,69

Unemployed by ethnicity, gender and the length of unemployment period

Male/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	20,38	20,04	23,81	35,78
Hungarians	25,09	19,35	24,64	30,92
Roma	20,35	11,30	16,48	51,87
Others	18,91	18,01	27,46	35,62
Female/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Under 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	over 27 months
Romanians	21,25	23,57	27,66	27,52
Hungarians	26,68	23,86	26,89	22,57
Roma	24,33	13,30	17,13	45,24
Others	21,54	24,94	28,58	24,94

Unemployed in urban area by ethnicity, gender and the length of unemployment period

Total urban/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	21,40	21,76	25,02	31,82
Hungarians	24,79	21,94	25,01	28,26
Roma	18,43	12,87	16,29	52,41
Others	21,25	20,69	27,41	30,66
Male urban/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	21,13	20,42	23,47	34,99
Hungarians	24,19	20,26	24,09	31,46
Roma	17,42	12,61	16,21	53,75
Others	20,22	18,67	27,36	33,75
Female urban/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	21,81	23,84	27,41	26,95
Hungarians	25,83	24,90	26,64	22,62
Roma	21,29	13,59	16,49	48,63
Others	23,55	25,16	27,52	23,78

Unemployed in rural area by ethnicity, gender and the length of unemployment period

Total rural/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	19,55	20,50	25,36	34,58
Hungarians	26,69	19,42	25,87	28,03
Roma	24,01	10,77	16,96	48,26
Others	17,76	19,14	28,23	34,87
Male rural/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	19,37	19,54	24,26	36,82
Hungarians	26,13	18,28	25,28	30,31
Roma	22,96	10,13	16,71	50,20
Others	17,48	17,28	27,58	37,66
Female rural/ ethnicity	Length of unemployment period			
	Less than 6 months	6-9 months	9 - 27 months	More than 27 months
Romanians	20,01	22,97	28,21	28,80
Hungarians	28,04	22,19	27,30	22,47
Roma	27,68	12,99	17,84	41,49
Others	18,60	24,63	30,14	26,64

Annex 4. The 2005 Plan of Priority Measures for European Integration

Priority/ measure	Institution in charge	Deadline (month/ year)	Comments
A. Delays			
Information and training of Roma opinion leaders and trainers Annual report on the implementation of projects for the improvement of the Roma situation	SGG	December/ 2003	The last public report on the stage of implementation of the Strategy was issued in 2003 and it was presented at the launch conference of the Roma Inclusion Decade, June 2003.
B. Measures from programming documents and evaluations of the European Commission			
Improvement of the Roma people's access to social services			
Increase in the number of the Roma ethnics targeted by the services provided by the National Agency for Employment	NLA	December/ 2004	
Recording in the databases of the County Employment Agencies of the Roma people looking for a job	NLA, SGG, MAI	June 2005	Recording the Roma people in the county databases of people looking for a job seems to be an on-going process, as the identification of the people included is being done by both the non-governmental organizations, and the County Offices for the Roma and by the Roma local experts. The job-shops for Roma are also an important source of identifying such people. Through the Phare RO 2002/000-586.01.02 program, some of the projects that were funded included among their objectives recording in the county Labor office databases of the Roma people looking for jobs.

Including Roma people in the databases of the County Offices for Employment within mediation, training and professional retraining programs	NLA	December / 2005	This measure is permanently in the focus of the institution in charge, and the progress is reported on a monthly basis.
Continuation of training healthcare mediators	MH SGG	September / 2005	In-service training of the healthcare mediation is not being done, but new mediators are being trained through projects such as Phare (RO 2002/000-586.01.02). One of the issues identified by the Roma NGOs is generally the reduced number of the mediators and the difficulty of employing them by the Public Healthcare Offices.
Improvement of the Roma population's access to the labor market:			
Public awareness-raising campaign for non-discrimination in employment	NLA, SGG	December/ 2004	This topic was partly the topic of awareness raising campaigns carried out for instance by Academia Cațavencu and CNCD.
Vocational training and revival of the traditional crafts.	NLA, SGG	December/ 2004	Through the Phare RO 2002&000/586.01.02 program, a few projects aim at revaluing traditional crafts.
Programs aiming at increasing the chances of finding a job of the Roma that did not complete compulsory education	SGG, NLA	December/ 2004	The Second Chance program, implemented by the Ministry of Education and Research is relevant in this respect.
Organizing job-shops for the Roma	NLA	July/ 2005	Job-shops are probably the most important measure by which workplaces are identified for the Roma, and mediation is established between the employers and the Roma.

