

ANALYSIS OF THE PRIORITIES AND BUDGET OF THE OFFICIAL ROMA INTEGRATION POLICIES IN THE AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

Meliha Kozaric Fanning



TABLE OF CONTENT

Table of Content.....	1
List of Abbreviations	2
1. Introduction	3
1.1. Purpose and Objectives	4
1.2. Methodology and Approach	4
2. Analysis of objectives and measures in individual action plans and strategies.....	6
2.1. Albania.....	6
2.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina	7
2.3. Kosovo*	9
2.4. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.....	10
2.5. Montenegro.....	11
2.6. Serbia	12
2.7. Turkey.....	13
3. Recommendations - Way forward	15
4. Donor activities in Roma integration related assistance.....	17
4.1. European Union	17
4.2. Regional Housing Programme (RHP) - Multi-donor Housing Programme	17
4.3. Swedish Development Cooperation (SIDA).....	18
4.4. Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)	18
4.5. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany...	19
4.6. Austrian Development Agency (ADA)	19
4.7. Norwegian Development Cooperation (NORAD).....	19
4.8. The World Bank Group (WBG)	19
5. Funding of priority measures for Roma housing and employment.....	21
6. Conclusions.....	24

© RomaIntegration2020, 2017

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this assessment are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Regional Cooperation Council or of its participants, nor of the European Union and the Open Society Foundations.

Ruzveltova 61, Belgrade, Serbia
P: +381 11 4046 891

romaintegration2020@rcc.int
M: + 381 63 1094 191

www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020
F: + 381 11 404 68 94

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic cooperation and Development of Germany
EU	European Union
EU Framework	The European Union Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020
EUD	European Union Delegation
GIZ	German Development Agency
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
NGO	Non-government organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRIS	National Roma Integration Strategy (refers to officially adopted strategic document for Roma integration, regardless of its official name)
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Vocational Education Training
WBG	The World Bank Group





1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 (EU Framework) recognizes the adverse socio-economic situation of Roma throughout Europe and calls on the EU Member States to develop, implement and monitor the implementation and impact of National Roma Integration Strategies.

The enlargement region is invited to join the efforts within the EU Framework. The Regional Cooperation Council Roma Integration 2020 project, funded by the European Union and the Open Society Foundations, works with the governments of Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) and Turkey to improve their performance in formulating, implementing, budgeting and monitoring their Roma integration policies within the EU integration process and in line with the EU Framework.

Within the efforts to assist governments in the region to improve the budgeting of the National Roma Integration Strategies, the Roma Integration 2020 commissioned this analysis in order to assess the official strategies and action plans in terms of planned measures with corresponding budget and the funding opportunities available in the region besides the public budget. It focuses on the areas of employment and housing, as these two areas have been assessed as the most demanding and least developed in the region. The analysis is used to base the discussions to take place at the regional conference “Filling in the Budget Gaps in Roma Integration Policies” and for any follow up activities of the Roma Integration 2020 project, while assisting the governments to properly plan their national budgets responsive to the needs of Roma.

The challenges that Roma are facing in the area of housing and employment are well identified in the strategies and action plans of all the seven economies. These challenges, to summarize only a few are as follows:

- The majority of Roma lack competent skills to become employable in an already economically challenging environment where the labour market is highly competitive and discrimination in employment persists; thus the tendency to work in the informal economy;
- Employment incentive programmes exist, but the conditions and nature of participation leave the majority of unemployed Roma excluded; most of these incentive programs lack sustainable results;
- Roma are living in informal settlements without proper communal infrastructure and in buildings that are of poor quality, often lacking the ownership documents.

Such challenges could be overcome if the proposed government measures and activities are carefully planned, budgeted, monitored and mainstreamed in the overall socio-economic policies of the countries. Nevertheless, for many measures appropriate funds are missing, and establishing a proper coordination between





governments and donors could cut down significant long-term social expenses that the region is facing.

1.1. Purpose and Objectives

The premise of the upcoming regional conference is twofold:

1. **Decent living conditions** (retainable roof over the head, access to water, electricity, sanitary conditions, proper social and other infrastructure) ensure access to basic human rights, and
2. **Employed people** can provide for decent life of their families, including access to health and education services; and are motivated to advance themselves and their children in society.

The purpose of this document is to identify common objectives, measures and activities among the seven economies in the region for Roma integration in the areas of housing and employment. The purpose of the conference is, based upon this common platform, to initiate dialogue towards enhanced coordination and proper commitment of both governments and donors when it comes to Roma integration.

