

POTENTIALS FOR ROMA EMPLOYMENT IN THE ENLARGEMENT REGION





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IN THE ENLARGEMENT REGION**

Rasim Tulumovic

December 2018

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* 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.

ACRONYMS

ALMM	Active Labour Market Measure(s)
ALMP	Active Labour Market Policies
AP	Action Plan
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CoE	Council of Europe
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSW	Centre for Social Work
EI	Employment Institute / Institution
ESA	Employment Service Agency
ESAP	Employment and Social Affairs Platform
EPP	Employment Promotion Program
EU	European Union
EU Framework	European Union Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FYRM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
ID	Identity Document
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LGU	Local Government Units
LMI	Labour Market Indicators
MHMR	Ministry of Human and Minority Rights
MLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
NES	National Employment Service
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRIS	National Roma Integration Strategy
OFA	Ohrid Framework Agreement
OSFA	Open Society Foundation in Albania
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PEP	Public Employment Program
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
RR2011	Regional Roma Survey 2011
RS	Republic of Srpska
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WB	Western Balkans
WB6	Western Balkans six (refers to Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia)

INTRODUCTION

Employment policy is a vision and a practical plan for achieving certain employment goals. It is not just a job creation programme, but should consider a whole range of social and economic issues. The governments from the EU enlargement region offer a range of standard active labour market measures and monetary support in case of unemployment.

The majority of working age Roma¹ in the enlargement region is unemployed, and many have been out of work for a considerable time. Large number of unemployed Roma is engaged in the informal sector (collecting waste, street vendors, cleaners, etc.). The mass-unemployment of working age Roma is most often perceived as a labour market supply-side issue, attributing the high unemployment to Roma's inability to find it because of their low levels of education, out-of-date work skills, and detachment from the labour market². The issue is, however, much more complex, and includes obstacles on the demand-side (prejudice and distrust, for example) and in relation to the design of the active labour market measures and other policies offered by the governments.

The governments in the EU enlargement region have adopted Roma integration public policies and established institutional arrangements and dialogue on Roma issues. However, impact on Roma populations remains limited because of the isolation of the issues affecting Roma from the mainstream public policies, public budgeting, public service institutions and administration. These issues are addressed by the Roma Integration 2020 project.³ The objective of the Roma Integration 2020 is to contribute to reducing the socio-economic gap between the Roma and non-Roma population in the Western Balkans and Turkey by strengthening institutional obligations of governments to incorporate and deliver specific Roma integration goals in the mainstream policy developments.

This analysis of the employment policies towards Roma in the enlargement region served as an input to the Regional Conference “Innovative Approaches to Employment of Roma”.⁴ The conference explored the current practices of the governments to identify reasons for their limited impact on Roma, their potential impact, as well as the need to adjust the policies to produce impact on Roma. Further, the conference presented new approaches to employment implemented by international or non-governmental organisations, as well as the private sector, which, along with employment practices targeting other vulnerable groups may also be applicable to the Roma population. Besides the analysis of the employment aspect of the existing Roma integration policies, this report contains the contributions, conclusions, and recommendations discussed at the conference.

The first chapter presents the analysis of the employment policies towards Roma as stipulated within the Roma integration policies in the region. The second chapter contains a selection of practices from EU countries. The third chapter presents possible innovative approaches and key recommendations that should be considered by governments in the enlargement region in order to further develop their efforts to employ Roma, based on the analysis and the inputs from the regional conference “Innovative Approaches to Employment of Roma”.

¹ In line with the terminology of the European institutions and international organisations, the term ‘Roma’ is used here to refer to a number of different groups (e.g. Roma, Sinti, Kale, Gypsies, Romanichel, Boyash, Ashkali, Egyptians, Yenish, Dom, Lom, Rom and Abdal) and includes ‘travellers’ or ‘itinerants’, without denying the specificities of these groups.

² Ann Hyde, “Systemic Exclusion of Roma from Employment”, available at: <http://www.errc.org/roma-rights-journal/systemic-exclusion-of-roma-from-employment>. The demand side in employment refers to the employers, and the supply side in employment refers to the labour force.

³ The Roma Integration 2020 project is implemented by the Regional Cooperation Council and funded by the European Union and the Open Society Foundations. More information can be found on the project's website: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/>

⁴ The conference was organized by the RCC's Roma Integration 2020 and Employment and Social Affairs Platform, and the Roma Education Fund. It was held in Budapest on 10-11 December 2018. More information on the conference is available at: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/events/34/regional-conference-innovative-approaches-to-employment-of-roma>

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Public policy is a course of actions or lack thereof, adopted and pursued by a government. It is regulated by laws, priorities, strategies, action plans, and other governmental actions, but also includes the attitudes of the public officials and servants. Employment policy is a vision and a practical plan for achieving certain employment goals.

High and persistent rates of unemployment have been a major problem in the enlargement region for a long time. In response to the growing concerns about the rise in unemployment, various public employment policies have been developed. These policies aim to improve employability, ease transitions in the labour market, contribute to better matching of demand with supply, and help reintegrate vulnerable groups. The measures under these policies include general and vocational training, wage subsidies, support for self-employment, mobility support, and provision of labour market services such as information, advice, job search assistance, etc.

Some of the marginalised groups in the labour force at risk of exclusion from the labour market are poverty-stricken individuals with limited or no education, landless or almost landless, in rural areas, vulnerable women and youth, disabled, single parents, and Roma. Each of these groups has specific limitations compared to the rest of the population. These limitations affect their position and vulnerability in the labour market.

Generally, the effects of the employment policies vary. The long-term effects can be quite different from their short-term effects.⁵ Short-term effects, measured one to two years after the start of policy implementation, are modestly positive. However, vulnerable groups (including Roma) have specific limitations and what has proven to work for others, may not work for them. What actually works for the Roma population depends on the different context in each economy and also on the differences among Roma communities. For example, for Roma secondary students in Hungary⁶ substantial importance is placed on linking education with employment directly (e.g. working as police officers).

In order to improve the position of Roma in the labour market, the governments in the enlargement region adopted strategies for the integration of Roma and accompanying employment action plans. The desk analysis of these strategies and action plans are presented in Chapter I of this document. The strategies include a number of fundamental policy fields⁷ and objectives. One of the major sections of each strategy is related to employment objectives and actions. Objectives related to employment refer to the increase of the participation of Roma in the measures of the mainstream employment policies⁸, increase of the level of qualification, direct employment promotion, and strengthening the capacity of the responsible institutions. Across the region, the action plans for Roma integration on employment vary: some are very precise and some are much more general. Proposed actions are related to supporting the participation of Roma employment, granting full scholarships, job qualification, information dissemination and similar.

⁵ Marloes Lammers and Lucy Kok, „Long term effects of active labour market policies: UI benefit recipients and welfare recipients“, Amsterdam, August 2017, available at: http://www.seo.nl/uploads/media/DP_90_Long_term_effects_of_active_labour_market_policies.pdf.

⁶ Investing in our future: What work(s) for young Roma?, ERGO network (2017)

⁷ The key priority areas are health, education, employment and housing, as a rule. Some of the strategies and action plans contain additional priority areas (social welfare, gender equality, culture and others). In line with the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, the policies tackle civil registration as well, usually mainstreamed within one of the mentioned priority areas.

⁸ Active employment policies are related to government expenditures targeted towards improving the job-finding probability of an unemployed persons, in comparison to the passive measures providing financial support to the unemployed.

ROMA INTEGRATION

It is estimated that there are between 10-12 million Roma living in Europe, six million of whom live in the EU.⁹ According to the available data,¹⁰ there are around 3,795,500 Roma living in the enlargement region.

Roma still face social exclusion and discrimination all over Europe, leading to lack of education, chronic unemployment, limited access to healthcare, rudimentary housing, limited access to essential services and widespread poverty. This is due to fragmented and scarce interventions aimed at the Roma population resulting in isolating the issues of Roma from the mainstream public policies, public budgeting, public service institutions and administration.

The dire situation of Roma across Europe initiated Roma activists to advocate for improvement of the situation of this population. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) has an Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE area¹¹ since 2003. The Council of Europe adopted the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma¹² in 2010, dealing with non-discrimination and citizenship, social inclusion, and international cooperation. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is actively engaged in a number of actions contributing to the integration of Roma. These and other international / intergovernmental organizations have also adopted a range of documents for improving the situation of Roma and their inclusion in the society.

The most significant initiative was the Open Society Institute and the World Bank initiated Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 that was proclaimed with a declaration signed by heads of governments from South East Europe.¹³ The governments committed to reduce the socio-economic gap between the Roma and the rest of the societies and eliminate discrimination towards Roma, by adopting and implementing Decade Action Plans, ensuring full participation and involvement of Roma in the process, demonstrating progress (monitoring and reporting) and reviewing experiences. This effort was successful in ensuring the first ever formal government policies for Roma inclusion in the societies, although tangible changes in the lives of Roma were modest, and the monitoring and reporting on the progress were rudimentary.

Following the first ever European Roma Summit in 2008,¹⁴ in 2009, the European Platform for Roma Inclusion was established and the fundamental principles for social inclusion of Roma were identified at the level of the European Union. The European Union adopted the EU Framework for National Roma Strategies up to 2020¹⁵ (EU Framework) in 2011 as the main policy document on Roma integration, and subsequently published several advisory jurisdictions and declarations regarding the inclusion strategies.¹⁶ The EU Framework invites the governments in the enlargement region to align their efforts with the EU and offers help in their Roma integration efforts.

⁹ European Commission's website Roma integration in the EU countries, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-countries_en

¹⁰ RCC's Roma Integration 2020 webpage Roma in the Region, available at: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/pages/3/roma-in-the-region>

¹¹ Available at: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/17554>

¹² Available at: http://unipd-centrodirittumani.it/public/docs/the_strasbourg_declaration_on_roma.pdf

¹³ Information on the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 can be found at: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/romadecade>

¹⁴ Information on the developments at EU level regarding Roma integration can be found on the European Commission's website Roma and EU : https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu_en

¹⁵ European commission, COM(2011) 173 final, available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1444910104414&uri=CELEX:52011DC0173>

¹⁶ More information is available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/roma-and-eu/roma-integration-eu-countries_en

The Regional Roma Survey 2017¹⁷ is the a major collection of data on marginalised Roma in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo*. It follows up similar statistical exercises undertaken for the first time in 2003, and then in 2011, allowing for of comparability across time, as well as geographical. The results of the survey are used by the European Union to assess the progress on Roma integration within the EU integration, and by the Roma Integration 2020 project for monitoring the National Roma Integration Strategies (NRISs) in the enlargement region.

According to the survey, modest progress has been made throughout the region in meeting the targets outlined in the NRISs. However, marginalised Roma continue to face limited access to opportunities in virtually every aspect of human development such as basic human rights, health, education, housing, employment and standard of living. Key labour market indicators in the Survey include the unemployment rate (% of total labour force, age 15-64), the employment rate (% of population, age 15-64), not in employment, education or training rate (% of population, age 18-24), labour force participation rate (% of population, age 15-64), and informal employment (% of population, age 15-64).

The situation of Roma in employment is assessed as one of the major issues of concern (along with housing and gender equality). Therefore, a special report in the area of employment, including quantitative, as well as qualitative information from the 2017 Regional Roma Survey is published under the title “The position of Roma women and men in the labour markets of Western Balkans”.¹⁸ The report contains comparison of the data from 2017 with the data from 2011, indicating negative trends across the indicators and across the whole region. The participation of Roma in the labour market and their employment rates have dramatically fallen since 2011, although the unemployment has also fallen in most of the economies of the Western Balkans. With the participation of Roma in the informal sector mostly remaining the same over time, the data collectively indicate that Roma are pushed out from the labour market, despite the existence of the Roma integration action plans on employment.

When compared to their non-Roma neighbours, Roma face twice as high unemployment rate in the region. The regional average unemployment rate among Roma is 44.83%. The unemployment is the highest in Bosnia and Herzegovina (with 56%) and the lowest in Montenegro (23%). The gap between marginalised Roma and their non-Roma neighbours in the region is also high and it is 20.33%. It is the highest in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (30%) and again the lowest in Montenegro (15%), followed by Albania (17%).

Albania also experienced the largest decline in the employment rate (18% in 2017) among marginalised Roma since 2011. The employment rate of Roma in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is the highest in the region (22%), closely followed by the rate in Serbia (21%). The lowest employment rate is in Bosnia and Herzegovina (11%), followed by Kosovo* (13%). The average employment rate of Roma in the region is 16.5%. The gap in the employment between marginalised Roma and their neighbouring non-Roma counterparts in the region is -15.33%. The gap in Albania is small (-8%) in comparison to those in other Western Balkan countries. It is the highest in Montenegro (-23%).

