

ROMACTION+

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

THE USE OF THE NATIONAL POLICIES FOR
ROMA AT THE LOCAL LEVEL



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SUMMARY

The process of creating public policies for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia started in 2004 on the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the preparation of the Strategy for Roma. Creating public policies for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia as a process imposed by the international community, the Roma civil society first joined this initiative improving the situation of the Roma for which it worked for a longer period. Key year and beginning of the implementation of public policies aimed at Roma community can be considered 2005 with the adoption of two key documents: Strategy for Roma, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and joining the regional initiative for inclusion of Roma in the society "Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015" by signing the Declaration in Sofia.

By implementing public policies for Roma, the majority of the public, believes that it has a positive impact on the integration of Roma in the Republic Macedonia, but still much remains to be done in order to achieve effective improvement in the inclusion of Roma in society.

Today in the Republic of Macedonia the issue of inclusion of Roma is targeted through the Strategy for Roma 2014 - 2020 and Integration of Roma 2020 within the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) - Sarajevo, which represents a regional initiative in the Western Balkans and Turkey and can be considered as a post-regional project of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015.

With this Analysis, we attempt to emphasize the possibilities and the applicability of national policies at the local level.

INTRODUCTION

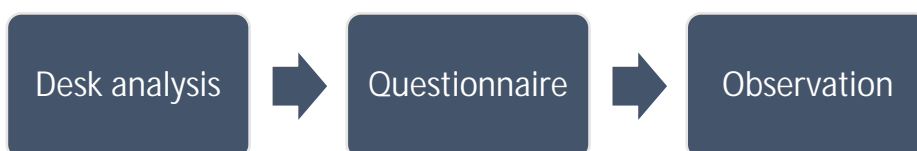
The process of creating public policies for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia started in 2004 with the preparation of the Strategy for Roma. Creating of public policies for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia as a process was imposed by the international community, while the Roma civil society was the first to join this initiative. Key year and beginning of implementation of public policies targeted at the Roma community can be considered 2005 with the adoption of the two key documents Strategy for Roma, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and joining the regional initiative for Roma inclusion in the society "Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 -2015" with the signing of the Declaration in Sofia.

The first step that was taken over by the state was the development of National Roma Strategy 2005 - 2015, which followed the signing of the international declaration "The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015", where signatory countries have pledged to work on reducing the gap between Roma and non-Roma in the four priority areas: employment, housing, education, health while special focus was also targeted on gender issues, discrimination and poverty. Based on both documents, National Action Plans (NAP) and Local Action Plans (LAP) were created. The goals and activities of the both national documents in the implementation period was intertwined though both were directed towards integration of the Roma community. This process was intertwined largely due to the bad institutional setup that was supposed to implement, monitor and evaluate public policies for Roma. However, both documents that were adopted belong to the so-called soft legislation that they do not have legally binding action and depend on the goodwill of the Government.

The main hypothesis posed is if national policies for Roma are adopted by the Government, they should be adopted and implemented by the units of local self-governments (municipalities) which also need to have developed Local Action Plans. This analysis aims to analyze the applicability of national policies at the local level. The analysis begins with a brief overview of the development of policies for Roma, follows the methodological approach used in the analysis. It continues with a brief overview of the previous efforts and results at the national and local level and evaluation of the municipalities based on the answers received from the questionnaire filled out by the representatives of the local self-governments. In the end, there is a conclusion with recommendations for future activities.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological framework used in this analysis is divided into three parts and combines a qualitative and quantitative approach. This approach offers an opportunity for a comprehensive analysis of how national Roma policies are applicable at the local level and implemented. This analysis has an aim to identify the factors that hinder the applicability of national Roma policies at local level, while recommendations to all stakeholders involved in the process of creating and implementing public policies for Roma will be generated. The desk analysis includes an analysis of key documents: the Roma Strategy 2014-2020¹, National Action Plans 2016-2020 in the priority areas², Local Action Plans of the municipalities that were developed in cooperation with Eptisa³. Also, a large number of information in this research is generated by several civil society reports and surveys on the implementation of the Strategy for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia.



The second part of the methodological framework was a questionnaire designed for representatives of twelve municipalities: Beroovo, Delcevo, Kocani, Vinica, Stip, Kumanovo, Suto Orizari, Cair, Tetovo, Gostivar, Bitola and Prilep, which were part of a meeting

¹ Ministry of Labour and Social Policy - Strategy for Roma 2014-2020. Available at: <https://goo.gl/wyv1se>

² Development of national action plans on education, health, employment, housing and strengthening the position of Roma women in the society for 2016-2020 year. Available on: <https://goo.gl/39yvf3>

³ The brief summary of the project is available at: <https://goo.gl/TDfU97>

organized by the Association Initiative for Social Change - InSoC within the ROMA ACTION project + civil engagement of the local community⁴. The selection of the municipalities was made according to the established Local Coordinating Bodies. The questionnaire was anonymous and contained 15 questions from semi-structured character.