Since the governments in the enlargement region can secure only limited funding to address these two important aspects of Roma integration, the objectives of the regional conference are as follows:

- a. To identify programmes in both thematic areas common to all economies in the region that have the potential of effectively addressing the unemployment and lack of adequate housing of Roma;
- b. To solicit interest of donors who are willing to continue or commence their support to the implementation of such programmes;
- c. To initiate operational and coordination mechanism of governments and donors to work in cohesion towards the implementation of tangible targets in the next three years.

It is important to keep the regional dimension of the donor programming for a number of reasons, the most important of which are the balanced integration of Roma throughout the region, the peer support among economies to work on a multi-dimensional issue, the regional perspective of EU integration, and the potential for setting of planning and budgeting standards with better alignment to available funding.

1.2. Methodology and Approach

This analysis is based upon the following documents:

- The Roma integration action plans and/or strategies of the seven economies in the region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey) that also participate in the Roma Integration 2020 project; and





- Data collected on donor activities in the fields of housing and employment for Roma.

The consultant firstly examined each action plan and extracted all objectives and measures and/or activities related to Roma housing and employment from the individual action plans (Annex 1) to assess the following:

- the challenges each economy is facing in housing and employment of Roma,
- the objectives, measures and activities set forth by each economy to address the challenges, and
- the proximity of the proposed objectives and activities among the economies.

This analysis provides short description of each action plan with the observations of the consultant regarding the feasibility and attainability of objectives, and remarks regarding the potential advantages and constraints that derive from the formulation of any given objective and activity.

The analysis further provides matching the donor experiences in housing and employment for Roma for each of the economies' actions, which is based on the collected donor activity data. The EU funding provided mainly through IPA, but also other EU programmes, is not in the focus of the analysis, as an evaluation of the funding for Roma integration in the region has been completed and is available online.² Furthermore, the IPA is programmed in close cooperation with governments, taking into consideration the Roma integration priorities, and is to a large extent implemented by responsible government institutions. This serves the aim of this analysis for better coordination on the financing of Roma integration policies, which is more relevant for bilateral donors and development banks.

The private funding and philanthropy is also out of the scope of the analysis because of the lack of relevant data and the wideness of the scope.

Finally, the analysis provides an overview of the objectives and actions that are common to all the participating economies.

² Allen, R. O'Connor, S. Petanovic, M. and Bitu, N. (2015). Thematic Evaluation on IPA Support to Roma Communities, available at: http://publications.europa.eu/resource/cellar/1cd8ac96-e047-11e5-8fea-01aa75ed71a1.0002.01/DOC_1





2. ANALYSIS OF OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES IN INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANS AND STRATEGIES

2.1. Albania

Albania developed the “National Action Plan for integration of Roma and Egyptians (2016-2020)” under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth. The document is endorsed by a Decision of the Council of Ministers.

The document treats employment under the *Employment and Vocational Educational Training (VET)* policy area and housing under the *Housing and urban integration* policy area.

The objectives related to employment are focused on *vocational educational training programmes (VET) and promotion of self-employment and social entrepreneurship*.

The housing related objectives indicate that the focus in Albania is on the *housing legalization process* (specific measures: mapping illegal settlements, urbanization of Roma communities, free legal aid to Roma for matters related to housing) and *direct and indirect housing programmes* (specific measures: subsidizing social housing rent, improving the infrastructure, housing reconstruction and construction of new units).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

There are no objectives or activities designed to support first employment, employment in a company and/or in public institutions. It is suggested to remain open to other mechanisms such as:

- social entrepreneurship promotion and support;
- subsidized employment in the private sector;
- employment in the public sector through affirmative measures;
- prevention and protection from discrimination in employment.

These employment measures should be implemented as programmes that combine tangible opportunities for employment with supporting activities, such as vocational education and protection from discrimination at the work place. The implementation of such programmes would require additional funding and systemic preparation.

The housing objective should be amended with optional accommodation in the event that informal settlements cannot be legalized. Specifically, social housing or private housing should be made available before the illegal settlements are dismantled. The housing objective will require additional funding for adequate implementation and monitoring, including follow up on the decency and





sustainability (security of tenure) of the living conditions for Roma in the newly constructed buildings and infrastructure.

The donors that are present in Albania are listed in the table below, with indication of projects that support Roma integration.

Table 1: Active donors and Roma related projects

Donor	Roma related projects
ADA	N/A
NORAD	Yes, education
Open Society Foundation	Yes, human rights
SIDA	Yes, entrepreneurial efforts
SDC	Yes, employability and education
USAID	N/A
WBG	N/A

2.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a strategic platform for Roma integration endorsed by the Council of Ministers in 2005 and valid until the completion of the integration of Roma and fulfilment of all objectives. Action plans are prepared for the period of 3 to 4 years. The most recent one is for the period 2017-2020, and has two objectives relevant for the integration of Roma in employment and housing: *Improvement of employability and employment of Roma* and *Improvement of living conditions for Roma*.