The shares of youth (age 18-24) not in employment, education, or training are very high among Roma, ranging from 73% in Serbia (78% in 2011) to 86% in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The regional average is 78.5%. The gap between marginalized Roma and non-Roma neighbours is the highest in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (45%) and the

¹⁷ The survey was supported by the European Commission Directorate General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), and implemented by the UNDP and the World Bank.

¹⁸ The full report is available at: http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/dam/rbec/docs/RomaEmployment_UNDP_RBEC.pdf

lowest in Bosnia and Herzegovina (21%). The regional average of the gap is 35.16%. The situation is especially daring for young Roma women, with 89% of them not being involved in education, employment or training across the region, or 9 in 10 are completely out of any integration process.

Unlike in most Western Balkan economies, where marginalised Roma are less likely to participate in the labour market, labour force participation in Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Kosovo* is similar among marginalised Roma and their neighbouring non-Roma counterparts (with a gap of 3 to 5%). The regional average of this gap is 10.5%. The labour force participation of Roma in the region varies across the region and it is 31.5% in average. The lowest labour force participation rate of Roma is in Montenegro (19%) and the highest is in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (44%). While Roma are still struggling to remain in the labour market, the trend of being pushed out from the labour market is evident in comparison with 2011, as the rates decline.

Informal employment continues to be high among the marginalised Roma, with 60.8% average in the region. Informal employment is lowest in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (39%), and highest in Serbia (71%). The informal employment rate among the non-Roma neighbours is much less than for the marginalised Roma. The gap in Serbia is the highest in the Western Balkans (56%), followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina (46%) and Albania (40%). The average gap between marginalised Roma and non-Roma neighbours in informal employment is 35.16% in the region.

All the labour market indicators (LMI) for Bosnia and Herzegovina are below the regional average, where the highest gap between marginalised Roma and non-Roma neighbours are also encountered, with four gaps higher than the regional average. Kosovo* and Montenegro are also challenged with quite low LMI when compared to the region, with only one indicator above the regional average. Three gap indicators in Montenegro are above the regional average. It is interesting to note that all the gap indicators in Kosovo* are positive when compared with the rest of the region (below the regional average). The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is faced with high unemployment of Roma, but other LMI are above the regional average. A similar situation is observable in Serbia where informal employment is high, but other LMIs are below the regional average. The three gap indicators for both countries are negative (higher than the regional average).

The table below summarises the data. It is evident that a change in the policy and resolute actions are required in the field of employment in order to change the situation.

2017 Regional Roma Survey – summary of employment data	Non-Roma	Roma	Roma females
Employment (% of population, ages 15-64)	32	17	7
Labour force participation rate (% of population, ages 15-64)	42	32	18
Unemployment (% of total labour force, ages 15-64)	25	45	55
Not in education, employment or training (% of population, ages 18-24)	43	79	89

1. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR ROMA IN THE ENLARGEMENT REGION

1.1. Albania

The official data suggest that 11,669 people account for the Roma¹⁹ community in Albania, representing 0.42% of the population. The average estimation from unofficial sources is that there are 115,000 members of these communities in Albania. The National Action Plan for Integration of Romas²⁰ is the document governing the Roma integration policy in Albania. It covers five key areas and one of them is employment.

Employment of Roma

According to the Action Plan²¹, there is no accurate data on the employment rate, labour market participation rate, or unemployment rate for Roma. The survey of the Open Society Foundation in Albania from April 2014 shows that 75% of the working age adult Roma were unemployed. The UNDP Survey from February 2012 showed that 92.3% of the economically active Roma (those with some kind of job providing income) did not have employment contracts. According to the 2017 Regional Roma Survey, the unemployment rate of marginalised Roma is 55%. At the end of 2017, Roma constituted 7% of registered unemployed job seekers in Albania. The overall employment rate in Albania as reported through the Labour Force Survey was 43.6% in 2017, while according to the 2017 Regional Roma Survey the national employment rate is 56%, and the employment rate for marginalised Roma is only 18%.

The poverty and the urge for providing for the basic needs considerably decrease the chances of Roma to attend vocational education schools and training courses or to get involved in job qualification courses. Instead, they are forced to make alternative choices that are often informal. The informal rate of employment reported is 63% within the Roma integration Strategy/Action plan,²² (62% according to the 2017 Regional Roma Survey).

The Strategy underlines that the main obstacles preventing Roma from getting employed are poverty, exclusion, lack of trust in the existing employment programmes, and negative experiences in the past. Roma also face hidden barriers to employment, including distance from work/school, discrimination and the stigma of being Roma, frequency of migration, lack of ID cards and other personal and administrative documents, lack of knowledge on the existence of employment programmes, etc. Most employment offices and VET centres or schools also do not have any employees of Roma origin, which generates misunderstandings between the administration and the communities, and at times discriminatory attitudes during service provision.

The Roma who manage to find work are mostly engaged in second hand small trade and individual collection of recyclable waste, as well as in the services sector, domestic care, and construction. Formal employment is mainly based on subsistence agriculture.

In 2016, there were no government programmes for supporting self-employed or low skilled and vulnerable entrepreneurs.

¹⁹ The term Roma in the context of Albania used in this report is a collective term for Roma and Egyptians.

²⁰ Available at: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/National%20Roma%20Integration%20Strategy%20AL%202016-2020.pdf/b98927eec4630f720e5cb27f469a92ac.pdf>

²¹ Page 29, section Employment and Vocational Education and Training (VET)

²² Regional Roma Survey 2017

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

The National Action Plan includes a set of measures in Employment and Vocational Education and Training (VET). The government implements a combination of passive policies and active policies which promote labour market integration. The National Employment Service offers a set of mainstream employment promotion programmes. However, the participation of Roma in these programmes remains minimal.

The strategic goal related to employment is “to provide equal opportunities for formal employment for Roma”. The goal is further elaborated with “80% more Roma men and women participating in VET and active employment programs will be integrated in the labour market by the end of the year 2020”.²³ The elaboration of the goal does not correspond to the actual strategic goal. The strategic goal deals with “equal opportunities”, which may be interpreted as elimination of the gap as a resulting situation, and with the formal employment, measured by the employment rate of Roma and the overall population, or more precisely with the gap in these employment rates. The elaboration of the goal, in fact, deals with employability (job qualification) and access to employment services, which does not correlate directly with the strategic goal definition, and thus, is not providing sufficient information on the actual target set to be achieved, and the baseline (starting point). At the same time, the explanation of the strategic goal is, in fact, the indicator (or rather target) of the first specific objective in employment. In this sense, the strategic goal needs revision in order to ensure clarity and accuracy, including in its definition and the set baseline and target values.

There are three objectives set with corresponding indicators:

- Objective 1: To integrate Roma in the labour market through VET and active employment programs.
Indicator: 80% more Roma men and women participating in VET and active employment programs will be integrated in the labour market by the end of 2020.
- Objective 2: To promote (social) entrepreneurship and self-employment of Roma.
Indicator: 300 representatives of Roma communities will be self-employed or carry out (social) entrepreneurship by the end of 2020.
- Objective 3: To build capacities and improve the performance of the NES and VET system staff for the integration of Roma in the labour market.
Indicator: The work performance of NES staff and VET system for the integration of Roma in the labour market will be improved more than 80% by the end of 2020.

The objectives set in the area of employment are defined as outputs from the activities, and may also benefit from reformulation, particularly in terms of their indicators and targets, as well as by providing baseline data. Furthermore, the logic of intervention, or how the activities deliver outputs, how the outputs contribute to the specific objectives, and these to the strategic goal, needs to be established clearly.

Measures and activities

The Action Plan contains a number of activities related to the outlined objectives.

The first objective is related to integration of Roma in the labour market through VET and EPPs. During 2014, 146 Roma participated in EPPs, out of a total of 3,975 (4% of the total) beneficiaries of this mainstream measure. In order to increase the number of Roma beneficiaries of the EPPs, it is planned to establish quotas for their participation, involve them in public works, and in VET trainings free of charge, grant VET students' full scholarships, develop and pilot standard career counselling programs, and enable them to receive the

²³ In the action plan this explanation of the goal is presented as the indicator for Objective 1.

benefits accompanying the economic aid until they find a permanent job, regardless of their participation in EPPs (e.g. not suspending the social benefits for Roma participants in employment programmes).

The activities and measures for promoting (social) entrepreneurship and self-employment of Roma include improving legislation (to support social enterprises through grants), evaluating potential impact of tax exemption for Roma entrepreneurs/self-employed, designating and equipping outdoor markets for Roma, exploring possibilities to give concession of dump areas to Roma individual collectors, upgrading or replacing the modified vehicles frequently used by Roma to transport goods, reducing local taxes and fees for Roma entrepreneurs by 30%, improving information systems for Roma, and awarding support services and grants for the development of agriculture or rural development projects and start-ups.

In order to build capacities and improve the performance of the NES and VET staff for the integration of Roma in the labour market (objective 3), it is intended to prepare better informational material and train NES and VET staff. It is also planned to secure employment of qualified Roma in employment institutions and introduce annual targets for employment of Roma in public service.

Monitoring

The Integrated Policy Management Group (IPMG) monitors the sectoral reforms in Albania according to the government priorities, the National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI), the Medium-Term Budgetary Framework (MTBF), the EU integration process and the international obligations of Albania. A Thematic Subgroup on Social inclusion within the IPMG monitors the implementation of the objectives and measures of the action plan for Roma, and periodically presents and discusses progress made. This subgroup is chaired by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. The Action Plan foresees the publication of annual progress reports and support for civil society monitoring reports.

The two main monitoring indicators in the area of employment set in the Action Plan, along with the baseline data and targets, are presented in the table.

Indicator	Baseline 2013	2017	2020
Number of Roma (men and women) included in EPP	146	5% increase	10% increase
Number of Roma (men and women) who complete vocational training courses	250	5% increase	10% increase

Obviously, these indicators are process, rather than result indicators, as they measure the quantity of the outputs of the activity. Therefore, the progress towards the set objectives, and even more importantly the strategic goal, cannot be measured through these indicators. It is necessary to include the LMIs (employment rate, unemployment rate, labour force participation rate, and similar) within the Action Plan and establish a proper data collection system with possibility for data disaggregation by sex and ethnicity in order to monitor if the policy is having any impact on the ground.

Implementation progress

According to the Ministry of Finance and the NES, significant improvement in the employment of members of the Roma community has been observed in 2017. 842 Roma were enrolled in a VET or EPP. 193 of those enrolled have successfully completed the training/program and 174 of them were employed after the completion of the EPP.

Additionally, 854 Roma were employed through the Regional Employment offices. The employment occurred mainly due to the number of participants in various activities such as:

- 268 involved in public works (compared to 14 as reported in 2016) – temporary engagement on jobs of public interest organised by local governments;
- 944 involved in career counselling programs;
- 180 designated market places used by Roma for sale of goods and handcrafted products (166 as reported in 2016);
- 20 businesses run by Roma have profited from the decrease in local taxation;
- By the end of 2017 there were 34 Roma beneficiaries selected to receive grants totalling EUR 100,000 for the purpose of starting a business.

These results from the implemented activities show that the government has invested certain efforts to ensure Roma benefit from some of the mainstream active labour market measures, and additionally provided for certain specific measures for Roma to increase their economic participation (such as dedicated markets, reduced taxes for business). However, the available statistics regarding the situation of Roma in regards to employment show that these efforts are far from sufficient to achieve the strategic goal and reduce the gap between Roma and the rest of the society. Besides the technical improvements and the improvement of the monitoring system (including impact data) suggested before, Albania needs to redesign its employment policy towards Roma in order to produce far better effects on the ground.

1.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to the 2013 census, the number of Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been reported as 12,583. The average estimation on the number of Roma from unofficial sources, mainly claims by Roma civil society or Roma leaders, is that there are around 76,000 Roma.

The Strategy for addressing the issues of Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina²⁴ was adopted in 2005 by the Council of Ministers, at the proposal of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. The strategy neither establishes a time frame for implementation nor monitoring and implementation indicators. Therefore it is applicable in the long-term (indefinitely) and serves as a declaration of the basic principles for the gradual improvement of the situation of Roma, while the details of the implementation are regulated by action plans.

