



**GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA
NATIONAL AGENCY FOR ROMA**

**PUBLIC POLICIES
BEST PRACTICES**

EDUCATION

1. The Ministry of Education organised and continued the following programme which, during the years, became a public policy:

Providing annually special places in universities for Roma children that graduated high-school. If in the academic year 1998 -1999, 149 special places for Roma were offered in 8 universities, in 2009 there were almost 500 special places in 40 universities.

2. Another good practice in the field of education is the fact that in 2007 the Ministry of Education adopted the Order **1540** which prohibits any form of segregation in the pre-university education system. Subsequently, the Ministry of Education, approved the Methodology for preventing and eliminating school segregation of Roma children. Furthermore, the Ministry issued an internal regulation outlining that schools and school inspectors must take action to identify and eliminate any segregation practices. Measures already taken:

Dissemination and information of the school inspectorates and schools:

- Written information transmitted by Ministry of Education to the County school inspectorates regarding the adoption of the order
- Posting the order on the ministry's website
- Training provided for inspectors, headmasters and teachers regarding possible segregation situations, the educational benefit of desegregation, possible difficulties and the ways to get over them
- involvement of representative stakeholders in communities in the information process regarding segregation/desegregation, mediation actions (where needed)
- involving the trained school mediators, who are mostly representative of Roma Community, in the communication between the local authorities/

educational authorities and the Roma community and in the process of school desegregation

- establishing local and county support groups, including representatives of educational and local authorities, of parents, local community and other stakeholders, with the aim of discussing all the issues related to education of children coming from disadvantaged communities, including segregation and finding solutions to the problems, including necessary resources

The desegregation process is a long and difficult one, but there is the necessary political will to enforce the Order 1540/19.07.2007

EMPLOYMENT

3. Labour Caravans

Starting with 2005, the Ministry of Labour through the National Agency for Employment have been organized **job markets** for Roma ethnics. Besides the objective to create adequate conditions for employers to satisfy their employment needs and to facilitate the employment of Roma ethnics, these job markets offered the opportunity to campaign the fact that Roma ethnics are interested in work so that the employers would come to accept them as future employees. Also, Roma ethnics had the possibility to discuss with representatives of economic agents and find out which are the requirements for getting a job.

HEALTH:

4. Within the National Health Programme, the Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with the NGOs, established **a system of Roma health mediators**, as an interface between providers of medical and social services and the community, in order to improve the health status of the population, especially for persons with low socio-economic status, without medical insurance and those living in rural areas uncovered by family practitioners.

The number of Roma health mediators has increased as follows: from 70 mediators in 2002 to 500 mediators in 2009, respectively from 160 community nurses in 2002 to **800 in 2009**.

In 2006, this part of the National Health Programme, coordinated by the Ministry of Public Health, evolved into a public policy , „Actions for health”, with an estimated increase of 300% in the number of communities where these two types of community health workers activate.

5. Structural Funds

Structural Funds are the main core of all NAR activities because we understand the importance of this tool in achieving the goals of National Strategy on Roma and also of the

Lisbon Strategy which has as aim social inclusion. Thus, this aim represents the foundation for Structural Funds for reducing the economic and social disparities between Roma and mainstream society. Therefore, in April 2008 European Social Fund approved to fund 6 strategically projects elaborated by the National Agency for Roma in the area of social inclusion of Roma people, as follows:

1. TOGETHER ON LABOUR MARKET

Implementation period : 24 months

Value : aprox 5 mil Euros

The project is a pilot and trans-national project and it will be implemented in 8 localities in partnership with Fundacion Secretariado Gitano from Spain during the period 2008-2010. In the following period 2010-2013 the project would be multiplied at national level. The target group are 6770 Roma people between 16-64 years old and Roma young people between 14 and 16 years old.

The main object of this project is to promote social inclusion of Roma people in the employment area at national level by implementation of ACCEDER model in Romania, which was a best practice program funded by European Social Fund and implemented in Spain during 2000-2006.

The goal of the project would be achieved through vocational trainings for Roma men and women, trainings that would be adapted to the demand of the Romanian labour market. Another activity of the project would be the stimulation of Romani children between 14 and 16 years to attend the school in order to increase their chances on the labour market.

The project was developed taking in consideration several factors that contribute to the high unemployment of Roma people in Romania, namely racial discrimination, lack of professional qualification, low vocational preparation and non-correlation of the work needs of Roma with labour market.

The expected outcomes of the project are the following:

- To increase the life standard of the Roma employed and their families due to the vocational training courses and prevention of the school abandon
- To create a network among institutions, agencies and civil society that will implement this project
- To establish the premises of Roma participation to the improvement of the economic situation of mainstream society
- To improve the image, perception and self esteem of Roma people
- To prioritise equality of gender for Romani women
- To develop the managerial partnership model in Romania

2. EDUCATION OF ROMANI CHILDREN- THE WAY TO A GUARANTEED EMPLOYMENT

Implementation period : 36 months

Value: aprox 5 mil Euros

It is a trans-national project which it would be implemented during 2008-2011 by NAR in partnership with Roma Education Fund, Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, Resources Centre for Roma Communities and Pakiv Association from Romania.

The main objective of this project is to increase the level of education of Romani children in the rural and urban area for developing human resources, which later will participate on the flexible and modern labour market as the result of the improved quality of education and reduction of the school abandon.

The target group are Roma pupils from rural and urban area.