The third method used in the preparation of this analysis is the observation. During the working meeting one of the experts attended the working meeting and observed the discussions among the representatives of the municipalities. Also, the expert team discussed with several key persons and experts who are involved in the process of integration of the Roma community in the Republic Macedonia. Based on this method the expert who participated at the meeting prepared a report with notes from the meeting that were then subject to analysis. This method aims to study the spontaneous behavior of municipal representatives in the process of defining the priorities of Roma at the local level in the municipalities. Based on this method a report with the notes of the expert who participated in working meeting was prepared.

⁴ More information of the project is available at: <https://goo.gl/VrnHWw>

GENERAL REFERENCE TO NATIONAL PUBLIC POLICIES FOR INCLUSION OF ROMA IN THE SOCIETY

The National level

The Strategy for Roma 2014-2020

The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy within the project "Supporting the Implementation of the Strategy for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia", through the improvement of the strategic and operational governance processes at the national level"⁵ after the passing of the importance of the Strategy for Roma adopted in 2005, the Roma Strategy 2014-2020 was drafted. As a document, the Strategy for Roma 2014-2020 is part of the public policies in the Republic of Macedonia and with the strategy the state strives for full integration of the Roma community in society. As with the Strategy for Roma 2014-2020 the state with the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 covers the priority areas: employment, education housing, health and culture. Strategic determinations of the state in the mentioned areas are: Employment - Improving conditions and employment opportunities reducing unemployment of the Roma community and as a result the community to be integrated into the mainstream society in the country. In this part, the Strategy proposes that all measures and activities be dimensioned within the existing policies implemented through the competent institutions. Education - Raising the level of education in the Roma community. Housing - Reducing the gap in the quality of housing between Roma and non-Roma communities in the Republic of Macedonia. Health - Continuous improvement of the health status of the Roma community in the Republic of Macedonia. Culture - Development and promotion of Roma culture, language and tradition.

⁵ Strategy for Roma 2014-2020. Available at: <https://goo.gl/wyv1se>

The competence of the implementation is shared by: The operative part in The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, where a separate unit for its implementation was formed and the Political and Coordinative part through the Minister without portfolio as National Coordinator responsible for implementation of the Strategy for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia.

[The National Action Plans](#)

For the operationalization of strategic priorities and the provision of coordinated and consistent approach in dealing with the identified challenges faced by Roma in the country, National Action Plans for Health, Employment, Housing, Education and a plan to strengthen the position of the Roma woman in the society were prepared and adopted for the period until 2020. National Action Plans (NAPs) have been adopted during 2015 and 2016. The implementation of the National Action Plans is under the authority of the line ministries in cooperation with the unit for implementation of the Roma Strategy 2014 - 2020 and the Action Plans as well as the National coordinator, the Minister without portfolio - National coordinator.

[*The Implementation of strategic priorities*](#)

[Inclusion of Roma children in kindergartens](#)

The implementation of the Strategy for Roma 2014 - 2020, MLSP together with the Roma Education Fund from Budapest starting from the school-year 2011/2012 successfully implemented the project "Inclusion of Roma children in the Public Municipal Institutions - Kindergartens". According to the data of the MLSP since the beginning of the implementation of this project so far there have been more than 3,500 Roma children enrolled, of which 82% are in primary education. This project is implemented in 18

municipalities and 17 Roma NGOs are involved as implementing partners⁶

Municipalities where the project is implemented					
Cair	Gazi Baba	Karpos	Bitola	Gostivar	Kumanovo
Veles	Prilep	Vinica	Kocani	Kicevo	Delcevo
Stip	Pehcevo	Suto Orizari	Center	Tetovo	Berovo

Table 1. Municipalities implementing the project "Inclusion of Roma children in the municipal institutions - kindergartens"

The main goal of the project is to improve and support the integration of Roma children by increasing the number of Roma children in pre-school institutions, one year before going to primary education, and in the last three years of increasing the number of Roma children in pre-school institutions, refers to children from one to two years before going to primary school education.

Also, there are efforts to improve the approach, the attitude of the parents of the Roma children encompassed by strengthening and supporting the development and education of Roma children from age 4 years and 5 months to 6 years, to improve social skills, improve the rule of the Macedonian language, and to increase the competencies of educators and nurses to work and overcome prejudices and stereotypes for Roma in public kindergartens. For the needs of the project, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy approved special fund for engaging 17 Roma women.