There were three action plans adopted for the implementation of the Strategy. The initial plan was adopted in 2008. The Revised Action Plan 2013 – 2016 followed the initial plan. The third Action Plan is for the period 2017 – 2020. The plans cover the areas of employment, housing, and health care (the area of education is regulated by a separate plan which is not defined in time and has been revised once). The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees is the leading institution for the coordination of the implementation of the action plans (except for education). Unlike the other economies in the region, the action plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina is implemented through an earmarked budget (grant) decided by the Council of Ministers and managed and distributed to the implementing institutions by the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. In practice, this means that even though mainstream measures are implemented as part of the action plan for Roma integration, the funding is separate, explicitly dedicated to Roma, making the monitoring of the implementation of activities, Roma beneficiaries and expenditures easier.

Employment of Roma

Employment is identified within the Strategy as an important field and issue that should be included in the programme of actions with concrete measures. There is no data available about the level of Roma unemployment in the Strategy. Employment institutes²⁵ registered 2,645 Roma as unemployed²⁶. According to the Regional Roma Survey from 2017, the unemployment rate of marginalised Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 56%. Their employment rate is only 11%, but their rate in informal sector is even 63%. The participation of Roma in the labour force is only 26%, and the rate of young Roma not in employment, education and training is even 86% (92% for females).

According to the Strategy, Roma are the most unemployed ethnic group in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The reasons are numerous and include:

- lack of education among Roma;
- inadequate qualifications of Roma;
- employers reluctant to hire Roma, particularly at more qualified and better-paid jobs;
- few Roma owing companies with limited possibility for hiring (also reluctant to hire Roma);
- lack of competences and opportunities for self-employment and managing companies;
- lack of coordination with local government to facilitate self-employment through support in the registration process and issuance of permits.

²⁴ Available at:

[https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20050721%20BH%20NRIS%20unlimited%20\[en\].pdf/7818b40fcd72b2b2abc216b9e0de9a08.pdf](https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20050721%20BH%20NRIS%20unlimited%20[en].pdf/7818b40fcd72b2b2abc216b9e0de9a08.pdf)

²⁵ The employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a central function, but divided by entities, thus the Employment Institutes operate in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Srpska and the Brčko District.

²⁶ Action plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for addressing Roma issues 2017 – 2020, page 18.

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

As said, the Strategy for Roma integration is general and contains certain principles for implementation. The efforts in employment, as planned in the Strategy, are indefinite in time given the complex situation and the previous negligence of the issue.

The part of the Strategy on employment declares that direct intervention for employment of Roma by the authorities is not realistic (as the authorities cannot directly interfere with the recruitment of employees in the private sector).²⁷ Nevertheless, it commits to certain actions that may improve the employment of Roma, including:

- promoting affirmative action (favouring) Roma in recruitment;
- checking payment of wages and contributions (health, retirement, social) by employers hiring Roma;
- funding and implementing vocational trainings for Roma (for job qualification or re-qualification adequate to the employers' requirements) in cooperation with the education system;
- encouraging lower level authorities to allocate funds for employment of Roma;
- subsidising companies implementing programmes for hiring Roma, and offering other benefits to these companies, such as partial exemption from contributions, simplified administrative procedures for registration and similar;
- encouraging banks and other financial organisation to provide favourable loans for start-ups to Roma;
- supporting Roma owned start-ups dealing with collection and processing recyclable waste, cleaning public properties, or other environmentally beneficial works;
- employing Roma in the public sector, at central and lower levels, proportionally to their percentage within the overall population on the corresponding territory;
- mandating the labour inspection to monitor and deal with discrimination of Roma in employment;
- allocating state-owned untitled agricultural land to Roma families for temporary or permanent use, with appropriate economic, financial and fiscal provisions to encourage Roma to engage in agriculture;
- ensuring the infrastructure in Roma settlements is appropriate to encourage economic activities (in coordination with housing).

The Strategy further calls on including the employment of Roma within the Poverty Reduction Strategy as its integral part, and lists the responsible institutions, besides the chiefly responsible Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees:

- The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- The Employment Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the labour offices at entity and cantonal level;
- Ministries / authorities at central or lower level responsible for economy, labour, social policies, privatisation,
- Centres for social work
- Municipal authorities
- Utility and other public companies
- Market and labour inspection
- Coordination offices for the implementation of the Development Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of the Poverty Reduction Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

²⁷ Roma Strategy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, chapter 2 Employment.

The Strategy calls for adoption of an action plan for the implementation of the part on employment of the Strategy for Roma integration.

Since the commitments expressed in the strategy actually list planned measures and activities, there is no identifiable strategic goal that would clearly specify the impact that the strategy should achieve, with measurable indicators, baseline data and set targets.

Measures and activities

The Action plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for addressing Roma issues in the fields of employment, housing, and health care 2017 - 2020²⁸ is the third action plan adopted for implementing the Strategy.

There are four strategic goals set for the given period and the second goal is “Improvement of the employability and employment of Roma“. The indicator for employment is the annual number of employed Roma through the measures of the government. The baseline is the number of employed Roma through the measures of the government in 2016, and it is 101, while for each following year (2017-2020) the plan is to employ 157 Roma. The indicator for employability is the annual number of Roma with increased employability through the measures of the government. The baseline value for employability is 0, for 2016, and the plan is to increase the employability of 386 Roma in 2017 and 424 each following year. The goal is implemented by executing two programme activities:

1. Programme for supporting Roma employment:
 - 1.1. Developing efficient programmes for employment of Roma at the three EIs;
 - 1.2. Incentives for employment and self-employment of Roma;
 - 1.3. Involving Roma in public works programmes;
 - 1.4. Financial support for establishing of cooperatives and other forms of association of Roma (and non-Roma) in entrepreneurship.
2. Programme for education, additional qualifications, (re)qualification of Roma registered as unemployed with the EIs:
 - 2.1. Encouraging Roma to register with employment institutes (campaigns including brochures and meetings in the community);
 - 2.2. Additional qualifications, (re)qualifications of Roma for known employers (combined with adult education);
 - 2.3. Adult education and professional qualifications;
 - 2.4. Training of Roma for active job search and starting own business.

In accordance with the projections from the Action Plan, BAM 5,299,400 (approximately EUR 2,649,700) are planned for investing in the employment of Roma for the period 2017-2020, by which 628 Roma should get employment and 1,658 Roma should get increased chances for employment (through increased employability).

The Action Plan does not include all the commitments from the Strategy for Roma integration in the area of employment, particularly those related to the monitoring of the private sector by the labour inspection for formal employment of Roma and regular payment of wages and contribution, free from discrimination during recruitment and as employees; fair employment of Roma in the public sector at central and lower levels; and encouraging Roma engagement in specific economic fields, such as waste recycling, environment maintenance, and agriculture through direct forms of support and favourable legal conditions.

²⁸ Available at:

<https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/Action%20Plan%20for%20Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina%20on%20Roma.pdf/b9a2199bf508af0f33df08aee71f26af.pdf>

Nevertheless, it contains measures clearly directly contributing to the strategic objective of increased employment and employability of Roma, which is commendable. While the process indicators are well defined, the Strategy would benefit from defining the impact indicators, along with their baseline values and targets (such as employment rate, unemployment rate, etc.). Establishing a monitoring system for the impact is also needed.

Monitoring

As said, the Strategy for Roma integration in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not set a concrete strategic objective in the area of employment, which would be accompanied with proper impact indicators, their baseline values and set targets. This makes the monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy difficult. Furthermore, there is no defined mechanism for monitoring of the Strategy in the area of employment defined within the Strategy (although certain monitoring arrangements are defined for the other priority areas).

The Action Plan on employment for 2017-2020, on the other hand, defines specific process indicators that allow for measuring the progress in implementation, the number of Roma beneficiaries from various measures, as well as the expenditures for implementation. Additionally, the Action Plan contains a provision stating that the regionally adopted monitoring standards²⁹ shall be applied to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan and the Strategy. The regional monitoring standards set the following impact indicators in the area of employment: employment rate; informal work rate; unemployment rate; long-term unemployment rate; last employment experience; no employment experience rate; and youth not in education, employment or training rate.

The monitoring is coordinated by the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. Data on the implementation, number of beneficiaries and budget spent is collected from the Employment Institutes of the three entities (and other relevant institutions dealing with employment).

The annual reports prepared by the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees contain the required information on implemented activities in the area of employment according to the Action Plan, to the large extent data on beneficiaries (disaggregation by sex should be improved), and some data or estimations on the expenditures. The monitoring and reporting system may be improved by including monitoring obligation within the implementing agreements with the institutions receiving grants for implementation, and by engaging the statistical offices and regularly collecting data for the impact indicators.

Implementation progress

In the period 2009 - 2016, the Council of Ministers of BiH allocated BAM 19,522,000.00 (approximately EUR 9,761,000) to be implemented for solving Roma issues in the areas of employment, housing, and health care.

688 Roma went through programmes for co-financing employment and self-employment and a total of BAM 4,777,000.00 (approximately EUR 2,388,500) were allocated for this purpose, although it is not clear if all the allocated funds were actually spent. The fund was implemented through the employment institutes. Unfortunately, 95% of Roma gaining employment through the state funded employment measures are dismissed from employment after one year (when the state funding ends). This is a fundamental problem in the design of the planned measures that needs to be resolved in order to achieve sustainable impact.

²⁹ The regional monitoring standards are adopted by the National Roma Contact Points of the governments from the enlargement region within the framework of the Roma Integration 2020 action. The monitoring template used by the governments for the 2017 annual reporting is available at: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/docs/87/template-for-report-on-the-implementation-of-the-roma-integration-public-policy-for-2017>.

Regarding the programs for stimulating Roma employment in 2017, three of them were implemented with a total budget of 7,500 EUR. 90 Roma received incentives for employment and self-employment. There is no consolidated report on the number of Roma involved in public works, but it is estimated that 30 were involved. Financial support for the establishment of cooperatives or other forms of associations of Roma in entrepreneurial activities was not implemented in 2017.³⁰

During 2017, Roma were motivated to register at EI by civil society organisations, but there were no funds disbursed for this activity. VET trainings and trainings for active job seekers were not implemented.

The results from the 2017 Regional Roma Survey, accepted by the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a reliable source of information, indicate that the efforts for employment of Roma implemented as part of the Roma integration Strategy are insufficient to produce the desired change in the lives of Roma by significantly increasing the employment and decreasing the unemployment and informal employment rates.

³⁰ The data for 2017 on the implementation of the Strategy for Roma are extracted from the annual government report for 2017, available at: https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/BIH_Progress%20Report%202017%20ENG.pdf/8f45a42e030e7de827fbac87a4d038cc.pdf

1.3. Kosovo*

The official number of Roma³¹ population in Kosovo is reported to be 35,784 and the unofficial number is slightly higher than 37,500. The main policy document is the Strategy for inclusion of Roma and Ashkali communities in the Kosovo society 2017-2021.³² It has four specific objectives covering the four main areas of inclusion. Employment and social welfare are combined as one main area.

Employment of Roma

According to the aforementioned Strategy, low level of employment is the key economic and social problem for all citizens of Kosovo, but particularly for Roma, as their unemployment rate in 2009 was around 58%, according to the Human Development Report 2010. The 2017 Regional Roma Survey reports that the unemployment rate of marginalised Roma is 49%, although the unemployment gap between Roma and non-Roma is the second smallest in the enlargement region. There were 2,262 Roma job-seekers registered with the employment institute in 2016.

Members of Roma communities are commonly hired to perform temporary sweat jobs that do not require highly skilled employees and are not well paid. The main reasons for the current situation of employment are:

- a low average level of education/skills;
- discrimination in the labour market;
- low access to relations/informal networks that would allow for increased employability;
- lack of information.

The Strategy identifies two mainstream policies relevant for the improvement of the employment of Roma:

- The legal framework regulating proportional representation of non-majority communities in the public sector;
- The existing active labour market measures implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

The Strategy defines one strategic goal for each of the priority areas. The strategic goal in the area of employment is “to improve the economic and social situation of the Roma and Ashkali communities”. Although the strategic objective is not defined clearly, there is a set of indicators to measure the impact envisaged in the Strategy, including targets to be achieved.

The strategic objective is further operationalised in two expected outcomes with related activities. One of the expected outcomes is for the social welfare aspect, and the other for the employment. The one on employment follows the strategic objective and states “improved level of employment of members of Roma and Ashkali communities.”

The strategic goal is somewhat unclear and may benefit from reformulation in order to clarify it, make it measurable and realistic. The indicators envisaged to measure the success in the area of employment may be used to clarify and understand better the strategic objective.

³¹ The term Roma in the context of Kosovo* used in this report is a collective term for Roma and Ashkali.

