



Republic of Macedonia

Government of the Republic of Macedonia

**The way forward: Government commitments  
to desegregating education in the Decade  
countries**

# Current Status

- Macedonia is one of the countries where the status of the Roma has significantly improved over the recent years
- In the last five years:
  - *Coverage of Roma students enrolled in the first grade has increased by 8.5%, by 21.7% for those enrolled in the primary education, and the coverage of Roma students enrolled in secondary education has increased by 57.7% ;*
  - *5 primary schools implement lessons in the elective subject Roma Language and Culture - 79% of the Roma children attend these lessons;*

# Current Status

- But there is a certain number of children of the Roma ethnic community who are included in the special schools/classes,  
*(upon verification by experts from the Mental Health Institute, as part of the Ministry of Health, that these children have special education needs; such assessments are made before enrollment in the first grade, or are based on school referrals);*
- The referral and enrolment procedures practiced in Macedonia are not questionable, as is the case in other countries;

## What are the problems / reasons implying this status?

- **Insufficient / in certain environments total absence of knowledge of the Macedonian language** (*students insufficiently or not at all understand the contents of the lessons taught and give poor results in return, the requests are usually imposed by the teachers or by the parents*);
- **Poor social & economic status of the Roma families** (*parents themselves demand that their children are placed in those classes – they receive certain benefits – financial support in the form of a monthly allowance of 50 euros, free accommodation, food, free schoolbooks and other benefits*);

## What are the problems / reasons implying this status?

- Insufficient information of the Roma community about the active measures the Government implements in education;
- There is no mechanism to have an insight in the referral and enrolment procedures and the categorization process is carried out without in-depth analysis (no arguments, just doubts);

## What is the Legal framework / institutional set-up in RM

***A number of ministries are responsible  
there is inter-sectoral set-up***

- *Ministry of Education and Science (MES) – Agency for Development and Improvement of Education in Languages of Communities;*
- Ministry of Health (MH);
- Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP);

# Activities undertaken to improve the status

## **Affirming and stimulating measures and activities that contribute for an improved situation**

**In the last 5 years** have been implemented the following projects:

- *Inclusion of Roma Children in Public Pre-School Institution;*
- *Implementation of the project Conditional Money Transfers;*
- *Exemption from paying administration fee for immunization certificate;*
- *Production of the Manual on Non-Discrimination in the Education and Child-Rearing System;*
- *Scholarships, mentorships and tutorships of secondary-school;*
- *Free schoolbooks, transportation and accommodation in secondary-school dormitories;*
- *Reduced criteria for Roma students in secondary schools and enrolment quota (10%) for Roma students in higher education institutions; and*
- *Roma Language as elective subject in higher education;*

## Recommendations / planned activities

- **A work group has been formed** with the task to draft recommendations that will contribute for reduction of the number of children in specialized schools;
- Within the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, **to draft modifications of the existing Rulebook** so as **to define 4 Regional Commissions** that will be authorized to issue findings and opinions on the type and extent of developmental impairment and the special needs, with the purpose to overcome the anomalies in issuing the findings by various commissions (members of these commissions are regularly employed experts);
- Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and Ministry of Health have been authorized by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia **to set up a 2nd-level Commission** that will provide second opinion on the findings reported at 1st- level (comprising of 3 doctors);



## Recommendations by the MES

- **To improve the mechanisms and instruments** for early detection of children with impairments by testing them with adequate tests;
- **To use a decree by a doctor** or to set up an improved communication between health, education and social sectors;
- **Financial support to students** already in the primary education thus overcoming the accommodation problem in special schools and special classes;
- **To work with parents**, especially with mothers, as natural educators of their child and raising the educational/cultural level of the Roma, especially of the Roma mothers and their active involvement in the lifelong learning programs, as well as in parent programs;

# Recommendations by the MES

- **To introduce elements of vocational orientation** for the children as early as with their inclusions in kindergartens;
- **Specialized school services** and teachers to **strengthen** their competences and responsibilities for providing opinion for re-categorization of students;
- **To make the education of Roma** an important and integral part of development plans of schools;
- **Raising the awareness** of municipality administration about the needs of the Roma students when adopting the annual programs;

## Recommendations by the MES

- **To equip the schools** additionally so as to be able to work with children with special needs;
- **To adopt contemporary work methods** and support by way of individualized approach in the work with children with special needs;
- **To set up networking of schools**, with the purpose of exchange of experiences and good practices; and
- **Review of regulations** relating to education of children with developmental impairment;

We hope these measures will help reduce the number of Roma children included in this type of education and will improve this situation in the country