⁶ Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Project "Inclusion of Roma children in kindergartens". Available on: <https://goo.gl/NoQtZk>

Roma health mediators

This program started with implementation for the first time in 2010 by HERA - Association for health education and research. During 2011, by an initiative of the Ministry of Health, a Strategic Framework for the Introduction of Roma Health Mediators in the country was prepared. The same was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the goal by introducing the mediators was to improve the health status of the Roma population. For the first time, the Ministry of Health in the course of 2012 allocated funds for engaging mediators as well as office space for work. The health mediators' offices are within the health care homes in order to make them more accessible to the population and to health care workers. The task of Roma health mediators is a direct field work with the Roma community and they offer assistance to families in difficult situations to receive appropriate health and social services that are followed. Health mediators are a link between the Roma community, social services and health workers. Roma health mediators with the new Roma Strategy 2014 - 2020 are envisaged to continue their work, but to enable progress and sustainable improvement of the health of Roma, it is necessary to find an appropriate model for how to include them in the health care system of the Republic of Macedonia.

Municipalities where there are Roma health mediators ⁷			
Tetovo	Suto Orizari	Karpos	Gostivar
Gorce Petrov	Stip	Kocani	Delcevo

Table 2. *The municipalities in which the project is implemented Roma health mediators*

Scholarship for high school students

The scholarship project for Roma high school students started with implementation from academic 2009/2010 where the first year were awarded 444 scholarships for Roma high school students. In the first years of the implementation of this project finances were separated from the state budget, but there was also a Roma share by the Roma Education Fund from Budapest. From February 2016 scholarships for high school students have become public policy because they entered into a legal solution. Namely, the Law on the Student Standard with the amendment to Article 54, paragraph 2 explicitly mentions the Roma as users of stipends and specifies the special conditions for obtaining a scholarship. The number of scholarships for Roma high school students grows year after year reaching 752 for the 2017/18 school year.

Year	Number of scholarships	Number of mentors / tutors
2017/18	752	127
2016/17	670	127
2015/16	671	127

Table 3. *Scholarships awarded in the last three years*

⁷ The number of received health mediators from the field. According to the information on the official website of the Ministry of Health, health mediators cover the following municipalities: Suto Orizari, Karpos, Tetovo, Gostivar, Bitola, Prilep, Kocani, Stip. Available at: <https://goo.gl/agQJZS>. Note: according to the years, the number of health mediators and municipalities is constantly changing.

Scholarships which are awarded to Roma students enrolled in the first, second, third and fourth year in public and private secondary schools are divided into five categories. The amount of scholarship depends on the success of high school students, it is paid monthly for a period of nine months.

source Ministry of Education and Science

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
Average assessment	4.50 – 5.00	3.50 – 4.49	3.00 – 3.49	No average ⁸	2.00 – 2.99
Amount of scholarship	2200 Denars	1500 Denars	1000 Denars	1000 Denars	600 Denars

Table 4. Scholarship categories for high school students

[Undergraduate scholarship](#)

Besides scholarships for secondary education, the Ministry of Education and Science for the academic 2015-2016 from the budget of the Republic of Macedonia provided 30 scholarships for Roma students in higher education. For the academic 2016-2017 the number of scholarships for Roma students has been increased to 73. Scholarship competition for Roma students for academic 2017/18 have not yet been published. The amount of the scholarship is 5000 denars per month for a period of 9 months.

[Roma Information Centers](#)

⁸ The fourth category of scholarship is for students with special educational needs.

Roma Information Centers (RICs) have been operating since March 2007 year, and their establishment resulted from the government's action plan for "The Decade of Roma Inclusion, in the period 2005 - 2015". RIC continued work even after the Roma Decade, their work is foreseen with the new Strategy 2014-2020. The purpose for which the RIC is established is to inform the Roma community, to hold consultative meetings in order to help them meet their needs in the area of social protection, housing, health care, employment, education and human rights. Also, according to the jurisdiction of the RIC, they initiate the preparation of local action plans, provide logistical support through identifying human rights violations, providing direct help by writing applications, appeals and filling out various applications and forms. In the Republic of Macedonia there are a total of 12 RICs in the municipalities: Kumanovo, Kocani, Delcevo, Bitola, Stip, Prilep, Gostivar, Tetovo and Suto Orizari, Topaana, Vinica and Berovo. With the support of donors, there are 2 new RICs (Gorce Petrov and Kicevo).⁹ Part of the centers are located in municipal buildings, while some are located in local non-governmental organizations. With the new Strategy, the RICs revise together with Roma mediators to work with homeless people who are housed in collective centers, street children and people without documents. Just like with Roma health mediators are working on finding a systemic solution for inclusion of RIC as part of state institutions.