³² Available at: <https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/KS.pdf/bda07dc7fb150ca1d1588bccf39b974a.pdf>

Measures and activities

The Action Plan of the Strategy for the period 2017-2021 is an integral part of the strategy. It lists the key activities to be implemented under each of the priority areas. The activities planned for the area of employment are:

- Establishing indicators (gender sensitive), regularly collecting data through the Labour Force Survey, and reporting on the situation of Roma on the labour market and their benefits from the employment measures;
- Improving the representation of the Roma in the public institutions and enterprises, both at central and local level;
- Engaging Roma employment advisors in the local employment services at municipalities with significant number of Roma;
- Explore possibilities for affirmative action in employment (find existing promising practices);
- Allocate quota of the active labour market measures for Roma, including for vocational training;
- Conduct needs assessment and effectiveness analysis of the active labour market measures for Roma, and accordingly design the measures;
- Implement active labour market measures for Roma (300 beneficiaries each year), including vocational training and start-up incentives, designed according to the needs of Roma;
- Promote the public employment services among Roma, encourage registration and participation of unemployed Roma and promote role models.

The Action Plan contains some details on the different activities per year, budget and source of funding, leading institution and partners.

Monitoring

The Office for Good Governance (OGG) within the Office of the Prime Minister is the coordinating body responsible for the implementation of the Strategy. To facilitate monitoring of the Strategy and Action Plan a set of indicators have been identified. The indicators for Objective 2 related to employment are: the employment rate, women's employment rate, inclusion in ALMM, inclusion of women in ALMM, and inclusion in employment in the public sector. The list of indicators with accompanying baseline and target values are presented in the table below:

Indicator	Baseline	Target
Employment rate	Missing data	17%
Women's employment rate	9%	12%
Inclusion in ALMM	6%	10%
Inclusion of women in ALMM	12%	25%
Inclusion in employment in the public sector	0.5%	1%

The targets are not too ambitious, and it cannot be expected that the achievement of those targets would close the gap between Roma and non-Roma in employment in Kosovo*.

Implementation progress

An overall evaluation of the Strategy and the Action Plan is envisaged for the third year (2019) of the implementation. In 2014, the number of Roma beneficiaries from the active labour market measures was 247. In the first half of 2016, the number of participants of these communities in the measures was 95. Decline of the number of Roma beneficiaries is obvious. The obligatory quota for Roma from the ALMM in 2017 has not been established.

The legal requirement for equal representation of Roma in the public sector was also not implemented in 2017.

A number of activities and actions were implemented during 2017:

- 649 unemployed Roma are newly registered with the EI in 2017;
- 37 went through vocational training through individual plans;
- 26 participated in public works;
- 30 benefited from the ALMM scheme (subsiding 50% of the gross salary);
- 9 received grants for starting their own business;
- 11 received internship;
- 226 trained in 20 (out of 30) occupations;
- Employment mediation services were provided to 110 Roma.

While the budget spent for the implementation of the employment measures from the action plan for Roma integration in 2017 was not provided, according to the estimations based on the total budget spent for the mainstream ALMM, the total number of beneficiaries and the number of Roma and Ashkali beneficiaries, the spent budget was EUR 725,281.

These modest results for 2017 are not promising achieving the aims set with the Strategy, and even less so the aim of closing the gap between Roma and non-Roma. Unfortunately, the government is not collecting relevant statistics to properly report on any potential progress made with the implementation of the Strategy on the impact indicators listed above (such as employment rate).

1.4. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The last census in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was conducted in 2002. The number of Roma reported from the census is 53,879, while the unofficial estimate is 197,000.

The official policy on Roma integration is defined within the “Strategy for the Roma in Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020”.³³ There are five strategic intervention areas identified, one of which is employment.

Employment of Roma

The unemployment rate of Roma is almost twice of the national average. The employment rate of marginalised Roma in 2017 was 22% as compared to 49%, the national average. The total number of Roma who registered with the Employment Institute as of December 2013 was 7,516 people and in 2016 the number rose to 9,127. It is estimated that up to a quarter of the registered unemployed Roma are active job seekers. In the area of public employment there has been some progress, with the newest official report from the government reporting 1.14% representation of Roma in the public sector.³⁴

The main reasons listed in the Strategy for the current situation of Roma in employment are:

- lack of coordination of the institutions and inter-institutional cooperation at central and local levels in the development and implementation of employment policies;
- lack of involvement of the local government in identifying the problems and needs and recommending measures to overcome them;
- lack of specialized programs for employment of Roma;
- low offering of literacy programs, and qualification and re-training of unemployed Roma in accordance with their identified needs/opportunities;
- ineffective sharing of information to Roma on possible employment by the responsible institutions;
- discrimination by certain employers;
- low levels of education limit most of the Roma to the lowest and least paid jobs;
- lack of legal framework for social entrepreneurship;
- failure to comply with OFA in the selection process for employment of Roma in public administration;
- low motivation and lack of ideas for starting an own business and gaining appropriate qualifications;
- lack of documents and high criteria to get loans.

It should also be noted that, although the low education levels of Roma are a barrier to their employment, there are Roma who have successfully completed high school, but remain on the waiting list as unemployed at the employment centres for a considerable time.

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

Strategic orientation related to employment is, “improving the conditions and opportunities for employment and decreasing the unemployment of the Roma community, and integrating this community into the mainstream society”.

There are two sub-areas, defined at the level of specific objectives. The first sub-area of action is, “institutional support for employment of Roma” and the first specific strategic goal is “to

³³ Available at: https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/MK2014-2020_en.pdf/a4b7a7abd52eaa6a5b369f18f180cc12.pdf

³⁴ This data is not in line with the data from the Strategy for the Roma in Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020, page 32 “In the area of public employment there has been some progress documented between 2005, when there were 0.33% Roma employees, when compared to 2.56% in 2012.”

increase the number of Roma registered in the Employment Service Agency (ESA), 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". There are five expected results under the sub-area of "institutional support for employment of Roma":

1. To improve the awareness of the Roma in terms of rights and obligations in the field of employment and opportunities for involvement in the labour market;
2. To increase the capacity for employment through training, re-training, and additional training annually by 2020 to at least 50 Roma;
3. To increase the number of registered Roma in the ESA;
4. To increase the number of active registered Roma claimants involved in active measures of the Government;
5. To engage the local government and the City of Skopje, in providing institutional support.

The second sub-area is "increasing the employability of the Roma community" and the second specific strategic goal is "to increase the employability of the Roma community through the creation and implementation of incentive policies and programs by the end of the 2020". There are five expected results under the sub-area of "increasing the employability of Roma":

1. Increased utilization of programs for completion of education of adult Roma for easier access to the labour market;
2. Increasing the credit worthiness of the Roma community by 2020;
3. Revival of social entrepreneurship as an opportunity to reduce unemployment and poverty among Roma by 2020;
4. Creating of at least one policy on a level of a law or an active measure from the Government that will include benefits for Roma who will register and run official businesses and employ other Roma;
5. Proportional representation of Roma in public administration by 2020.

The Strategy does not explicitly state any impact indicators in employment, but the strategic objective implicitly includes indicators: employment and unemployment rates of Roma and the gap of the two rates between Roma and the overall population. Only one of the specific objectives includes an indicator with a target. Although the first sub-area is related to employment, and the second to employability, it seems that the expected results of the first sub-area contribute more to employability, and of the second sub-area to employment.

Measures and Activities

The National Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy in the area of employment for 2016-2020 provides more details in terms of goals, objectives and expected results, accompanied with indicators with baseline data, targets and sources of information, leading institution, implementing and reporting timeframe, and budget with funding sources. The plan also lists the activities under each expected result. The activities are:

- Training of the employment advisors at the employment centres for work with Roma;
- Professional counselling and mentoring Roma for employment;
- Information meetings with registered unemployed Roma;
- Sharing information on employment opportunities to Roma through social networks and web portals;
- Vocational training for jobs demanded at the labour market (mainstream measure that should include Roma);

- Subsidies to employers for employing Roma;
- Information meeting with potential employers;
- Internship programme for Roma with secondary and higher education;
- Self-employment incentives (mainstream measure that should include Roma);
- Training of Roma to develop a business plan;
- Meetings with Roma entrepreneurs;
- Training of Roma entrepreneurs for using micro-loans;
- Developing a mechanism for identifying and processing discrimination;
- Information meetings with Roma about discrimination;
- Sharing information on employment discrimination protection mechanism through online tools;
- Training of employment advisor and social workers on the mechanism against discrimination of Roma in employment;
- Campaign against stereotypes towards Roma in employment;
- Survey on the economic situation of Roma in 10 municipalities;
- Building the capacities of the employment advisor and social workers for horizontal coordination and sensitivity in working with Roma;
- Support to the employment of Roma in the central government civil service;
- Support to the employment of Roma in the municipal public services.

Monitoring

The annual monitoring (until the end of 2020) should be conducted at the end of June each year. Monitoring report should be submitted by all the implementing institutions to the Department for Implementation of the Strategy and the Decade of Roma at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the National coordinator for implementation of the Decade and the Strategy for Roma, a Minister without portfolio in the Government.

Local coordinating bodies (LCBs) should be established at levels of local self-government units in ten municipalities where Roma live in significant numbers, and should monitor the implementation of the Strategy for Roma at local level through local action plans.

The Strategy for Roma in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is accompanied by an annex “System of Indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Macedonia”³⁵ defining the indicators and the sources of information. In the area of employment, the document proposes the following indicators:

Indicator	Source
Structure of working-age population, employed and unemployed, by gender and highest education level	LFS, RR2011
Employment rate	Population Censuses, LFS, RR2011
Unemployment rate	Population Censuses, LFS, RR2011
Activity rate	LFS, RR2011
Long-term unemployment rate and share of long-term unemployment in total unemployment	LFS, RR2011
Self-employment rate	LFS, RR2011
Share of informal employment in total employment (incidence)	LFS, RR2011
Rate of previously gained work experience	LFS, RR2011
Administrative unemployment	ESA

³⁵ Available at: <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/System%20of%20Indicators.pdf>

Where LFS is the Labour Force Survey, and the RR2011 is the Regional Roma Survey from 2011 implemented by the UNDP, World Bank and the European Commission.

The proposed baseline data for some of the indicators, as within the document for 2011 are:

	Roma	Roma M	Roma F	non-Roma	General
Activity rate	42.9	57.5	27.7	42.3	56.9
Employment rate	21.7	33.3	9.8	32	38.7
Unemployment rate	49.3	42.1	64.7	24.3	32
Informal employment rate	65	62	68	24	25
Self-employment rate		3	1	6	9
Source:	RRS2011				LFS2010/11
NB:	in %, for age 15+				

The indicators envisaged with the National Action Plan (NAP) do not fully correspond with the indicators proposed with the Strategy. Indicators in the NAP include the GINI coefficient that was 0.46 among Roma in 2011 (0.37 among non-Roma) that should be reduced by 0.02 in 2020; number of Roma and percentage of Roma women benefiting from the active employment measures that should be 1,000 in total by 2020 (at least 30% women); proportion of Roma within the total number of registered unemployed, at 5% in 2015, that should be reduced to 4.5% by the end of 2020. Process indicators are envisaged for the activities. These indicators do not necessarily correspond to the objectives or the indicators stipulated in the Strategy.

Implementation progress

Regarding the active employment measures, no systematic and consistent data to measure the progress of implementation exists.³⁶ However, there is fragmented data of national action plans for employment and they suggest that the participation of Roma has increased in regard to these measures. It is even less possible to understand the effects of the measures.

The mid-term evaluation of the Strategy is stipulated for the fourth quarter of 2016, in order to determine to what extent, in the period of 2014-2016, the planned specific strategic goals are realized, and what is their impact. The evaluation report should have been considered in the preparation of the Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy for the period 2017-2020. Such evaluation has not been done in 2016. However, an assessment of the strategy is currently being undertaken, and the report is expected by the end of 2018.

The following results are reported by the government for 2016:

- 405 unemployed Roma applicants for active employment measures;
- 112 unemployed Roma participants in active employment measures;
- 88 unemployed Roma received professional orientation and career counselling;
- 425 Roma received employment capacity assessment by mentors;
- 11 Roma participated in VET trainings;
- 2 Roma benefited from support to SMEs to create new jobs;
- 64 Roma benefited for subsidised employment programmes;
- 7 Roma benefited from on-the-job training;
- 13 Roma benefited from internship;
- 21 Roma received self-employment support.

³⁶ Page 32, the Strategy for the Roma in Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020

The government reports increased number of Roma (170) participants in the ALMM, and 28 Roma beneficiaries from self-employment measures in 2017.