Specifically, the expected results of the project are the following:

- Equal access to education of 1200 Roma pupils from VII and VIII grade which are most exposed to the early abandon of school. The result will be achieved by offering additional education preparation for passing the national tests.
- 600 Roma students from grade VII will continue their studies in the secondary stage as the result of the mentorship, personnel development, orientation and guidance activities
- Retention of 750 Roma students in the 9th grade in the secondary school by facilitating their adaptation to the new educational environment.
- Preparation of 450 students of Arts and Crafts School to gain access to labour market throughout scholarships programs for excellence in studies.
- Preparation of 2400 Roma adults who early abandoned school to benefit of programs such as “Second Chance” which have as aim to support Roma adults to gain access to labour market by ensuring them basic education.

3. THE PARTICIPATION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS TO THE SOCIAL ECONOMY.

Implementation period : 36 months

Value: aprox 3,4 mil Euros

This project would be implemented during 2008-2011 by NAR in collaboration with 8 partners¹, namely several governmental bodies and NGOs which have expertise on the situation of vulnerable groups. The main goal of the project is to develop the capacity of the local communities to realize a durable local development with the participation of vulnerable groups. This goal would be achieved through the empowerment of the vulnerable groups to be included on the labour market by developing their professional, vocational and antreprenoriale skills.

The target groups of this project are the following vulnerable groups:

- 9800 of Roma people which suffer social exclusion from all social services, such as education, health care and housing
- 7000 detained people or who recently were released from detention
- 1200 drug addictive people who
- 1000 women who suffered domestic violence
- 1000 young people which left the institutional system for child protection

The expected outcome would be the following:

- To increase the social inclusion of vulnerable groups throughout participation on the labour market.
- To insert and reinsert members of vulnerable groups on the labour market
- To prepare experts on social inclusion

4. NATIONAL NETWORK OF LOCAL ROMA EXPERTS AS MECHANISM OF SUPPORT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTIONS FOR ROMA, A VULNERABLE GROUP EXPOSED TO SOCIAL INCLUSION.

Implementation period : 36 months

Value:aprox. 5 mil Euros

Throughout this project NAR in collaboration with National Institute of Administration is targeting to improve the relations between Roma people and public institutions at local, regional and national level by means of development of a national network of Roma local experts in order to enhance the social integration of Roma in Romania. The target groups are Roma people and local public authorities.

¹ National Anti-Drugs Agency, National Agency for Family Protection, National Administration of Penitentiaries, The Foundation of Penal Justice Reform, Association of Romanian Group for Defending Human Rights, Association Towards Europe Targoviste, Foundation for Social Development of Roma- Ramses and Transcena Association.

The rationale of the elaboration of this project is that the objectives of the Government Strategy are to make central and local public authorities accountable for the enforcement of concrete measures for improving the condition of the Roma in five sector areas: community development and public administration, education, healthcare, employment and housing. The goal would be achieved through preparation of Roma human resources and including Roma human resources in decision-making processes; all of these should be based on the principles of antidiscrimination and gender mainstreaming. However, NAR in the implementation of the abovementioned objective encountered several difficulties in order to convince the local authorities (mayors, local councils etc.) to formulate courses of action in favor of Roma in accordance with their duty to act in order to improve the situation of all citizens.

Therefore, this lack of political motivation of local authorities to allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of social inclusion programs for Roma at regional and local level creates a vicious circle of social marginalisation, specifically:

- Weak participation of Roma to public and civic life
- Lack of promotion of Roma interests on the local agenda of local authorities
- Increased gap between the mainstream groups and Roma and thus of dependence of Roma for social aid

Therefore NAR throughout the implementation of this project will prepare Roma local experts to work within local public institutions targeted and Roma Local Councilors by developing their lobby and communication skills necessary to establish an effective and real relationship between different public institutions, Roma and majority communities.

The expected outcome is to contribute to a much efficient representation of Roma communities' interest at local level and thus to determine them to implement different actions for creating real chances for breaking the vicious circle of social exclusion of Roma from social services, such education, health care and housing.

5. SCHOOL A CHANCE FOR EVERYONE

Implementation period : 36 months

Value: aprox 2,5 mil Euros

The project proposes several measures to prevent the early abandon of school of vulnerable groups in 20 counties of Romania. This trans-national project would be implemented in partnership with International Association Step by Step and also Ministry of Education, Research and Youth, the Centre for Education and Personal Development- Step by Step and Agency for

Community Development “Together”. The activities implemented during 2008-2011 would contribute:

- To improve participation of Roma children, poor and disabled children at primary and secondary level.
- To diminish school abandon
- To realise a collaboration and networking mechanisms among the actors implicated in educational issues

6. TOGETHER FOR A BETTER LIFE

Implementation period : 30 months

Value: 4,5 mil Euros

The main objective is to increase the participation of vulnerable groups on the labour market and to promote the social inclusion of Roma by developing the structures and specific activities of the social economy by means of Regional Centres of Human Resources for Social Economy. This project would be implemented during 2008-2011 in partnership with Fondazione Brodolini and Conform S.R.L. from Italy and National Organization for Disabled People from Romania

The project would target the professional and personal development of vulnerable groups throughout vocational training in order to facilitate their insertion on the labour market. At the same time their self-esteem would be enhanced as the result of mentorship actions.

The target groups are 1000 of Roma people, 800 persons with minimum income and 200 disabled people. Moreover, 50% of the target groups are representing women and 15% people between 55-64 years old.

The insertion of these vulnerable groups on the labor market would be ensured through 8 Regional Centres of Human Resources for Social Economy created in the 8 developed regions and the partnerships developed between the above mentioned and the local authorities, who together will elaborated 80 small grants regarding social economy.