

GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



National Agency for Roma

**Speech of Mr. Ilie DINCĂ,
President of the National Agency for Roma
Secretary of state
Government of Romania**

Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015

**International Conference on Improving Access to Housing for Roma –
Good Local Practices, Funding and Legislation**

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor and a pleasure to meet you here.

Please let me briefly introduce you few information about the situation of Roma housing issue in Romania.

Officially, here are living about 535.000 Roma people, but the real number of this ethnic group might be more than 2.5 millions persons. Roma minority presents a massive risk of exclusion, particularly in housing. Roma people live mostly in outskirts and rural areas (83%), in compact communities (77%)¹, according to the study launched last week by the Research Institute for Quality of Life in Bucharest.

Roma are presented regularly in areas of extreme poverty, ghetto type or near cesspools. The houses are cheapest here, but there are poor or lack of infrastructure and limited access to public services. Anyway, the rate of homeowners among Roma is very low.

Roma housing represents one of the priorities of the new National Action Plans of the new Strategy of improving Roma situation, documents that are on the way to be carried by the Government.

In 2008, the National Agency for Roma, the institution I represent here, signed a Framework Agreement with the Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing. The document is the basis of a pilot-programme “Social housing for Roma communities”. Its aim is to improve the Roma access to decent housing and public services such water, electricity, sewerage, roads and heating systems in accordance with the laws in force. According to this, social housing for Roma is made through public investment promoted and run by the National Agency for Housing, and funded from the national budget through the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism budget.

¹ Legal and Equal on Market Place for Roma Communities, Institutul de Cercetare a Calității Vieții, 2011

In 11 localities from different regions of the country, they will be built 43 modulus with seven apartments each of them. The beneficiaries have to fulfill specific conditions, regarding their monthly income and other specific terms.

Because of the financial constraints, at the end of the year 2010 they were contracted the construction plan services for 34 houses. For other 9 houses (situated in 2 localities), the local authorities have not submitted yet the documents required to obtain the land needful to build the houses.

Through the PHARE programme 2006, in worth of 18 million Euros, they were contracted 38 projects in small scale infrastructure and housing (32-small scale infrastructure, 6 -

housing), in a total amount of approximately 8, 6 million Euros. The six projects funded in the field of housing are implemented as follows: 4 in Constanța county, and 2 in Sibiu county.

By the program "Partnership for Roma support 2003" conducted by UNDP and the Government of Romania, that was addressed to the public authorities involved in implementing and promoting actions to improve the Roma social conditions, they have been granted 8 projects in order to rehabilitate the Roma houses.

During 2000 - 2004, the PHARE programme 1998 in worth of 2 million was run out. The programme had two components: a training component (worth 1.1 million Euros) and a grant component (worth 900,000 Euros). This last one has been assigned to the local public authorities and in its frame has been granted 3 housing projects.

The major problems in Roma housing remain the financial ones, the collaboration between the central and local public authorities and institutions, as well as the poor results of housing public policies and weak abilities in attracting EF for housing.

Regarding the possibility to use ERDF funds for Roma housing in the period of 2011-2013, I would mention that within the Monitoring Committee of the Sectorial Operational

Programme for Human Resources Development was set up the Commission for Roma, within they were involved as well the representatives of the Regional Operational Programme and ERDF, in order to correlate future projects accessed by structural funds.

Moreover, we need that European Strategy, whose set-up would be beneficial to develop the local communities through integrated projects. These must be focused on the four priority areas of the Decade, also on infrastructure and public administration. I would like to stress that it is necessary to create a special line for Roma for the next programming period of 2014-2020 in order to implement integrated projects on priority area within the local communities.

Considering the implication and political positions the participants at this important event have, I have the confidence that together we really can urge and to push the things in the right direction in the Roma housing problems.

Thank you for your attention!