⁹ Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy 2017-2019, Skopje 2017, Available at: <https://goo.gl/ruqR1A>

Measures for employment

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia has started in the past few years, activities for providing support for employment of Roma as a target group in active programs and employment measures. However according to a research¹⁰ "Entrepreneurship policies in Macedonia for overcoming the otherness towards the Roma "- a result of the research generated by Mr. Deniz Selmani under the mentorship of the Center for Economic Analysis - Skopje, it is noted that the programs for entrepreneurship and measures in 12 municipalities that were subject to analysis are minor in quantity and quality. Therefore, the impact on the growth and development of Entrepreneurship is quite small. But they have a certain positive effect in reduction of unemployment among the Roma community. In 2015, the number of registered unemployed Roma fell to 5842 of whom 2126 are women. Again, the number of Roma who are without education and primary education, which amounts to 5153, of which 1914 are women. By the end of September 2016¹¹, the number of registered ones increased unemployed Roma are 6081 persons out of which 2248 are women.

Source: Employment Agency

2015 year		
	Women	All
Without education and primary education	1914	5153
Incomplete secondary education	47	281
Completed high school	149	375
Higher education	1	4
High education	15	29

Table 5. Overview of unemployed Roma by level of education.

¹⁰ Deniz Selmani, Analysis of the Entrepreneurship Policies in the Republic of Macedonia for overcoming the "OTHER" among the Roma, 2016

¹¹ Overview of unemployed Roma by nationality, available at: <https://goo.gl/m1MqhZ>

The training measure of a known employer with subsidized employment in 2015 out of a total of 128 Roma who applied for the same measure in Employment Agency signed an agreement with only 5 Roma. About the measure internship in 2015 there are 26 Roma reported, and with 8 they signed a contract. About the measure training for the demand occupations on the labor market in private 43 Roma have applied for a training, with 10 they signed a contract, from which 6 have given up, and 4 Roma have successfully completed the training.

Program / Measure	Training with a known employer with subsidized employment		Training for adequate demands occupations on the labor market with private training providers.			Internship	
Year	Applied	Signed Contract	Applied	Signed Contract	Trained	Applied	Signed Contract
2015	128	5	43	10	4	26	8

Table 6. Number of Roma who applied and signed a contract for the use of measures.

In terms of self-employment program lending in 2015 signed agreements for self-employment with 11 Roma.

Program / Measure	Self-employment with lending		Self-employment lending to young people under 29 years	
Year	Applied	Signed Contract	Applied	Signed Contract
2015	24	11	15	10

Table 7. Number of Roma who applied and signed an agreement on the use of the measures

Budget

Funds separated from the budget of the Republic of Macedonia and financial resources from donations in the period 2015 - 2017.

From Table 8 we can conclude that the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2015 - 2017 has foreseen financial resources from the state budget in the amount of 38,774,000 denars for administration and project for supporting secondary education. The state allocates 25,526,000 denars for the Roma secondary education project. For the same period, financial donations are foreseen for a project to support secondary education of Roma in the amount of 21,358,000 denars. The total amount of foreseen financial resources from the state budget and donations for administration and a project for supporting secondary education of Roma is 61,516,527 denars.

Budget according to the final account Ministry of education and science				
Year	Budget	Institutions	Ministry of education and science	
			Administration	Project for supporting Roma in secondary education
2017	State budget	Planned	7,668,000	11,750,000
		Realized	-	-
	Donations	Planned	-	5,786,000
		Realized	-	-
2016	State budget	Planned	2,700,000	6,255,000
		Realized	1,926,447	6,175,196
	Donations	Planned	-	9,537,000
		Realized	-	2,308,831
2015	State budget	Planned	2,880,000	7,521,000
		Realized	122,970	6,148,500
	Donations	Planned	-	6,035,000

Table 8. Final account of Ministry of education and science in the last three years. Data collected by the Ministry of Finance.

On Table 9 it is noted that the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the 2015 - 2015 period has provided financial resources in the area of support for the implementation of the Strategy for Roma in the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in the amount of 27,003,000 denars and donation budget in the amount of 30,152,000 MKD.

Budget according to the final account Ministry of Labor and Social Policy			
Year	Budget	Institutions	MLSP social protection - welfare
2017	State budget	Planned	9,402,000
	Donations	Realized	-
		Planned	9,230,000
		Realized	-
2016	State budget	Planned	8,325,000
	Donations	Realized	7,609,690
		Planned	9,822,000
		Realized	5,159,681
2015	State budget	Planned	9,276,000
	Donations	Realized	8,316,921
		Planned	11,100,000
		Realized	7,067,608

Table 9. Final account of Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in the last three years. Data collected by the Ministry of Finance.