The employment related objectives focus clearly on *VET programmes* and *direct incentives for employment, self-employment, social entrepreneurship and public works*. These measures are planned as mainstream active measures for employment, with specific budget allocations for the benefit of Roma. The condition for participation is the registration of the unemployed Roma at the employment offices, which limits the possibility for a number of Roma to participate. There are efforts to increase the registration of unemployed persons through informative campaigns. Furthermore, a plan to engage Roma mediators at the employment offices to work on registration of unemployed, their inclusion in the mainstream employment programmes and monitoring the sustainability of the measures exists.

The housing related objectives encompass activities that, if implemented, will ensure decent living conditions of Roma and their full integration in local communities. The housing objective includes: *mapping of illegal settlements, planned relocation of Roma families, legalization of decent housing units, implementation of infrastructure projects in Roma communities, construction of new houses, reconstruction of the existing housing units and construction of social housing*.





RECOMMENDATIONS:

Regarding employment programmes, it is recommended to introduce additional and specific employment measures:

- social entrepreneurship promotion and support;
- employment in the public sector;
- prevention and protection from discrimination in employment.

To ensure participation of Roma in employment measures, the conditions for registration of unemployed persons should be analysed and any obstacles for Roma to register should be removed. Actions should be taken to register unemployed Roma, including by engaging a Roma mediator at the employment offices. The subsidized government programme for employment of Roma currently does not include provisions to ensure that Roma employees remain employed even after the first year subsidy expires.

Other than these recommendations the activities are set clearly and broad enough to allow for number of interventions for integration of Roma into the labour market, without any limitations as to the sector or type of work.

The housing objective is clearly set. It requires additional funding for full implementation and monitoring of the impact, including follow up monitoring on the decency and sustainability (security of tenure) of the living conditions for Roma in the newly constructed buildings. There is also need for further improvement of the communal infrastructure.

The donors that are present in Bosnia and Herzegovina are listed in the table below, with indication of projects that support Roma integration.

Table 2: Active donors and Roma related projects

Donor	Roma related projects
ADA	Yes, inclusion and rights of Roma women
NORAD	Yes, small grants programme, “Women can do it”, human security (trafficking)
Open Society Foundation	N/A
SIDA	Yes, housing
SDC	Yes, education
USAID	Yes, USAID’s Marginalized Populations Support Project
WBG	N/A





2.3. Kosovo*

The Strategy for Inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities in the Kosovo* society (2017-2021) is a government document that sets priorities for Roma integration. These priorities are defined based upon two key challenges in the areas of employment and housing:

1. Informal and temporary nature of Roma employment, which reduces the chances of Roma for sustainable income and decent living;
2. Lack of registration of Roma housing needs, which prevent the government to set priorities within its limited budget for housing.

The two objectives that are set to resolve the above mentioned challenges are focusing on provision of *indirect support to employment measures* and *adequate and sustainable housing* for Roma and Ashkali communities.

There are no direct employment measures set forth in the Action plan, such as *incentives, grant schemes, entrepreneurship schemes* and similar mechanisms. The only measures that can be considered as direct employment measures are *improved employment in public institutions and companies* and *vocational trainings*.

Some measures are similar to other economies in the region, especially in the area of housing, where the key activities remain: *assessing the housing needs, informal settlements and related legislation, reconstruction of housing units, and construction of new units*.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

As the strategy is lacking measures directly resulting in employment of Roma, the key recommendation is to introduce such measures, as well as other measures supporting employment, including:

- social entrepreneurship promotion and support;
- subsidized employment in the private sector;
- employment in the public sector;
- prevention and protection from discrimination in employment.

It is recommended to focus on the construction of new private housing and apartment units for Roma, in phases, and simultaneously develop a database of housing needs at the local level governments.

The donors that are present in Kosovo* are listed in the table below, with indication of projects that support Roma integration.





Table 3: Active donors and Roma related projects

Donor	Roma related projects
ADA	N/A
NORAD	Yes, Women can do it project
Open Society Foundation	Yes, human rights
SIDA	Yes, employment, housing, humans rights and education projects
SDC	Yes, Social inclusion and improvement of living conditions for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians and other vulnerable groups in Kosovo (2017-2019)
USAID	Yes, education
WBG	Yes, Social Inclusion and Local Economic Development Project

2.4. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, in cooperation with the National Coordinator of the Decade developed the Strategy for Roma (2014-2020). The Strategy addresses challenges in all priority areas for Roma integration, while specifically for employment and employability it states, to mention only a few: lack of information on active measures to reduce unemployment, low motivation among Roma for starting own business, insufficient registration of Roma (with accent to Roma women) at the Employment offices, discrimination, low level of education. With regards to housing, illegal settlements and illegally constructed buildings, basic infrastructure conditions, lack of property related documentation, are just some of the challenges that Roma are facing. These challenges apply to other economies in the region, noticed from the similarities set in the main objectives of the Strategies.