There is no information in the government report on the impact of the employment policy for Roma. According to the 2017 Regional Roma Survey, the participation of Roma in the labour market is similar to their non-Roma neighbours, and while relatively small with tendency to decline compared to 2011, it is still the highest in the region. The rate of employment of marginalized Roma in 2017 was 22%, similar to 2011, while the employment rate of their non-Roma neighbours was around 40%. The situation is particularly precarious for Roma women, with only 13% employment rate. The unemployment rate declines for both Roma and non-Roma from 2011, but much more rapidly for non-Roma. It is 49% among Roma, and even 58% for Roma females. The informal work rate among Roma is still very high, although declining and representing the lowest rate in the region. The rate of Roma youth (age 18-24) not in employment, education or training is extremely high at 74%, for females even 81%, compared to the rate of 33% among non-Roma.

1.5. Montenegro

According to the most recent census data, there are 6,251 Roma and 2,054 Egyptians in Montenegro. The average estimation that comes from unofficial sources is that there are about 20,000 Roma³⁷ in Montenegro.

The Government of Montenegro, in late 2007, adopted the Strategy for improving the position of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian population in Montenegro 2008-2012, which was followed by the succeeding strategy for the period 2012–2016, and the third, Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma in Montenegro,³⁸ covering the period 2016–2020. The key and overall objective of the Strategy is the social inclusion of Roma by improving their socio-economic position. There are seven key areas that actually represent the operationalization of the concept of social inclusion, and one of them is employment.

Employment of Roma

The number of registered unemployed Roma by the end of May 2017 was reported at 1,847. According to the Strategy, the key obstacles to employment of the Roma are:

- lack of education and educational opportunities;
- discrimination and lack of acceptance by non-Roma members (negative attitudes and prejudice);
- lack of skills required to be employed;
- lack of personal documents (which is a prerequisite for obtaining services in the field of employment);
- difficult economic and social position, preventing attendance of longer training programs and education;
- living in unsafe and sub-standard settlements;
- lack of guarantees in the form of real estate and guarantors for loans;
- lack of information and sufficient access to institutions of the system that are responsible for employment;
- negative aspects of certain behavioural patterns;
- lack of trust in the institutions of the system;
- lack of staff to properly work with the community for employment;
- social isolation and lack of social skills.

It is interesting to note that the private sector employers in Montenegro believe that the first three obstacles are crucial for the unemployment of Roma.

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

The Roma integration Strategy of Montenegro does not include a strategic goal in none of the areas of intervention, including employment. Instead, each area contains several (specific) objectives. For the employment area, there are four objectives with accompanying measures as follows:

- Objective 4.1 Increase the participation of Roma in the measures of active employment policy.
 - Motivation in active employment seeking and participation in EPP.
 - Introduction of occupation "associate in social inclusion of Roma in the area of employment" (third quarter of 2017).

³⁷ The term Roma in the context of Montenegro used in this report is a collective term for Roma and Egyptians.

³⁸ Available at: [https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20160324%20ME%20NRIS%202016-20%20\[en\].pdf/516f4f38750495e5df7c9596503cf7e4.pdf](https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20160324%20ME%20NRIS%202016-20%20[en].pdf/516f4f38750495e5df7c9596503cf7e4.pdf)

- Objective 4.2 Increase the level of qualifications of Roma.
 - Vocational education and training.
- Objective 4.3 Direct measures aimed at employment of Roma.
 - Inclusion of Roma in public work programs.
 - Stimulating employment on seasonal jobs by subsidizing salaries and/or tax incentives.
 - Training program for work with the employer.
 - Self-employment programs (adoption of secondary legislation and creation of credit lines).
- Objective 4.4 Strengthening the capacity of institutions of the system.
 - Training for employees of the Employment Institute and centres for social work.

Measures and activities

The Action plan for 2017 for the implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma in Montenegro for 2016-2020 was adopted in May 2017. It presents in detail the measures from the Strategy planned for 2017. The key expected outcomes for 2017 are:

- Standards and education programs for occupation "associate in social inclusion of Roma in the area of employment" adopted (third quarter of 2017).
- New vocational training programs adjusted to the needs of Roma are created and implemented, programs for obtaining new skills implemented, qualification programs implemented.
- Public works, training for employers, seasonal works, subsidizing (50%) employment for a period of three to twelve months.
- Self-employment programs.
- Internship and increasing the number of Roma employed in the public sector.

Monitoring

The Strategy is being implemented through one-year action plans. In order to monitor the implementation of activities, the Government formed a Commission and appointed the National Coordinator for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy. The Commission led by the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights prepares an annual report for the Government of Montenegro on the implementation of the Strategy.

The Strategy does not explicitly contain indicators to measure the success of the Strategy in none of the intervention areas. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights have conducted a survey prior to preparing the Strategy, in order to inform the policy formulation with baseline data. The information is not systematically presented, but can be found throughout the text of the Strategy within the elaboration of the situation in each area. The following indicators and their baseline values (for 2016) can be found for employment:

Indicator	Roma	Roma F	Overall
unemployment rate	83%	n/p	17.72%
employment seekers rate	50%	n/p	n/p
employment rate	15%	n/p	n/p
registered unemployed persons without qualifications rate	82%	n/p	n/p
number of registered unemployed persons	1731	766	49487
number of newly registered unemployed persons	154	67	10837
number of registered unemployed persons participating in active employment measures	n/p	n/p	n/p
unemployment rate	84	35	13820

Implementation progress

According to the government report for 2017,³⁹ the key implementation outcomes were:

- 6 mediators ("associate in social inclusion of Roma in the area of employment") were employed in three municipalities through projects supported by NGOs (no funds were invested by the Government)
- 173 Roma increased their level of qualifications but there is no data available about their successive employment. Six of them participated in the programs of the Employment Institute, and 164 people were covered through projects financed by the EU
- 45 Roma were included in public works program
- 49 Roma were included in seasonal jobs

2.5 million EUR was allocated in 2017 for employment measures, of which around 50,000 EUR were specifically intended for Roma and approximately 37,000 EUR were spent.

The government has provided the values achieved in 2017 for the following indicators: number of registered unemployed persons (928 Roma, 508 Roma females, 51,262 overall population); number of newly registered unemployed persons (177 Roma, 80 Roma females, 7,530 overall population); and number of registered unemployed persons participating in ALMM (248 Roma, 35 Roma women, 13,820 overall population).

Unfortunately, the values of the impact indicators are not provided, thus assessment of progress in the integration of Roma according to the Strategy, in the area of employment, is not possible.

³⁹ Available at:
https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/Montenegro_Progress%20Report%202017%20ENG.pdf/d5e75fa5a7c55ca253e1a5ccac604a2d.pdf

1.6. Serbia

The number of Roma in Serbia is officially reported as 147,604 but the unofficial number is much higher and is estimated at 600,000. In terms of the employment policy, the key strategic document for Serbia is the National Employment Strategy for the period 2011-2020, which recognises Roma as a vulnerable group in the labour market, requiring additional support to achieve competitiveness. The main purpose of the Strategy of Social Inclusion of Roma Men and Women in Republic of Serbia 2016-2025⁴⁰ is to reduce poverty among Roma and combat discrimination against Roma. In the area of employment, this means to create conditions for higher employment of Roma and address the needs for additional assistance and support for their involvement in the labour market.

Employment of Roma

There is no precise data on the unemployment rate among Roma in Serbia. According to the 2011 Roma Regional Survey the unemployment rate of Roma was 49% and it was reduced to 37% in 2017. There were 22,513 Roma in 2015 officially registered as unemployed. The total unemployed Roma on the register at the end of 2017 was 22,456.

Greater integration of Roma into the labour market is hampered by the following factors:

- Low share of Roma with working ability in the formal labour market;
- Functional illiteracy, early abandonment of formal education, and low levels of acquired skills and qualifications;
- Lack of willingness of employers to hire or engage Roma men and women;
- Under-representation of Roma men and women in employment policies and economic development at the local level.

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

At the level of strategic goal, the Special Objective 3 of the Strategy is, “encouraging participation Roma with working ability in the formal labour market, increasing employability, employment and economic empowerment, particularly of Roma men and women who belong to multiple categories of unemployed people with low employability”.

There are seven operational objectives with accompanying relevant measures. The operational objectives are the following:

1. Increase the number of working-age Roma men and women in the formal labour market;
2. Prevent and reduce discrimination against Roma men and women in the labour market;
3. Increase the competitiveness of Roma in the labour market;
4. Promote employment and economic empowerment of Roma men and women, with a special focus on multiple vulnerable groups;
5. Employment policy of Roma men and women is an integral part of the local economic development policy;
6. Increase the number of Roma men and women employed by public authorities;
7. Legalise work of informally employed Roma men and women, especially individual collectors of recyclable goods and familiarise them with the waste management system at the level of local self-governments.

⁴⁰ Available at: [https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20160303%20RS%20NRIS%202016-2025%20\[en\].pdf/25271eeef1fb46a73d48630d6d4d63bec.pdf](https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/20160303%20RS%20NRIS%202016-2025%20[en].pdf/25271eeef1fb46a73d48630d6d4d63bec.pdf)

Measures and activities

The Action Plan for 2017-18 for implementing the Strategy is very detailed. There are a number of measures planned for each operational objective and each of these measures is further divided into activities with defined process indicators, implementing agency, timeframe, and funds. The measures for each relevant objective listed above are as follows:

1. Creating a national database of unemployed Roma; Developing and implementing programs for informing and educating Roma; Increasing the number of unemployed Roma covered by training in active job search systems; Improving EI work with less employable categories or groups of unemployed persons.
2. Ensuring effective implementation of laws; Monitoring discrimination; Free legal aid; Increasing institutional and NGO capacity to fight discrimination; Raising awareness; Promoting examples of good practices.
3. Improving cooperation of institutions in the social protection system and education; Actively promoting and developing policies and measures; Involving a large number of unemployed Roma through programs aimed at achieving a more competitive position in the labour market; Promoting good practices.
4. Financial and non-financial support for employment and economic empowerment; Financial support to private sector employers for employment of Roma; Encouraging the development of Roma entrepreneurship; Developing alternative forms of providing collateral; Training programs; Mentoring programs; Business incubation services; Developing traditional occupations; The formation of cooperatives and other associations; Participation in the form of social economy; Affirmative programs of agricultural development targeting Roma; Building capacity and empowering civil society organizations.
5. Strengthening the capacity of LGU and local employment councils; Encouraging the involvement of CSOs; Capacity building and fostering dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders; Monitoring and reporting on activities.
6. Personal data protection when employing national minorities in public services; Encouraging the employment of Roma in institutions; The affirmative measures of employing national minorities in public authority bodies; Raise awareness of employment opportunities.
7. Allow depositing of waste materials that can be recycled; Encouraging LGU to regulate the issue of waste management and creating local planning; Providing subsidies to individual secondary raw collectors for necessary equipment.

Monitoring

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Construction, Transport, and Infrastructure is responsible for the coordination of the work on the improvement of the status of the Roma population and their full inclusion, and is chairing the National Coordination Body for monitoring of the Strategy. The Office for Human and Minority Rights and the Team for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction provide support to the Deputy Prime Minister in terms of monitoring the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plan. The Strategy envisages 4 levels of monitoring of the strategy implementation: public service facilities, local governments and ministries; coordination body preparing annual reports (based on data from first level monitoring, statistical data and own surveys); relevant independent agencies (equality commission, public prosecutor, etc.) reporting to the parliament; and civil society reporting. The Strategy does not explicitly set the indicators by which the success of its implementation should be measured, including in the area of employment.

The Strategy provides a range of socio-economic indicators and their baseline values as a description of the situation of Roma, including:

- **Economic dependency ratio trend 2002-2011:** -15% dependents, +10% with income among the general population; +69.1% dependents, -51% with income among Roma;
- **Inactive per active persons (2011):** 140 inactive per 100 active in general; 257 inactive per 100 active Roma. Active includes employed and unemployed;
- **Unemployment rate (2011):** 59% among Roma (49% according to UNDP/WB/EC), 22.4% national average;
- **Labour force participation gender disparity:** 77.5% Roma men vs 22.5% Roma women; 57.9% men vs 42.1% women in general;
- **Employment rate trend (2002-2011):** -5.95% for Roma;
- **Income source (2011):** 27.6% of Roma households live on social assistance; almost a third of the total number of Roma (45,050) are social aid beneficiaries (27.6% of them younger than 17, 37,3% younger than 26);
- **Estimated rate of informal employment (2011):** 73% among Roma;
- **Jobless rate (2011):** 83% among Roma women;
- **Participation in subsidised employment rate:** 2.8% Roma from total (50 Roma in total, 28 women).