From Table 10 it is noted that the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2015 - 2017 has envisaged financial means in the part of support for implementation of the Strategy for Roma in the Ministry of Transport and Communications in the amount of 27,000,000 denars.

Budget according to the final account Ministry of Transport and Communications			
Year	Budget	Institutions	Ministry of Transport and Communications
			Administration
2017	State budget	Planned	10,000,000
		Realized	-
	Donations	Planned	-
		Realized	-
2016	State budget	Planned	7,000,000
		Realized	6,198,022
	Donations	Planned	-
		Realized	-
2015	State budget	Planned	10,000,000
		Realized	9,972,409
	Donations	Planned	-
		Realized	-

Table 10. Final account of Ministry of Transport and Communications in the last three years. Data collected by the Ministry of Finance.

According to Table 11 it is noted that the Government of the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2015 - 2017 has envisaged funds in the area of support for implementation of the Strategy for Roma in the Ministry of Health in the amount of 8,300,000 denars.

Budget according to the final account of Ministry of Health			
Year	Budget	Institutions	Ministry of Health
			support for implementation of the Strategy for Roma
2017	State budget	Planned	2,500,000
		Realized	-
	Donations	Planned	-
		Realized	-
2016	State budget	Planned	2,300,000
		Realized	2,286,548
	Donations	Planned	-
		Realized	-
2015	State budget	Planned	3,500,000
		Realized	2,774,610
	Donations	Planned	-
		Realized	-

Table 11. Final account of Ministry of Health in the last three years.

Data collected by the Ministry of Finance.

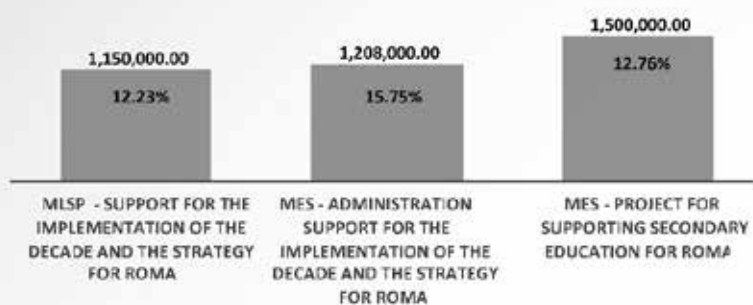
On the infographic below, it is noted that the last budget rebalance for two ministries has reduced its budget for the implementation of the Roma strategy. The Ministry of Education and Science within the administration for support of the Roma Strategy reduced the projected budget by 15.75%, while in the same ministry for the project, supporting secondary education of the Roma decreased by 12.76%. Ministry of Labor and Social Policy reduced its budget for the implementation of the Roma Strategy by 12.23%.

BUDGET REBALANCE 2017 REDUCTION OF THE BUDGET FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROMA STRATEGY

Expenditures from core budget



Total reduction



Local level

According to the conducted analysis of the policies and measures adopted at the national level it can be established that they have a certain positive effect at the local level in the municipalities that are the subject of this analysis. In the part of education, as a result of the project for inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education, significant progress can be reported on the rates for enrollment of children in kindergartens. There is some improvement in the part of employment, but it is a minor one. According to the analysis "Entrepreneurship policies in Macedonia for overcoming the otherness towards the Roma" - a result of the research prepared by Mr. Deniz Selmani under the mentorship Center for Economic Analyzes - Skopje, certain employment policies at national level have a positive effect on the unemployment of the Roma community at the local level. Namely, formal and informal entrepreneurs are involved in active measures and programs for self-employment and development of entrepreneurship. On the other hand, the representation of women on the labor market at the local level is quite low in relation to women from other ethnic communities. In the area of health care, mediators contribute to facilitating access to health care, especially in the area of immunization of newborns in the Roma community. Therefore, in the next period it is necessary to find a solution for the involvement of health mediators as part of the health care system. Also, at the local level, Memoranda of Cooperation with the Council of Europe have been signed for involvement of ROMED 2 with the

municipalities of Debar, Kocani, Berovo and Kicevo. Within this program, action groups of the community have been established in 10 municipalities that are included in the ROMED program (Tetovo, Gostivar, Prilep, Bitola, Stip, Vinica, Debar, Kocani, Berovo and Kicevo).

Local Action Plans

The Local Action Plans were developed within the framework of the project "Local Integration of Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Minority Groups"¹² financed by EU IPA - and implemented by "EPTISA". In fact, such local action plans have been prepared in a total of 12 municipalities with a higher concentration of Roma such as Tetovo, Gostivar, Prilep, Bitola, Kocani, Vinica, Stip, Delcevo, Berovo, Kumanovo, Cair and Suto Orizari. However, a very small number of municipalities have adopted them. The reason why LAPs are not adopted in certain municipalities is the political crisis and the parliamentary and local elections that were organized in the past period.