The objectives in the areas of employment and housing are:

- *To increase the number of Roma registered in the National Employment Agency, as well as those involved in the active measures for employment from about 10% in 2013 to at least 50% by the end of 2020,*
- *To increase the employability of the Roma community through the creation and implementation of incentive policies and programmes by the end of 2020,*
- *To legalize 70% of the settlements inhabited by Roma population by 2017, where opportunity is presented,*
- *To build up to 50% of the communal infrastructure in the settlements, predominantly inhabited by the Roma population, where possible, by 2020.*

These objectives were adopted in 2014 and since then the targets may have changed, but the common measures remain:





- registration of unemployed, in particular Romani women,
- creation and implementation of active incentive policies aiming at increased employability and employment of Roma,
- legalization of settlements and houses,
- relocation and provision of alternative housing and
- construction of communal infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended to design specific housing and employment programmes for Roma adequate to each municipal context, with registration of needs and implementation of active measures. The funding may need to be increased and allocated for such specific projects. The same programme approach and types of interventions in both priority areas are recommended:

1. Active employment measures (subsidized employment, social entrepreneurship, public employment) with support advisory and training services;
2. Housing and infrastructure construction responding to the specific needs in the local context.

Table 4: Active donors and Roma related projects

Donor	Roma related projects
ADA	N/A
NORAD	Yes, human security (trafficking, three projects), women can do, disparity in education
Open Society Foundation	
SIDA	Yes, human rights, Secretariat for Roma
SDC	Yes, "Increasing Market Employability in Macedonia"
USAID	Yes, Roma education project
WBG	N/A

2.5. Montenegro

Montenegro adopted the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians 2016-2020, and prepares annual action plans. In the area of employment, Montenegro planned 4 objectives that encompass measures such as: *self-employment programmes, employment of interns in public and private organizations (immediately after high school or university), incentives to employers, vocational training programmes* and other measures. All these measures require significant funding and time to be implemented. The latest action plan for 2017 has two objectives in the housing policy area: *improvement of living conditions for Roma and Egyptians and Creation of conditions for closing down collective centres through construction of sustainable and decent housing*. In 2017 the Government





planned 11.7 million EUR for construction of social housing, all from donor funds. The challenges that Montenegro faces are the same as for the other economies in the region.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Similarly as across the region, stronger measures for direct employment of Roma, taking into account their specific vulnerable situation in this area (lack of qualifications, knowledge, discrimination, etc.) should be developed.

In the area of housing, mapping the housing needs and risks should be a priority, followed by concrete measures for providing decent and sustainable housing.

If one observes secondary data sources, besides EU funding, there are no donors active in housing and employment for Roma in Montenegro.

Table 5: Active donors and Roma related projects

Donor	Roma related projects
ADA	Yes, "Inclusion and rights of Roma women in South-Eastern Europe"
NORAD	Yes, "Women can do it", regional programme
Open Society Foundation	N/A
SIDA	N/A
SDC	N/A
USAID	N/A
WBG	N/A

2.6. Serbia

Serbia adopted the Strategy for social inclusion of Roma men and women for the period of 2016 - 2025. The Strategy defines that action plans will be prepared every two years. Hence, the most recent Action plan is prepared for the period 2017-2019.

The main characteristic of the Action plan is the need for multi-disciplinary and systemic approach in order to achieve each objective. Further to this, objectives, measures and activities are all defined in details and with logical progression.

There are six objectives in the area of employment and equal number in the area of housing. In regards to employment, the measures include: *increased level of registration, incentives for employment and self-employment, adult education, vocational education, legalization of informal employment, promotion of social entrepreneurship*, to mention only a few that are most specific. In regards to housing priority area, Serbia foresees the *legalization of buildings, (re)construction of communal infrastructure, construction of social housing units, construction of*





individual houses, construction of apartments, reconstruction of individual houses and apartments, and in general improvement of the living conditions for Roma. Throughout each objective, this action plan incorporates assistance to Roma population or working with Roma.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Action plan is extensive and detailed, but it will be difficult to implement all priorities and measures within the two years. It is recommended to focus on specific employment and employability measures for Roma with tangible delivery mechanisms and measurable results. Additionally, in the area of housing it is recommended to focus on the priority regarding infrastructure and construction of individual units or social housing units in the local communities with the highest percentage of Roma population.