The Action Plan for 2017-18 defines indicators at the level of operational objectives:

- **Employment rate (15-64):** national: 55.8% total, 63% men, 48.6% women; for Roma: 26% total, 40% men, 13% women;⁴¹
- **Employment rate (15-24):** national: 17% total, 24% men, 11% women; for Roma: 16% total, 25% men, 6% women;⁴²
- **Unemployment rate (15-64):** national: 27% total, 21% men, 37% women; for Roma: 49% total, 39% men, 67% women;⁴³
- **Unemployment rate (15-24):** national: 50% total, 36% men, 67% women; for Roma: 65% total, 54% men, 82% women;⁴⁴
- Number of cases of violation of human rights reported to the Ombudsperson by Roma;
- Number of cases of discrimination reported to the Equality Commissioner by Roma;
- Number of local self-governments implementing employment programmes including Roma;
- Percentage (and trend) of Roma civil servants relative to all the civil servants at local and central level;
- Number of registered waste collectors with permits;

It is evident that the Roma integration policy in Serbia would benefit from proper and consistent formulations and improvement of the intervention logic, indicators and their baseline and target values.

⁴¹ Two different sets of data are provided about the national employment rate in the Action Plan. The first set of data is given in the text, while the second set of data is: 43% total, 55% men, 31% women. For Roma, at one place there are the rates as given in the text, and at another place, the absolute numbers of employed Roma are provided: 275 total, 173 men, 102 women. The indicated source of information is the same at both the places.

⁴² Two different sets of data are provided about the national youth employment rate in the Action Plan. One is given in the text, and at another place there is a data of 19.7% total youth employment rate. For the Roma, the rates are given in the text, and at another place in the Action Plan, there is an absolute number of 96 employed young Roma in total. The same source of information is used at both the places.

⁴³ Two different sets of data are provided about the national unemployment rate in the Action Plan. One set is the one presented in the text, and the other one is the following: 15.9% total, 15% men, 17.1% women. For Roma, besides the data in the text, absolute numbers are provided at another place in the Action Plan: 25,431 total, 13,600 men, 11,831 women. The same sources of information are used at both the places.

⁴⁴ Besides the data provided in the text on youth employment rate, the Action Plan contains also the following data: 36.1% total national youth employment rate; number of unemployed Roma 4,885 in total. The same sources of information are used for all the data.

Implementation progress

The latest government report for 2017⁴⁵ does not contain information on the impact of the Strategy in the area of employment by the indicators planned in the Action Plan (employment and unemployment rates). The report contains information on Roma included in the mainstream active employment measures.

In 2017 the number of registered unemployed Roma is 26,456 (12,411 women), 4.18% of the total 618,827 unemployed, indicating overrepresentation. In total, 4,396 Roma received employability services and 465 Roma were employed through the ALMM in 2017 (excluding local employment action plans implementation). The report also informs that an analysis on the reasons for the informal work of Roma is done, but it is not publicly available.

According to the 2017 Regional Roma Survey the participation of Roma in the labour market is 33% (18% for women) compared to 49% of non-Roma and 66% national average; the employment of Roma is 21% (9% for women) compared to 40% of non-Roma and 55% national average; the unemployment of Roma is 37% (50% for women) compared to 19% of non-Roma and 16% national average; not in education, employment or training rate for age 18-24 is 73% for Roma (88% for women) compared to 42% for non-Roma. The situation of Roma in labour market participation, employment and not in education, employment or training for young has worsened compared to 2011. It remained the same in informal employment and improved only in unemployment (although employment worsened).

⁴⁵ Available at:
https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/Serbia_Progress%20Report%202017%20ENG.pdf/6d34c8fa234cb8f73525f36b98218a20.pdf

1.7. Turkey

The best official number of Roma in Turkey was reported by the Academic report prepared in 2008 for the National Security Council of Turkey totalling 700,000. Unofficially, it is estimated that the number is 2,750,000 Roma in Turkey. Roma do not enjoy a status of national minority in Turkey, but they are categorised as a disadvantaged group.

The Strategy Paper on Roma 2016–2021⁴⁶ includes objectives, goals and actions for improving the situation of Roma in areas of education, employment, health, housing, and social services.

Employment of Roma

There is a lack of data about the status of Roma in the labour market in Turkey. Research and published literature on Roma employment in Turkey is much more limited than elsewhere in Europe. In more general terms it is known that Roma work in unsecured, unqualified, and low-status jobs. The main reasons for such situations are identified in the Strategy as follows:

- low levels of education,
- lack of attendance in vocational training,
- traditional occupations of Roma people such as musicians, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, basket makers, coppersmiths, caners, florists, and peddlers, lack the sources of creating a market and income today.

Therefore, the strategic objective of the strategy for the area of employment is to facilitate Roma people's entrance into the labour force and to increase their employment in qualified and secured jobs.

Objectives of the Roma integration policy in employment

The strategic objective to facilitate Roma people's entrance into the labour force and to increase their employment in qualified and secured jobs is operationalised in four strategic directions that may be both interpreted as objectives and measures for employment:

1. Enabling Roma to reach the professional quality that the labour market demands.
2. Developing collaboration among employers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and all related sectors in order to improve the professional quality and provide equal opportunities in the labour market.
3. In order to encourage entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship training programs and financial means such as promoting micro-credits as well as more employment opportunities will be provided.
4. Necessary precautions will be taken to prevent child labour and to support children continuing with their education and channel children's and/or youth's talents into activities that can further them in different spheres.

Measures and activities

The Strategy contains an accompanying Action Plan for the period 2016–2018 that provides general guidelines for implementation and some concrete actions. There are four actions planned in the sector of employment.

⁴⁶ Available at:
<https://www.rcc.int/romaintegration2020/download/docs/Roma%20Strategy%20Document.pdf/a5ef792fa5e9eaf16003ab1c8b4a14a5.pdf>

The first proposed action is that employment surveys and labour market analysis on the position of Roma are to be conducted beginning in March 2017. The other proposed activities are:

- informing Roma people about employment opportunities, especially entrepreneurship (beginning in December 2016),
- encouraging investors to market the products of Roma people (beginning in March 2016),
- improving children's knowledge and abilities by preventing child labour and orienting children and young Roma (first half of 2017).

The recommendations from the First Public Dialogue Forum is that the Action Plan (2019-2021) must be more concrete with the additional inclusion of indicators and a proper budget.

Monitoring

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy is responsible for the implementation of the Strategy and the coordination of social inclusion policies for Roma. The Strategy should be implemented through three-year-period action plans (covering the period of 2016-2018 and 2019-2021). The Committee for Monitoring and Evaluating the National Strategy for Roma was established by the Ministry. The recommendation from the First Public Dialogue Forum in Turkey⁴⁷ is that the Committee should meet more regularly, at least three times annually. Monitoring and reporting on Roma integration in the area of employment is difficult, since there are no defined indicators with baseline values.

Implementation Progress

During 2017, the following activities were implemented:

- informative activities with the aim of raising awareness of the Roma population about employment opportunities and advancing knowledge and working conditions of seasonal workers; and
- implementation of several projects towards combatting child labour have been initiated as part of the National Program on Combatting Child Labour 2017-2023 implementation.

These projects are mainstream projects, also relevant to the Roma population and in line with the Roma integration Strategy.

Since the activities are loosely correlated to the aims and actions planned with the Roma integration policy documents, it is difficult to determine the progress.

⁴⁷ The Public Dialogue Forum was held on 13 September 2017 in Ankara and was jointly organized by the Regional Cooperation Council Roma Integration 2020 (RCC RI2020) and the Ministry of Family and Social Policy (MoFSP) of Turkey.

1.8. Mainstream employment measures in the enlargement region

Labour market policies (LMP) are interventions within the labour market aimed at increasing employability and employment of particular groups in the labour market. Throughout Europe, the emphasis on labour market policy has shifted from passive income support to active labour market policies (ALMPs). The main goal of the active labour market policies is to increase the employment opportunities for job seekers and to improve matching between jobs (vacancies) and workers (i.e. the unemployed). Active labour market policies (employment measures) in the enlargement region are catalogued by the Employment and Social Affairs Platform (ESAP).⁴⁸ ALMPs measures are classified⁴⁹ under the following categories:

- (i) labour market services – information services and individual case management designed to improve the effectiveness of job search (e.g. counselling, monitoring, and job search assistance)
- (ii) training – institutional, workplace, alternate, apprenticeship
- (iii) employment incentives – recruitment incentives (permanent and temporary), employment maintenance incentives, job rotation, and job sharing
- (iv) sheltered employment and rehabilitation
- (v) direct job creation
- (vi) start-up incentives

Average expenditure on ALMPs of the ‘Western’ EU member states is 0.88% (e.g. Finland spends around 3% of GDP) and in the enlargement region⁵⁰ expenditure only accounts for 0.12% of GDP. According to the “Regional Analysis of ALMPs in WB6”⁵¹ Albania and Kosovo* focus on training measures, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro prioritise employment and start-up incentives, while Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia balance between employment and start-up incentives and other measures.

The effects of the employment policies vary. The long-run effects can be quite different from their short-run effects. Short-run effects measured every one to two years after the start of policy implementation are modestly positive. Vulnerable groups or welfare beneficiaries (including Roma) have specific limitations and what may work for others, might not work for vulnerable groups (depending on the different context in each economy and also on the differences among communities). Therefore, the effects of the employment policies are usually even more limited for vulnerable groups.

Almost all active labour market programs are designed for those with a relatively low probability to find work. Roma are burdened with a low probability to find a job due to their lower education level and lack of work experience. Besides this, Roma are also faced with discrimination on the labour market, which is not tackled with the employment policies. Therefore, Roma should be offered a program which increases their probability to find a job in the long-run, taking in consideration their specific barriers on the labour market.

Generally, subsidised private sector labour programmes turn out to be the most effective in the short and long-term, followed by training and re-training programmes. According to the recent analysis⁵², public employment schemes turn out to have negative effects in both the short and long-term. Longer-lasting programmes are found to be more effective than short ones.

⁴⁸ The ESAP is a regional project financed by the EU and implemented by the RCC (March 2016 – March 2019). More information on the project can be found at: <https://www.esap.online/>

⁴⁹ Eurostat

⁵⁰ Without Turkey

⁵¹ Regional Cooperation Council, October 2017

⁵² The Effectiveness Of Active Labour Market Policies: A Systematic Meta-Analysis, October 2016

2. EXPERIENCE FROM OTHER NEIGHBOURING EU COUNTRIES

2.1. Promising practices from the Fundamental Rights Report 2018

The Fundamental Rights Report 2018⁵³ is a report produced by the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA). It explores the main developments in 2017 in 8 specific areas, including Roma integration. The report contains promising practices from the EU Member States identified by FRA that may be useful for the enlargement region governments. Some of the identified practices in employment include:

- Greece: Law facilitating Roma street vendors to obtain permits for selling on street markets and for organising markets through unions and associations adopted.
- Greece: The Union of Roma Mediators and Partners established and cooperating with the Special Secretariat for Social Inclusion of Roma in the Ministry of Labour to explore possibilities to recognize Roma mediator as a professional occupation.
- Slovakia: Relaxed the qualification criteria for community workers (recognised professional occupation) who provide crisis interventions in marginalised Roma communities, to allow more Roma to apply for these positions.
- Czech Republic: A legislative proposal on social entrepreneurship that would give businesses the status of “integrated social businesses”, providing employers with additional benefits if at least 30% of its employees are from disadvantaged groups in the job market, who are also provided psycho-social support.
- Croatia: Employs Roma in local governments to enhance cooperation between local authorities and Roma communities.
- Croatia: Adopted active employment measures to allow persons to continue receiving social benefits while employed under the ‘public works’ measure.
- Bulgaria: Linked qualification courses and subsidised employment.
- Hungary: Training of low skilled long-term unemployed and public workers, and providing employment and labour market services.
- Romania: Package of employment services provided to Roma, including counselling, mediation, and training courses.

Continued local-level actions to improve labour market inclusion in the Member States are also identified, including:

- Spain: The ACCEDER programme, a long term programme providing individually tailored employment service packages to Roma at local level, which functions as a specialised employment agency in 50 municipalities, continues to operate.⁵⁴
- Sweden: Outreach effort of the National Employment Office by continued informational campaigns for job seekers from the Roma community in pilot municipalities, increasing the number of Roma using the public employment services and the number of employed Roma.
- Greece, France, and Hungary: Case studies show that training and other participatory support activities for integration into the labour market can help micro-enterprises and support Roma entrepreneurs.