¹² The eptisa project is part of the IPA Component 1 component - Assistance for Transition and Institutional Strengthening. The main and specific goal of the project is to: improve the capacity of the state administration to strengthen and support the processes of local integration and the inclusion of displaced residents and / or non-residents (refugees or internally displaced persons) and minority groups (Roma), as well as increase the sustainability of their trust. To contribute to improving the access of Roma refugees and internally displaced persons to comprehensive services provided by state institutions, increasing autonomy through participation and inclusion in society, and improving the quality of life and access to the rights and services for social inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the country. Further information on the project can be found on the following link:
<https://goo.gl/TDfU97>

Local coordination groups

In November 2016, within the project "Local Integration of Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons and Minority Groups", funded by the European Union, implemented by EPTISA, the consortium leader, which includes CARE International, MCIC and REF, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy organizes preparatory and coordination meetings with representatives of the municipalities, public health institutions, employment centers, social work centers, primary schools, Roma information centers, local Roma NGOs and other partners from Berovo, Bitola, Vinica, Gostivar, Delcevo, Kocani, Kumanovo, Prilep, Tetovo, Cair, Stip and Suto Orizari. The project formally established the Local Coordinating Bodies (LCBs) in each municipality with which a Memorandum of Cooperation with the MLSP was signed. The members of these Local Coordinative Groups are composed of representatives from the municipalities, public health institutions, employment centers, social work centers, primary schools, Roma information centers, local Roma NGOs and other partners. Municipalities consider these local coordination groups as advisory groups in the integration of Roma at the local level. At the moment, 12 Local Coordination Groups have been established in the municipalities: Berovo, Bitola, Vinica, Gostivar, Delcevo, Kocani, Kumanovo, Prilep, Tetovo, Cair, Stip and Suto Orizari.

ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PUBLIC POLICIES RELATED TO THE NATIONAL ROMA STRATEGY

According to the received information from the questionnaire, all municipal representatives stated that their municipalities have demographic data for the Roma community at local level and are largely familiar with public policies for Roma as the National Roma Strategy 2014-2020, regarding the adoption of LAP according to Friedman,¹³ until the completion of the project in July 2017, they were adopted only in the municipalities: Berovo, Prilep, Vinica, Delcevo and Cair.¹⁴ But according to the report of the Regional Cooperation Council, in the part of Macedonia it is stated that the 12 local action plans together with the budget were adopted in the municipalities.

As an additional issue, all representatives of the municipalities were asked about the reasons for which they have or have not adopted

¹³ Eben Friedman, Project Coordinator of the EPISA project, which is part of the IPA Component 1 - Assistance for Transition and Institutional Strengthening. The main and specific goal of the project is to: improve the capacity of the state administration to strengthen and support the processes of local integration and the inclusion of displaced residents and / or non-residents (refugees or internally displaced persons) and minority groups (Roma), as well as increase the sustainability of their trust. To contribute in improving the access of Roma refugees and internally displaced persons to comprehensive services provided by state institutions, increasing autonomy through participation and inclusion in society, and improving the quality of life and access to the rights and services for social inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the country. Further information on the project can be found on the following link:

<https://goo.gl/TDfU97>

¹⁴ Regional Cooperation Council, Report, September 21, 2017. Available at

<https://goo.gl/k4oPX8>

the Local Action Plan. The municipality of Delcevo adopted the action plan in order to "improve the quality of life of Roma in the municipality", for the same reason the municipalities of Prilep and Stip adopted a local action plan, adding the reason for "reducing the gap between Roma and non-Roma population". While Vinica municipality adopted the local action plan in order to "solve Roma problems in the municipality". The main reason for the representatives of the municipalities of Kumanovo and Kocani is the political crisis and local elections.

One of the key questions in the questionnaire was directed towards self-assessment, i.e. in which areas the municipality has achieved results that are crucial for the Roma community. The following table presents only the assessment of the work already done and the achieved results of the municipalities for the full integration of the Roma community at the local level. According to the scale one is the smallest result, while five is the highest score achieved in a particular area.

Municipality	Housing	Education	Health	Employment	Infrastructure	Culture	Discrimination	Gender equality
Vinica	1	4	3	2	3	2	3	1
Gostivar	1	3	2	1	2	2	4	2
Delcevo	3	5	5	3	3	3	3	3
Kocani	3	4	2	3	3	2	3	2
Kumanovo	1	4	3	1	3	5	3	2
Prilep	2	4	3	3	2	1	1	1
Tetovo	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1
Stip	2	3	3	2	3	1	1	2
Suto Orizari	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1

Table 12. Achieved results of the municipalities related to the Roma community

According to Table 12 it can be noted that in the municipality of Vinica the least result was achieved in the housing of the Roma community and gender equality, followed by the employment and culture fields. Average results in the municipality of Vinica have been achieved in the health, infrastructure and prevention of discrimination against the Roma community. A high score has been achieved in education.