The donor activities in Serbia are presented below.

Table 6: Active donors and Roma related projects

Donor	Roma related projects
ADA	Yes, Inclusion and rights of Roma women in SEE
BMZ	Yes, Sector specific (recycling) partly includes Roma, regional project to support Centres for Social works for working with vulnerable groups
NORAD	N/A
Open Society Foundation	N/A
SIDA	Yes, Employment, housing, humans rights and education projects
SDC	Yes, Improved housing, living and income of Roma opened since 2013 until December 31, 2017 (value 3.9 mil. EUR).
USAID	Yes, Roma integration activities, various
WBG	N/A

2.7. Turkey

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy of Turkey adopted the Strategy for Roma 2016-2021, with the first phase action plan for 2016-2018. The action plan gives one objective for each priority area:

1. Employment: *Facilitating Roma people's access to the labour market and increasing their employment on qualified and secure jobs.*
2. Housing: *Providing Roma people's access to sufficient housing opportunities in disadvantaged areas and facilitating housing opportunities proper for*





their demands and social lives by accounting a healthy and livable physical environment, necessary infrastructure and transportation.

Clearly, the focus of Turkey is on decent living conditions for Roma and decent employment. Turkey finances the implementation of activities aiming to integrate Roma with technical assistance to the Ministry funded by the EU. During the first phase of the implementation of the strategy Turkey focuses on the assessment of the situation. It is expected that this exercise shall be followed with concrete actions towards the achievement of the set aims.





3. RECOMMENDATIONS - WAY FORWARD

Based upon the analysis of the strategies and action plans for Roma integration of each economy in the region, it is recommended to develop four programmes, as follows:

Housing:

1. Improved living conditions through:
 - 1.1. Construction of communal infrastructure (water, electricity - preferably from renewable sources, sewage, heating, public transport, social infrastructure, etc.) in the settlements and, as appropriate, the dwellings;
 - 1.2. Urbanization, legalization and ensuring ownership status for existing housing units where feasible; where necessary linking recently legalized houses with ongoing programmes for upgrading housing conditions;
2. Construction and reconstruction of housing units
 - 2.1. Where feasible reconstruction and upgrading of dwellings to the level of recognized standards for decent housing;
 - 2.2. Construction of private housing units, both apartments and houses, for Roma who live in housing units and/or settlements that must be dismantled;
 - 2.3. Construction and/or making available decent social housing units for those Roma whose housing status cannot be solved otherwise.

Employment:

3. Employability
 - 3.1. Adult education through special programmes that ensure certified and functional literacy for Roma;
 - 3.2. Vocational training programmes for professions in high demand in the labour market (carpenters, plumbers, welders, technicians in different processing industries)
 - 3.3. Internship programmes for students and young Roma graduates
 - 3.4. Soft employability services, such as information and advice on labour and unemployment rights, active job seeking, individual employment plans, etc.
4. Employment
 - 4.1. Incentive schemes that motivate potential employers to employ Roma (better conditions or higher incentives), with regular monitoring regarding the status of the employed Roma and their mentoring, counselling and support.
 - 4.2. Funding of start-ups and social enterprises with provisions for formalization of existing businesses and operational support and services.
 - 4.3. Affirmative measures for employment of Roma in public institutions and companies.
 - 4.4. Effective mechanisms for identifying, preventing and persecuting discrimination against Roma in employment.

The above recommendation summarizes the essence of all action plans in the Western Balkans and Turkey, despite different methodologies applied in developing such plans and the different position of each economy in terms of fiscal strength,





mechanisms available to address multiple challenges of Roma integration and institutional set-up. Furthermore, by addressing these two priority areas a number of crosscutting challenges, included and elaborated in strategies and action plans, will be addressed.

Crosscutting issues in all countries with regards to Roma integration are as follows:

- a. Lack of reliable and regularly collected data, and when existing - significant variations and incomparability of the data regarding the socio-economic (particularly employment and housing) situation of Roma;
- b. Circle of poverty due to unresolved ownership issues, lack of skills, and low competitiveness in the labour market.
- c. Specific multilayer vulnerability of Romani women.
- d. Widespread prejudice and stereotypes against Roma.

Resolving the employment and housing issues of Roma families and individuals has the potential to contribute to the integration of Roma in all other spheres of life, as well as to tackle some aspects of the cross-cutting topics. In particular, access to education and health may be significantly facilitated by improving the situation in housing and employment. Furthermore, improving the situation in housing and employment contributes to the opening of the Roma settlements to creation of much stronger socio-economic links with the rest of the society. Tangible programmes will open the possibility for Roma integration and all “soft” assistance to follow.