The experience of ACCEDER, a partly state-funded programme, is underlined in many reaserches as a very good practice. ACCEDER is well- designed program that incorporates elements of anti-discrimination actions, job-orientation, LM services, training, internships and placements.

⁵³ Available at: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-fundamental-rights-report-2018_en.pdf

⁵⁴ More information available at: <https://www.gitanos.org/que-hacemos/areas/employment/acceder.html>

2.2. What work(s) for Roma

“Policy Puzzles of Roma Employment in Slovakia”⁵⁵ is a policy paper that has taken a closer look at the implementation of mainstream employment policies in the south – central region of Slovakia. The main policy measure available to the Roma population is small municipal works. In contrast to the prevailing perception, research shows that many Roma approach the labour market actively. Roma seemed generally well-informed about the most common employment measures. They prefer forms of engagement closer to, or providing, actual employment. Institutional support of labour offices has been rather unsatisfactory. The most direct assistance to Roma is provided by social workers who supplement labour officers.

The aim of the research presented in the report, “Investing in our future: What work(s) for young Roma?” (ERGO, 2007)⁵⁶ was to explore what works for Roma youth in Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia. The best practice when it comes to the role of the state in providing the necessary support for enhancing Roma youth employment (especially among secondary students) is the employment of Roma in the public sector. It is important to directly link education with employment, for instance, by enabling Roma to attend police trainings and upon graduation work as public servants for the state as police officers. Another case from Hungary shows that youth living in rather marginalised rural areas can succeed in becoming self-sustainable through job opportunities supported by civil society (through programmes and projects). One of the research conclusions is that labour offices should put more efforts to encourage and stimulate young people to use their services. Longer-term programmes promoting properly paid employment are necessary.

“Policy Brief on Patterns on Roma Employment in Europe”⁵⁷ summarizes outcomes and findings of the 18 month-long research on Roma employment and labour market policies aimed at Roma unemployed in five EU member states (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Spain). Exclusive ethnic targeting of employment programs is rarely a feasible and efficient way of reaching out to Roma on a national level. Exclusive targeting works better locally, with the involvement of dedicated Roma community leaders or organizations. It is desirable to identify an ethnic target (the share of Roma on an aggregate level) of otherwise mainstreaming ALMM. Such a target would raise awareness of EI officers and stimulate them to reach out to unemployed Roma. The research shows that EI fail to provide genuine support to long-term unemployed Roma, especially if they live in marginalised areas. There is a need to raise awareness of the officers, introduce mechanisms to control their attitudes toward Roma (and other vulnerable groups), and employ staff from the Roma community in the EI (not short-term/project-based, but rather as permanent staff).

Direct job creation (Public Work, Public Employment Programs, support to entrepreneurship) is a key program type in most of the countries reaching marginalized unemployed Roma. When it comes to ALMM, Roma prefer stable employment as offered by EPP. However, the effectiveness of this program type in terms of supporting labour market inclusion is questionable. They have to carefully design and meet a number of conditions in order to support unemployed persons, including Roma. Wage support is another program type for increasing employment opportunities of vulnerable groups. However, this program type hardly reaches out to Roma due to their low education, skills, and other factors. Wage support would have greater potential in reaching marginalized Roma communities if it would formulate its target groups in a more restrictive way, conditions for employers (regarding further employment, administrative burdens etc.) are flexible.

⁵⁵ By Kurekova, 2015. Available at: https://celsi.sk/media/discussion_papers/CELSI_DP_34_.pdf

⁵⁶ Available at: <http://ergonetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Best-practices.pdf>

⁵⁷ By Messing, 2015. Available at: http://conference.iza.org/conference_files/neujobs_2014/messing_v9884.pdf

3. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS: POSSIBLE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA

3.1. Improving existing approaches

Active Labour Market Measures (ALMM)

There are numerous reports providing an overview of the active labour market policies (ALMPs) in the Western Balkan, including a recently drafted “Regional Analysis of ALMPs in the Western Balkans Six” (by the Regional Cooperation Council, October 2017), that is yet to be made publicly available. Other reports include the “Labour Markets in the Western Balkans: Performance, Causes and Policy Options” (RCC, 2018)⁵⁸ and the “Western Balkans Labour Market Trends 2017” (World Bank and WIIW, 2017).⁵⁹ Consulting such reports when formulating Roma integration policies in the area of employment, along with the actual legislation in the area, provide beneficial insight and better formulation of the policies. Most of the countries (just) include Roma in implementation of existing ALMP. Roma are not considered to be a specific target group for labour market measures by centrally designed and managed ALMP (although Roma are often named as a vulnerable group). Roma mostly participate in the least beneficial programme type.

In most general terms, it can be concluded that the main focus of the ALMPs effort in the region is on incentives for employment and start-ups, with the exception of Kosovo*. Such focus is assessed as appropriate within the conditions in the region. According to the patterns of expenditure on ALMPs, the report makes several recommendations, generally concluding that policy investments in this area need to be increased and resources across different measures need to be redistributed in order to allocate more resources to more effective measures. ALMPs could be better designed and targeted towards groups in need.

Despite some positive examples and a few good programmes, **ALMP, generally, were not able to systematically improve the labour market situation for Roma and decrease their vulnerability.** Besides the ALMPs, a range of policies are needed to address the unemployment issue from different angles. Coordination among these policies needs to be established and assured.

Roma employment approach

The main problems that prevent Roma from getting employed are the same across the region. The key obstacles for employment of Roma include⁶⁰:

- **lack of education and educational opportunities;**
- **discrimination of Roma in the labour market and lack of acceptance by non-Roma members (negative attitudes and prejudice)** (e.g. the lack of willingness of (public and private sector) employers to hire or engage Roma men and women)
- **lack of skills required to be employed;**

Other obstacles include:

- difficult economic and social position;
 - lack of personal documents (which is a prerequisite for obtaining services in the field of employment);
 - living in unsafe and non-standardized settlements;

⁵⁸ Available at: https://www.rcc.int/download/pubs/Employment%20report_web.pdf/bd4ac07658b29ab7f7899680cbe90107.pdf

⁵⁹ Available at: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/336041491297229505/170403-Regional-Report-Western-Balkan-Labor-Market-Trends-2017-FINAL.pdf>

⁶⁰ Summary of the obstacles identified in the policy documents

- social isolation and lack of social skills.
- lack of guarantees in the form of real estate and guarantors for loans;
- occupied with low-income existential strategies (such as waste collecting), not allowing time for longer engagement in a programme;
- limited institutional capacities and coordination;
 - lack of coordination of the institutions and inter-institutional cooperation at central and local levels in the development and implementation of employment policies;
 - lack of involvement of the local government in identifying the problems and needs and recommending measures to overcome them;
 - lack of trust in the institutions of the system;
 - lack of information and sufficient access to institutions of the system that are responsible for employment;
 - lack of public servants trained to work with Roma on employment;
- not friendly environment for starting own business for Roma;
 - limited possibilities for types of businesses and limited ideas;
 - lack of motivation and skills for opening and running own business;
 - lack of prosperity for the traditional occupations of Roma (musicians, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, basket makers, coppersmiths, caners, florists, and peddlers) in terms of markets and income;
 - lack of legal framework for social entrepreneurship and restrictive existing legislation for the private sector limiting the possibilities for vulnerable groups;

The measures implemented in the region are also very similar. A number of measures is related to strengthening capacities of institutions to better serve Roma and fight discrimination. Those measures are:

- Strengthening capacities of EI and VET system staff for the integration of Roma in the labour market
 - creating better databases of unemployed Roma
 - developing and implementing programs for informing and educating Roma
 - increasing the number of unemployed Roma covered by training in active job search systems (establishing quotas)
 - employing Roma in EI (to provide services to Roma)
 - design and implement a needs analysis and an analysis of the effectiveness of services/ALMM for Roma (research the affirmative action measures that have been effective in other countries)
- Improving cooperation among institutions
 - improving cooperation of institutions in the social protection system and education
 - strengthening the capacity of LGU and local employment councils
 - encouraging the involvement of CSOs
 - monitoring and reporting on activities
- Fighting discrimination
 - ensuring effective implementation of laws
 - monitoring discrimination
 - free legal aid
 - increasing institutional and NGO capacity to fight discrimination
 - raising awareness
 - promoting examples of good practices.

The other set of measures is related to “direct” employment of Roma with private and public employers and self-employment programs. Those measures are:

- Integration in the labour market through VET and active employment programs
 - financial and non-financial support for employment (e.g. financial support to private sector employers)
 - public works
 - apprentice programs, scholarships,
 - trainings and re-trainings (professional qualifications)
- Employing national minorities in public services
 - encouraging the employment of Roma in institutions
 - affirmative measures of employing national minorities in public authority bodies
 - proportional representation of Roma in public administration
- Encouraging the development of Roma entrepreneurship (self-employment)
 - training and mentoring
 - developing alternative forms of providing collateral
 - subsidies and grants
 - business incubation services
 - micro credits
 - developing traditional occupations
 - the formation of cooperatives and other associations (social enterprises)
 - allow depositing of waste materials that can be recycled
 - encouraging LGU to regulate the issue of waste management and creating local planning
 - providing subsidies to individual secondary raw collectors for necessary equipment
 - reducing taxes

The annual (monitoring) reports prepared by the governments are not providing sufficient information on the impact of the measures and the trends in the situation of Roma on the labour market (labour market participation, employment, unemployment, informal employment). According to the 2017 Regional Roma Survey, the regional trends in the labour market participation and employment of Roma are negative, suggesting that **the measures for employment of Roma are not yielding the desired effects. These measures are not implemented and/or not adequate to tackle long-term unemployment of disadvantaged groups in a sustainable way.**

At the same time, the trends in the unemployment and participation in the informal economy of Roma suggest that **Roma are further pushed outside of the labour market**, and thus, further into poverty. These trends alarm the region to address the employment of Roma in a much more serious way and redesign the measures in this area in order to reverse such trends.

Consistent implementation of the strategies

The available information indicates that the governments are focusing too much on creation of strategies and action plans, but not enough on their implementation. Strategic plans only help when they are kept active and implemented. Implementation is the result of focused and continuous action. The most effective strategic plans are those that are simple, completed with the leadership team and key people participating in their implementation, as well as clear indicators for success that are properly monitored.

It is clear from the annual governments' and other reports that implementation of the strategies and action plans for Roma should be more consistent. There is a lot of improvisation, estimation and negligence visible in the reports and it is clear that information is missing. There are a number of planned measures that are not implemented or that have been partially implemented. Very often, mechanisms for the inclusion of Roma in the implementation of national level ALMP are not clear. Data on Roma inclusion and effects on their employment are often missing, particularly long-term. Therefore, **the consistency in implementation of strategies (action plans) needs to be significantly improved.**

Decisive measures against discrimination of Roma by public institutions

If there are strategies and action plans, it does not mean that there is real political will to fight discrimination against Roma. It is clear that there is deeply rooted structural and institutionalised discrimination against Roma, which is directly and inextricably linked to political will and general public awareness. Real political will may be shown by employing Roma in public institutions and dedicating more funds for employment of Roma. Public institutions should set up an example for employing young educated Roma.

Wherever possible, **quotas for Roma employment in public companies and institutions, especially at the local level, should be introduced.** Imposing quota system is nothing new in the region. The quota system has been in force for a long time for people with disabilities not only for public companies and institutions but for the entire labour market. There are examples of quota-based labor policies on firms throughout the world. However, imposing quota system could additionally worsen business environment (introduce additional costs to the companies). Therefore, the introduction of the system should be carefully designed.

If it is difficult to introduce quotas, central and local public entities should be encouraged and stimulated to employ Roma on a permanent basis. Annual targets for employment of Roma in the public service should be set. Proportional representation of Roma in public administration is planned in several economies across the region, but is not implemented. It is, therefore, needed to introduce a law enforcement mechanism for this particular issue.

Improved participation of Roma in the ALMP

A relatively low number of Roma use the services of the EI. Employment institutes are mostly seen as purely administrative government offices where unemployed people register regularly in order to maintain their unemployed status and entitlements to benefits. However, employment offices, at least theoretically, are required to provide a variety of services beyond administration related to the unemployed, such as job-matching and counselling services to provide support when people apply for vacancies. Better integration of Roma in the labour market through VET and active employment programs could be significantly improved **by setting up quotas (for their participation)** that EI will respect and adhere to. Setting up quotas is planned in Albania and Kosovo* and should be introduced across the region.

Roma mediators/officers should be employed and have a strong role in the work of EI and VET systems. Currently, Roma are employed as mediators mostly on a project basis and with the support of NGOs. **Roma mediators should be employed on a permanent basis at the EI.** The criteria for employment of Roma public servants in the area of employment should be adjusted to the capacities of Roma. Employing qualified Roma is planned in Albania and Montenegro (implemented in 2017, but mostly on project basis).