The municipality of Gostivar has the lowest result achieved in housing and employment, followed by health, infrastructure, culture and gender equality, while the municipality has achieved the median results in education, and high results have been achieved in preventing discrimination against the Roma community.

According to the results, in the municipality of Delcevo is noted that the Roma community living in Delcevo is the most integrated in comparison with the other municipalities. In other words, the municipality has achieved medium-term results in six areas (housing, employment, infrastructure, culture, prevention of discrimination, gender inclusion of Roma women). The highest results regarding the integration of the Roma community in the municipality of Delcevo have been made in education and health.

In Kocani, low results have been achieved in health, culture and gender equality. Average results in housing, employment, infrastructure and the prevention of discrimination against the

Roma community, while high results have been achieved in education.

In the municipality of Kumanovo the least results were achieved in housing, employment of the Roma community and gender equality. While the average results of Kumanovo municipality have been achieved in health, infrastructure and prevention of discrimination against the Roma community. A high score Kumanovo municipality has achieved in education, and the highest achievement has been achieved in the development of Roma culture.

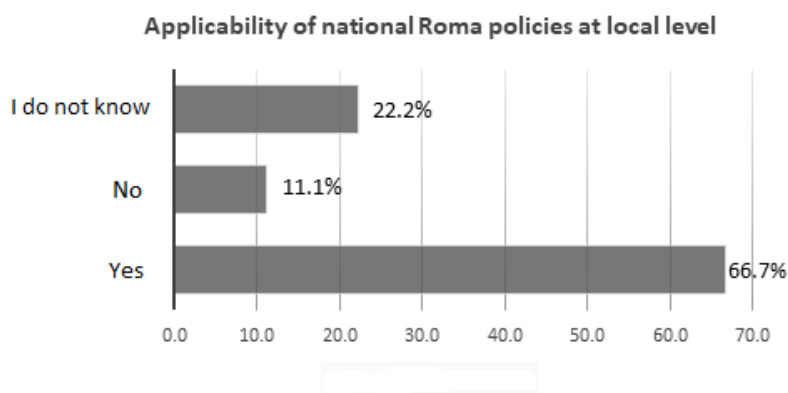
Municipality of Prilep least results have been achieved in culture, prevention of discrimination and gender equality, while low results have been achieved in housing and infrastructure. The average results of the municipality of Prilep have been achieved in health and housing, and a high result has been achieved in education.

In the municipality of Stip, the least results were achieved in the culture and prevention of discrimination against the Roma community, housing, employment and gender equality. While median results have been achieved in health, education and infrastructure.

In the municipality of Suto Orizari there is the least done for a complete integration of the Roma community, except for education. In the municipality of Tetovo there is a low estimate for housing, education, health and culture.

The Municipality of Stip believes that a key priority is to provide a day care center for children on the streets, and from the municipality of Prilep think that the development of the Roma culture should be a priority as well. According to the Strategy for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia 2015 - 2020 structures should be introduced that will be responsible for its implementation. One of the structures for implementing the Strategy at the local level is the local coordinating body (LCB). In listing key priorities for integration of the Roma community, a large part of the representatives of the workshop organized by the Association Initiative for Social Change - InSoC - Skopje, within the project "ROMA ACTION + civil engagement of the local community", were unanimous and concluded that employment, infrastructure, housing are the main priorities in order to streamline their work.

Regarding the question of who should be responsible for solving the problems that the Roma community faces in large part, the representatives think that this is the state and the municipality. The representatives of the municipalities of Kocani, Kumanovo, Prilep and Tetovo believe that the community itself is responsible for solving its problems. Representatives of the municipalities of Kumanovo and Tetovo believe that the civil society sector is also responsible for resolving the problems of the Roma community. From Chart 1 it can be noted that 66.7% of municipal representatives think that national Roma policies are applicable, 11.1% think they are not applicable, while 22.2% do not know if they are applicable.