4. DONOR ACTIVITIES IN ROMA INTEGRATION RELATED ASSISTANCE

The list of donors (presented below) that actively support Roma integration through projects and direct government funding is based upon desk research and is not final, since it includes only government donors and programmes that affect Roma in the areas of housing and employment. The focus of the research was on donors that support activities related to:

- Support to employment and employability of Roma;
- Support to Roma housing;
- Presence in the region; and
- Regional dimension of projects and initiatives.

4.1. European Union

Areas of assistance: *Housing, Employment and Education*

Geographic coverage: *Western Balkans and Turkey*

The European Union supported Roma Integration through the IPA I instrument with the total funding in the amount of 150 million EUR from 2007-2013 for Roma Integration across 8 countries in the region, including Croatia, now a member State. The IPA II instrument is still under negotiations, but it aims to provide significant support to Roma communities in all priority areas of integration.

4.2. Regional Housing Programme (RHP) - Multi-donor Housing Programme

Areas of assistance: *Housing for refugees and internally displaced persons*

Geographic coverage: *Regional -Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia*

The purpose of the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) is to ensure that housing units are provided to those refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) that are most vulnerable and most in need. This Programme includes Roma Housing needs, but data on the exact amount of funds provided for Roma housing through this programme was not available through the desk research. Of the total EUR 161 million committed for the Programme as of April 2017, EUR 121 million have been committed by the European Union represented by the European Commission (the “Commission”), i.e. 75% of the total funding. In addition, the Commission has committed a bilateral contribution of EUR 27 million to cover technical assistance for the Partner Countries and part of their operating costs, as well as the CEB’s management costs. Other significant donors to this Programme are these governments: The United States of America (Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration) with 15.3 million EUR, Germany with 6 million EUR, Norway with 5.5





million EUR, Switzerland with 5 million EUR, Italy with 5 million EUR, Denmark with 1.3 million EUR, Turkey with 1 million EUR and Luxembourg with 0.5 million EUR.

4.3. Swedish Development Cooperation (SIDA)

Areas of assistance: *Sustainable economic development, employment, housing, health*

Geographic coverage: *bilateral in the Western Balkans and Turkey*

Swedish Development Cooperation (SIDA) works in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Serbia and Turkey, and it also encourages and supports regional cooperation and cross border cooperation between the countries in this part of Europe.

SIDA already supports minority groups' employment, housing, human rights and education projects in Serbia and Kosovo*.

Since 2009, SIDA supports the Danish Refugee Council project in Kosovo*, Mitrovica, with the objective to better integrate the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in society. The project is aiming to support entrepreneurial efforts of Roma.

SIDA supported housing projects for Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina by providing 1,270,000 EUR for housing projects through Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in the period 2008-2012, and additional 2,280,000 EUR for Roma housing through Caritas, Lutheran World Foundation and "Leda" Association for Development from 2008-2010.

4.4. Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC)

Areas of assistance: *Employment and Housing*

Geographic coverage: *Bilateral, Western Balkans*

Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) has been involved in a number of projects throughout in Western Balkans working in the areas of housing in Serbia, employability in Albania and Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (vocational training, mentoring programs) and education of Roma (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia).

List of Roma integration relevant projects that SDC implements:

- Swiss embassy in Skopje, SDC Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Project: "Increasing Market Employability in Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". The project includes mentoring program that was introduced to allow Roma to get the help they need to find a job. This project commenced in 2013 and will be open until 2019 (overall project value 6.55 mil EUR).
- Swiss embassy in Tirana, Albania, Vocational training and education project open since 2014 until 2018 (value 2.6 mil. EUR).





- Swiss embassy in Belgrade, Serbia, project aiming at improved housing, living and income of Roma, open since 2013 until December 31, 2017 (value 3.9 mil. EUR).

4.5. Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany

Areas of assistance: *Human Rights, Economic Development, Employment, Education and SME support*

Geographic coverage: *Bilateral and Regional in Western Balkans*

The BMZ currently supports a regional project that is implemented by Ministries of Labour in countries of Western Balkans focusing on improving the capacities of Centres for Social work, local governments and NGOs and seeking solutions to support funding of social services to vulnerable groups.

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development is also supporting a project in Serbia that is being currently implemented and partly includes Roma in recycling type project (municipal waste management, 5 pilot municipalities, implemented by Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental protection in Serbia).