Adjusting the ALMP to the actual situation of Roma

A key prerequisite of good ALMP is proper targeting and understanding of the types of labour market programs that suit certain groups - in this case Roma. It is essential to regularly collect

information, monitor outcomes, effects and impact, and base the ALMP on the findings. There has to be a baseline established, so that the trends in the Roma labour market and employment participation can be monitored. Therefore, **there is a need to further improve collection of information on Roma employment in the region (including surveys) and monitor and evaluate the outcomes, effects and impact of the measures.**

Besides the efforts of the governments, there is a lack of information available through other (independent) researches or analysis on the suitability and effectiveness of these measures. There is a need to encourage researchers **to create and implement (independent) researches about the Roma (un)employment issues.**

The key obstacle for Roma employment is the low level of education and lack of skills. These could be improved through **long-term skill development programs.** However, research shows that exclusive ethnic targeting of employment programs is rarely a feasible and efficient way of reaching out to Roma on a national level, and much more effective at local level. Furthermore, training programmes are using precious time for beneficiaries that engage in the informal sector to provide for the existential needs of their families. Alternative ways should be found to continuously expose Roma to life and job skills, with particular focus on young and women.

Roma prefer forms of engagement closer to or providing actual employment. So, the governments should consider transferring resources from incentives and client services to employment (e.g. subsidies to employers that are targeted at the most disadvantaged groups for whom other measures have proved ineffective) and direct job creation. Anyhow, it is clear that Roma do not benefit from EI client services, so there is a need to transfer resources to programs that suit Roma better.

Research shows that exclusive targeting works better locally, with the involvement of dedicated Roma community activists or organizations (possibly as employment advisors as recommended). **ALMP should be localised** as much as possible and implemented **in cooperation with local communities** (cities and municipalities). Local communities should be given an opportunity to design ALMP for Roma and to apply for funds with national/regional authorities. This method could be especially relevant in the economies where employment and self-employment measures implemented through national employment institutes are not yielding sustainable impact.⁶¹ Engaging local governments in the institutional support is planned in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, but information on the effect on Roma is missing. The measures provided at central level should have the possibility of adjustment at local level in order to meet the context and the needs of the local communities.

The business environment in the enlargement region is not favourable. Starting and managing a business is even more difficult for Roma as a disadvantaged group in the labour market. Therefore, **the self-employment programs should be more carefully designed and include training, longer start-up support to be delivered in phases, and mentoring for at least a two-year period (combined with the start-up support phase, market development, and access to finance).** These programs should be accompanied with other measures such as passing legislation to make it easier for Roma to obtain permits and reach the market. Introducing promising concepts, such as the “integrated social businesses” providing employers with additional benefits if at least 30 % of their employees are from disadvantaged groups, should be explored. In the process of tax reforms the government should consider adopting legislation that promotes easier establishment and functioning of such small and

⁶¹ As an illustration, over 95% of Roma beneficiaries of employment and self-employment programs through national/regional EI in Bosnia and Herzegovina were dismissed and registered with the employment institutes as soon as the support ended.

medium businesses. The requirements that potential beneficiaries need to fulfil in order to benefit from start-up programmes should be adjusted. For example, if it is required to have a real estate and/or two guarantors for a loan, most of the Roma would not be eligible, thus such requirements should be removed. All of the enlargement governments implement self-employment measures but not in a comprehensive and long-term fashion, which should be changed.

Wage support measures for increasing employment opportunities hardly reach out to Roma due to their low education and limited skills, prejudice on the part of employers, and other factors. If this type of support is to be utilised, it should be **tailor-made**, and the **criteria for participation should be revised to allow far better outreach to Roma, including the most vulnerable Roma**, such as youth, women, disabled, etc.

3.2. Innovative approaches

Linking Roma education with employment

The mass-unemployment of working age Roma is most often perceived as a labour market supply-side issue, attributing the high unemployment to Roma's inability to find employment because of their low levels of education, out-of-date work skills, and detachment from the labour market. Private sector employers also underline that the key obstacles for employment of Roma are lack of education and skills required to be employed. On the other side, many researches and reports show that Roma are getting more educated and they get new (other than traditional) skills. So, **Roma may gain access to training programmes, but often these provide skills that have no market value and thus do not improve labour market opportunities of the beneficiaries.** New skills that Roma get are not needed at the labour market. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the type of education and skills development programs Roma attend and **Roma should be offered programs for acquiring skills needed for the labour market.**

For example, IT sector is one of the fastest growing in the region and there are IT programs designed for women (e.g IT girls) and rural areas. New educational and skills development programs could be offered to Roma for attractive sectors such as IT (e.g. IT support, back office developer). Special long-term scholarships should also be offered to young Roma capable and willing to get educated for labour market "attractive" occupations such as electrical engineers, doctors, drivers, etc.

Employment of Roma in public schemes would enable them to directly link their education with employment. A good example is the education and subsequent employment of police officers. The Roma Police Fellowship Programme (RFPF) in Hungary (started in Borsod County in 1996) aims to support Roma young people in their secondary education to become police officers. As a result of the different targeted supporting measures, some hundreds of Roma are estimated to be among the Police ranks. In Borsod County their ratio is estimated at around 9-10%, similar to the estimated 9 % size of Roma minority in this area.

Creating and offering combined education programs (compulsory education catch up combined with job skills training) for Roma could also significantly improve their situation at the labour market. These programs should be long term programs (3 years minimum) and link possible employer with the education institutions (programs). Roma attending schools would be given possibility to acquire necessary skills directly at the employer premises. Employer would get incentive for participating in the program, and a skilled worker. These programs could easily be designed and implemented by local CSOs in cooperation with EIs and other stakeholders through local partnerships for employment initiatives.

New services of the EI

Current ALMP and services that EIs provide do not work for Roma. So, one can argue what the purpose for introducing new ones is. However, the problem of Roma unemployment is huge and there is a need to work on improving existing services but also try to change the situation by introducing new ones that are already tested in some territories.

Individual employment plans should be created by EIs for each unemployed Roma, which is already done by some of the EIs in the region. Individual employment plans are individualised career service. The plans are jointly developed by the participant and the career planner. It identifies the participant's employment goals and defines the combination of services needed for the participant to reach employment goals. The plans are considered as one of the most effective ways to serve individuals with barriers to employment and to coordinate services.

The individual plans must be followed with the necessary services that would be comprehensive and tailored to the individual needs. It would also enable EIs to analyse these plans and create appropriate ALMP for Roma. Social welfare workers can participate in the creation of these plans as they are often supplemental to the labour officers. In this sense, the employment advisors should have the capacity to work with individual unemployed persons thoroughly to create and implement the plan. Roma employment advisors may be tasked with such role for Roma unemployed.

EI mobile (task force) teams or branch community services could be created to cover Roma settlements and work directly with Roma. Researches show that EI fail to provide support to long-term unemployed Roma, especially if they live in marginalized areas. EI mobile teams or community based services would provide services directly in marginalised areas. That would enable EI staff to better understand the needs of Roma and provide them with more appropriate services. Work in mobile teams or community-based services would also raise awareness of the EI officers. In Serbia, for example, the number of registered unemployed Roma and those using the services is increasing, since local mobile teams are reaching out to Roma, informing and encouraging the unemployed Roma to register and participate in active employment measures offered.

Local partnerships for Roma employment should support work of mobile teams. The governments should encourage and develop partnerships between employers, social partners, employment services, government authorities, social services and education and training providers to provide services that better meet the needs of enterprises and registered long-term unemployed persons. Each local partnership should have clear (measurable) objectives, available resources and limited time framework.

Social entrepreneurship and sheltered workshops / work centres

Social enterprise is a business⁶² with social mission. Social enterprises are businesses that are cause-driven — created to overcome a global or local issue or challenge.

Commonly used legal forms in the region include limited company (Ltd), cooperative or civil society organization. **The mission of Roma social enterprises would be to employ Roma.** Although social enterprises act in the market as any other business (enterprise), they are sometimes (financially) supported due to their mission. The support is provided by the stakeholders interested in the results of their work. Those could be individuals, development organizations, foundations or governments.

In this particular case, support for social enterprises that employ Roma should be primarily provided by the relevant (responsible) ministries. The ministries should provide long term support by covering some operational and development costs of such businesses.

Social enterprises have to have strong mission, business like focus, innovative concept, management expertise, effective collaboration with public sector, local community involvement, and strong leadership team.

For developing social entrepreneurship, there is no need for special legislation. The current legislation provides sufficient framework for their development. However, there is a need that relevant ministries create and implement programs to support social entrepreneurship development. The possibility for promoting social entrepreneurship through special legislation may also be considered, in order to provide a friendlier and enabling environment for such businesses to operate and grow.

⁶² In the enlargement region these work as any other business complying with the same rules and legal framework. To promote the social objectives, the governments should consider an enabling legal framework that would provide for facilitated work of such companies.

Sheltered workshops are business entities that are authorized to employ workers with disabilities. They function as any other business entity in the market, with the exception that the state (through special programs or funds) subsidizes operational costs and provides funds for development (e.g. all taxes and contributions for employees paid by the government).

Such **business entities (sheltered workshops) could be created for Roma as well.** The mission of sheltered workshop is enabling employment of hardly employable or categories endangered at the labour market. The work of sheltered workshop is more subsidized than the work of social enterprise and social enterprise could have much wider mission.

Changing target focus

Institutions mostly involved in solving the problem of unemployment among Roma are the employment institutes and educational institutions, which mostly use the mainstream active labour market policies. It is clear that current efforts are not yielding results. Therefore, **the target focus and objectives should be changed involving other relevant institutions.**

A good example is the waste selection sector. Roma are traditionally waste selectors (recyclers). The potentials of waste selection and recycling industry in the region is huge. There is a need to conduct a practical analysis (focusing on what is realistic and possible) about **possibilities to strengthen the role of Roma in official waste selection and recycling system.** The analysis should propose concrete measures (e.g. supporting work of social enterprises that would employ Roma in this sector) for proper inclusion of Roma in the waste recycling system. Such approach would also increase funding possibilities for employing Roma (e.g. funds for environment).

Research in all of the countries in the region found that **Roma participate in informal employment to a significant extent.** None of the labour market programmes address this issue. The sectors that Roma appear as undeclared workers are waste management, construction, agriculture, fruit picking, trade (street and open market mostly), and services (often cleaning). There are about 40,000 Roma professional collectors of secondary raw materials⁶³ and 2,500 undeclared Roma workers⁶³ from Southern Serbia in the construction industry. Before trying to solve the informal economic issues by repressive measures, Roma should be given a chance and be encouraged to formalize their informal businesses. There is also a clear need to (legally and using repressive measures) force the employers to “declare” workers.

Fund (regional) for Roma Employment

The issue of Roma unemployment is huge and one can think about **establishing a Fund for Roma Employment.** The fund would provide all the services and implement measures that are elaborated in this report. However, creation of such fund would be exclusive for Roma and the dilemma is whether to seek for inclusive solutions. The other dilemma is if there is political will to establish the fund. And the third dilemma is if there is capability (knowledge) in the countries to properly manage the fund.

The possible solution could be to establish a regional fund. The management of a regional fund would be more economical (cheaper), with proper knowledge, higher ability to attract additionally funding and without political influence. Each government should invest in the fund and significant portion should be reinvested in Roma employment to their respective territories, along with policy development, research and management of the fund. The best option would be that the Fund provides wide range of support measures related to Roma employment.

⁶³ Estimation done by YUROM centre Nis, Serbia

The other option is that the Fund concentrates its effort only on implementation of new approaches/measures. Namely, a number of employment measures have been implemented by the governments (mostly EIs) throughout the region. Most of these measures are inclusive and EI have been improving them. Therefore, these measures should probably be managed by EI in the future too.

The role of the Fund would in that case be specific. The Fund could concentrate on three main Roma employment issues:

- Fighting discrimination against Roma, especially working on employing Roma in public institutions and services as well as stimulating private employers to declare (undeclared) Roma workers
- Supporting combined education and skills acquiring programs for Roma, enabling Roma to get the skills demanded by the labour market
- Development of social enterprises that would employ Roma by developing entrepreneurial skills of Roma and enabling them to manage their own businesses. Roma having undeclared businesses could be stimulated to declare their businesses. The Fund in this case could have a function of business incubator for Roma.

The Fund could work on projects implementation principle in each country. It means that the funds would be distributed to final beneficiaries through projects, thus enabling a wide range of activities.