Organizing programs to increase the chances of the Roma women to obtain jobs	NLA, SGG	September /2005	Within PHARE RO 2002/000-586.01.02 it is expected that numerous Roma women will be trained and subsequently employed.
Sustained implementation of the Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation:			<p>In the last two years, the implementation of the Strategy has been somehow blocked by the changes in the institutional structure. Thus, the National Office for the Roma changed its name into the Office for Roma Issues, and later into the National Agency for the Roma. These changes did not lead to improvements in the central operations or the county-level operations, where the County Offices for the Roma do not have resources, the capacity and the influence to translate into practice the programming elements included in the general plan of measures.</p> <p>To some extent, the importance of the Strategy has been diminished in the context of the launch of the Roma Inclusion Decade.</p>
Providing the adequate financial support for the implementation of the General Plan of Measures of the Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation:			<p>According to the State Budget law, for 2004, 64 billion ROL was allocated. According to a memorandum of joint understanding signed by SGG and UNDP, a grant-making program was implemented at the end of 2004.</p>

Funding for projects that target the domains included in the General Plan of Measures of the Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation, especially community development, healthcare, economy, housing, small infrastructure, purchase of agricultural land	SGG	December/ 2005	Within the PHARE program „Support for the National Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation” (RO 2002/000-586.01.02), 6 million Euros was allocated by the European Commission for projects in healthcare, vocational training, income-generating activities, small infrastructure and social housing. Sixty-five projects were funded and are being implemented. It also included training for various actors.
Writing the annual report on the stage of implementation of the Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation	SGG	April /2005	The last report was presented in 2003. In 2004, the Open Society Institute, Budapest, in partnership with the Resource Center for Roma Communities, revealed the problems encountered in the implementation of the Strategy.
Updating the General Plan of Measures of the Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation	SGG	March/ 2005	This update was requested several times by both the Roma NGOs and the international institutions, without obtaining a concrete result. The National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion is obviously a diminution of the standards of the Strategy, as it lacks well defined objectives and indicators for the expected results, as well as the clearly assumed responsibilities by the relevant institutions.

Setting up a consultative committee of the Roma civil society that should be consulted in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of the public policies for the Roma	SGG	December/ 2004	An initiative of the Roma NGOs is being prepared, the Civic Alliance of the Roma, as a non-political consultative structure. A monitoring report of the problems encountered in the implementation of the strategy was prepared by some structures of the civil society.
Meeting with the Roma civil society / NGOs, every term Term I 2005 Term II 2005 Term III 2005 Term IV 2005	SGG	March June September December/ 2005	One of the critical issues of the implementation of the Strategy is the Government's exclusive collaboration with the Social Democrat Roma Party. This has been pointed out in the regular reports of the European Commission in 2003 and 2004, and there has been no change from the Government.
Social-cultural affirmation of the Roma minority and fight against their discrimination			The activities of the National Council to Combat Discrimination are within this component.
Facilitation of Roma women's participation in decision-making processes, in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of public policies for the Roma minority			Women's participation in the decision-making processes, in the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of public policies is almost non-existing, although some attempts have been made by the NGOs to coagulate such a structure.
Setting up and operating a working group for the representation of the interests of Roma women	SGG	March/ 2005	

Organizing periodical meetings of the working group for the representation of the Roma women's interest: Semester I Semester II	SGG	June November /2005	
Elaboration of sector action plans for the improvement of the social-economic situation of the Roma women	SGG	May/ 2005	
Organization of cultural events on the International Day of the Roma	SGG	April/ 2005	
C. Measures resulting from the negotiation documents and other relevant measures for the Community			
C.3 Measures of institutional building			
Setting up and consolidating the National Agency for the Roma and its regional structures	SGG	March/ 2005	The National Agency for the Roma was set up through the Government's Ordinance, approved by the Parliament. The Regional structures of NAR are not yet functional.
Completing the training of staff employed by the National Agency for the Roma	SGG	June/ 2005	The staff of NAR participated to a large extent in the sessions conducted within the PHARE RO 2002/000-586-01.02. These were training sessions in healthcare, public administration, human rights, partnerships, etc.
Developing the staff scheme of the PHARE Project Implementation Units within the Office for Roma Issues, in conformity with the PHARE programming documents agreed with the European Commission	SGG	March/ 2005	The Project Implementation Unit within NAR did not change its structure. The implementation of future PHARE projects may be jeopardized by the lack of sufficiently trained staff.
Training for Roma ethnics within the program PHARE RO 2002/000-586.01.02 as community development facilitators	SGG MAI	May/ 2005	The training components were developed within the Phare RO 2002/000-586.01.02. Program.

Elaboration of local action plans based on the knowledge built by the trained facilitators/trainers prepared in the PHARE program	SGG MAI	August / 2005	Action plans have been prepared in the counties, but the issue of translating them into practice and obtaining funding for them remains unsolved.
Development of a monitoring and evaluation system for the Strategy for the Improvement of the Roma Situation	SGG	December/ 2005	There is no such instrument of NAR. Monitoring of the implementation was done by various NGOs and by the Delegation of the European Commission, which run such projects.
Training for the NAR staff in monitoring and evaluation of the strategy for the Improvement of the Situation of Roma	SGG	December/ 2005	Such a program can be developed in collaboration with the NGOs that have had such previous programs or even within a PHARE or NAR-funded program.
Detailed national analysis of the number of Roma ethnics that do not hold identity cards and /or civil status cards	SGG	December/ 2005	This topic is part of the projects included in the PHARE multi-annual programming. The issue of identity cards remains rather pressing, as it influences the access of Roma people to various public services.

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