4.6. Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

Areas of assistance: *Social inclusion and Economic Development*

Geographic coverage: *Bilateral and Regional*

Austrian Development Agency (ADA) currently works in Albania, Kosovo* and Serbia, with past experience in other countries in the region. The Agency funded the project “Inclusion and rights of Roma women in South-Eastern Europe” in the amount of 799,920.00 EUR, from 2011-2015, using two implementing organizations: CARE and HELP/HILFE. The project was implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. The ADA supported innovative projects in economic development aiming to reduce poverty and supports inclusive markets. Further to this, ADA supports projects that are based on either regional initiatives or regional strategies.

4.7. Norwegian Development Cooperation (NORAD)

NORAD has supported different types of projects throughout the region. NORAD also supported an education project in Albania, specifically for Roma children, but it also supported number of small - scale projects for Roma through its small grant fund scheme that existed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period 2012-2014.

4.8. The World Bank Group (WBG)

Areas of assistance: *Policy development, Economic Development, Education*





Types of programmes: *Bilateral and Regional*

The WBG has track record of working with Roma population, mainly in policy development throughout the Western Balkans, but it also implemented grants for young entrepreneurs in Kosovo* and smaller scale community infrastructure projects (Kosovo*, 2010-2014; Project value: 4.99 million USD; Project title: Social Inclusion and Local Economic Development Project). This is not a final list of projects supported by the World Bank, but it illustrates the scope of intervention in the region.

There is a number of implementing agencies and non-government organizations that support social inclusion and integration of Roma with funding from bilateral donors.

In conclusion, there is an interest and commitment of the donor community for Roma integration that can be streamlined to support and match governments' efforts and funding in particular in specific areas of housing and employment.

Through active cooperation and coordination among governments of all countries and within each economy and its institutions, as well as through cooperation with Roma community representatives and Roma NGO's, the crosscutting issues may be resolved.





5. FUNDING OF PRIORITY MEASURES FOR ROMA HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

The governments developed Action Plans that indicate the total amount of funds required for the implementation of each objective and measure in all four priority areas: education, employment, health and housing. The focus of this paper is on employment and housing and similar measures in all the seven economies that relate to these priorities and the funding thereof. The following table provides information on the total funding required, funds committed by governments and financial gap. It has to be noted that the author does not have up to date information and/or knowledge on the recent activities and funding that was implemented but is relying solely on the data presented in the individual action plans. However, since the financial estimates are conservative, the author assumes that the financial gap amounts are relevant and that the needs for funding may in fact be higher for the integration of Roma.

Priority Area: EMPLOYMENT						
#	Economy	AP Year	Objective	Financial requirement in EUR		
				Total Funds planned	Government Committed	Financial Gap
1.	Albania	2016-2020	To provide equal opportunities for formal employment for Roma and Egyptians 90% of the total budget is for direct employment measures	3,560,136.74	2,043,261.74	1,516,875.00
2.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2017-2020	Improvement of employment and employability of Roma 77% of the total budget is for direct employment measures	2,351,635.87	1,594,156.95	757,478.92
3.	Kosovo*	2017-2021	Improved level of employment of Roma and Ashkali communities 96% of the total budget is for direct employment measures including VAT	982,950.00	35,700.00	947,250.00
4.	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2016-2020	Improvement of employment and employability of Roma	1,254,296.50		1,254,296.50





			88% of the total budget is for direct employment measures			
5.	Montenegro ³	2017	Employability and Direct employment 58% of total budget is for direct employment	96,000.00	96,000.00	Not estimated
6.	Serbia	2017-2018	Employment 80.7% of total budget is for direct employment	7,997,080.70	1,541,380.70 ⁴	6,455,700.00 ⁵
7.	Turkey	2016-2021		-----	-----	-----
TOTAL				16,242,099.81	5,310,499.39	10,931,600.42

Priority Area: HOUSING						
#	Economy	AP Year	Objective	Financial requirement in EUR		
				Total Funds planned	Government Committed	Financial Gap
1	Albania	2016-2020	To improve housing conditions for Roma and Egyptians 88% of total budget is for construction of housing and infrastructure	11,505,352.00	8,729,602.00	2,775,750.00
2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2017-2020	Improved living conditions for Roma population 98% of total budget is for constructions of housing and infrastructure	7,684,717.00	2,336,604.00	5,348,113.00
3	Kosovo*	2017-2021	Housing 91% of total budget is for housing reconstruction and construction	5,144,220.00	666,120.00	4,478,100.00

³ The Action Plan of Montenegro specifies funding only for some measures, although there are measures that the government institutions implement as part of their ongoing activities and some measures are being funded from projects but not quantified.

⁴ The committed funds from the Government of Serbia include IPA Technical Assistance project in the amount of 1 million EUR.

⁵ The financial gap is higher and the estimate presented in this table includes only IPA and other donor funding that was negotiated at the time of the Action Plan preparation.





4	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2016-2020	Social Housing & Improved living conditions 89% of total budget is for constructions of housing and infrastructure	7,974,752.00		7,974,752.00 ⁶
5	Montenegro	2017	Improved living conditions for Roma population 100% of total budget is for construction of housing	11,732,322.00		11,732,322.00
6	Serbia	2017-2018	Housing 81% of total budget is for construction and improvement of housing	18,461,698.00	5,461,698.00 ⁷	13,000,000.00 ⁸
7	Turkey	2016-2021		-----	-----	-----
TOTAL				62,503,061.00	17,194,024.00	45,309,037.00

It is evident, based upon the calculation of the difference between the total budget and funds committed per economy that the financial gaps amount to:

- 10,931,600.42 EUR for employment, out of which, in average 81.61% of the total funding required is for the purposes of grants, subsidies, VAT at workplace and incentives for start-up businesses.
- 45,309,037 EUR for housing, out of which, in average 91% of the total funding required is for the direct housing measures, such as construction of housing units and utility infrastructure.

Additionally, and in relation to the figures presented in the Table 7, it has to be noted as follows:

- The calculated financial gap relates to Western Balkans only.
- Montenegro plans its budget for Roma integration on an annual basis. Thus, the amount of funding required until 2020 will exceed the currently presented figures.
- Governments have planned their budgets taking into consideration their fiscal limitations. Thus, there may be differences between the budgeted funds in the Action Plans and the actual funding required.

⁶ The Action Plan of The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as a source of funding states budget and donor sources but without breakdown of the committed vs. required funding. Hence, it is assumed that the entire amount of funding is yet to be secured.

⁷ The committed funds include 4,6 million EUR of EU IPA assistance.

⁸ The financial gap is much higher, but at the time the Action Plan was developed, the gap was at 13,000,000 EUR negotiated to be funded through EU IPA instrument. Each measure in the Action Plan of Serbia requires additional funding, but the figures haven't been estimated.





6. CONCLUSIONS

- **The situation of Roma throughout the region in the areas of employment and housing is not regularly assessed with hard, reliable and regularly updated statistical data.** While there are a number of surveys and official data (both from statistical offices and administrative registers), these data differ across time and across the region, are not regularly updated and are insufficient to actually develop an informed policy and have the necessary exactness needed for budgeting. Housing and employment measures are significant investments that pay off for both the economies and individuals in the long run, and thus require systematic and comprehensive monitoring and data collection.
- **All the economies in the region face similar challenges in Roma integration** such as: informal and sub-standard Roma housing communities that need to be either legalized and improved (if conditions exist) or relocated to decent housing, number of unregistered Roma with no status or access to any benefits, low level of skills and low competitiveness of Roma in the labour market, high unemployment, disproportionately lower employment in the public sector, and discrimination of Roma in employment.
- **All the economies in the region have the same focus:** employment and employability and housing and decent living conditions for Roma.
- **All Strategies / Action Plans are endorsed by the governments,** prepared with detailed activities and supported by limited funding and there is a need for stronger cooperation with Roma representatives and increased funding for the implementation of housing and employment priorities.
- **The primary donors throughout the region in Roma integration to date are:** European Union Delegation, Swiss Development Agency and Swedish Development Cooperation. Additionally, individual countries are supported in Roma integration related projects by USAID, BMZ through GIZ, Norwegian Development Cooperation, Austrian Development Agency and Luxembourg Development Cooperation. **A system of regional coordination of all donor efforts and governments has to be established to ensure balanced and results oriented implementation of Roma integration programmes in the priority areas of housing and employment.** This system will also ensure standardization, stabilization, quality assurance and the efficiency of effort.
- **The financial gaps,** even with conservative planning, amount to: **10,931,600.42 EUR for employment and 45,309,037 EUR for housing** for the period of 2016 - 2021.





The integration of Roma has to be supported with more substantial programmes in the areas of housing and employment that will yield tangible results and can be precisely measured with indicators set in the regional methodology for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Action Plans for Roma integration.⁹ The relevant statistical data has to be regularly collected and allow for disaggregation by ethnicity, gender and age. This will further enable monitoring and reporting of the overall impact achieved in Roma integration. The measures should also strive to ensure sustainability of the results.

The process of Roma integration is an on-going process and it will require long-term commitment from governments. The change in the conditions and socio-economic situation of Roma and their integration in the society begins with opening the possibilities for better life and the socio-economic links with the rest of the society.

⁹<http://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20161109templateEN.docx/c3068fedc4168144298e04ab7dc804fd.doc>