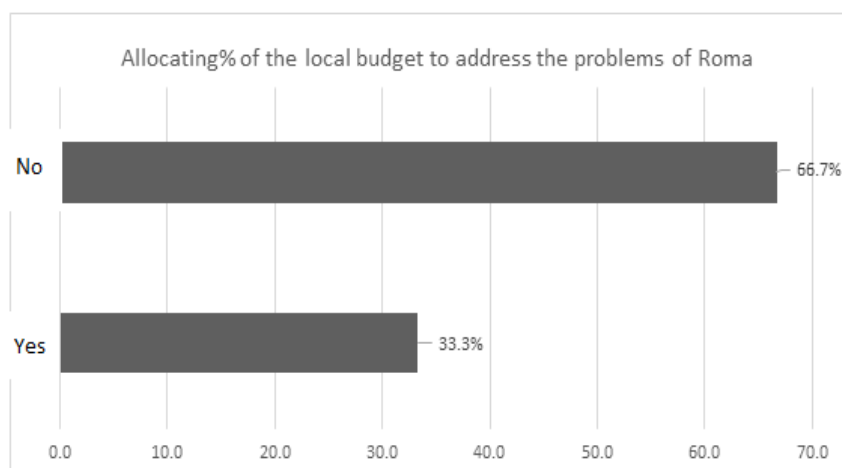


From Table 13 it can be concluded that the most alarming problems that the Roma community faces on the local level are unemployment with an average grade of 3.1, then as the second most troubling problem according to municipal representatives are substandard living conditions with an average score of 3.0 while as third, a problem with an average grade of 2.9 indicates the poor health situation in which the Roma community is located.

Lack of personal documentation	2.6
No sewerage network	2.8
Substandard living conditions	3
Unemployment	3.1
Bad health	2.9
Not accepted by other communities	2.4
Low level of education	2.8
No water in the Roma settlements	2.7

Table 13. Average assessment of the problems that the Roma community faces in the municipalities.

According to the answers from the representatives of the municipalities, only two municipalities allocate a certain percentage of the local budget to solve the problems faced by the Roma community i.e. the municipalities of Delcevo and Kocani, not including the municipality of Suto Orizari, in which the majority of the population belongs to the Roma community. In accordance to the answers received, the percentage is not clearly foreseen, but most often the funds are spent on infrastructure, for paving roads and allocation of funds on various basis according to the response of the Delcevo representative. The municipalities of Gostivar, Kumanovo, Prilep, Stip, Tetovo and Vinica, which do not allocate a percentage to solve the problems of the Roma community at the local level, say that the main reason is the lack of funds in the local budget.



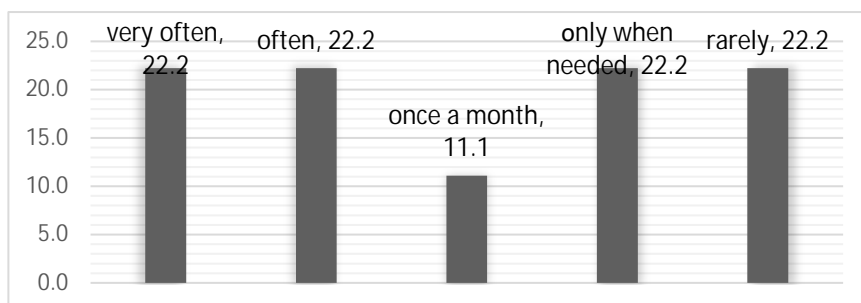
Graph 2. Allocating % of the local budget to address the problems of Roma

In the municipalities of Delcevo, Kocani, Stip, Vinica, including the municipality of Suto Orizari, there are Roma employed in the municipal administration, while in the municipalities of Gostivar, Kumanovo, Prilep and Tetovo there are no Roma employed in the municipal administration. All municipal representatives believe that in the municipalities there should be Roma referents employed.

Roma settlements in the municipalities of Delcevo, Kocani, Tetovo and Suto Orizari are part of the detailed urban plans of the municipalities. While in the municipalities of Kumanovo, Stip and Vinica are not included in the detailed urban plans. The representative of the municipality of Gostivar is not informed about the situation of the Roma settlements, and the municipality of Prilep has made a decision for inclusion of the Roma settlements in the detailed urban plan of the municipality and the process has already begun. The representative of the municipality of Vinica believes that the Roma community itself has no interest in solving its problems and therefore the legalization of Roma houses has not yet been realized and the settlements are not included in the detailed urban plan.

As it can be seen from Graph 3, municipalities have different practices in holding meetings with the Roma community. Municipalities Vinica and Suto Orizari frequently meet with the Roma community, municipalities of Gostivar and Delcevo often meet, and the municipality of Kocani is on average meeting once a month. Municipalities of Tetovo and Stip hold informative meetings with the Roma community only when needed, and the municipalities of Kumanovo and Prilep rarely hold meetings with the Roma community.

Figure 3. Maintenance of informational meetings with the Roma community or civil society



Regarding the question whether the municipality has the capacity to implement projects from the IPA funds, with the municipal resources Delcevo, Kocani, Prilep, Tetovo and Stip have confirmed affirmatively that they have human capacities and resources for implementing IPA projects. Unlike the aforementioned municipalities, only the representative of the municipality of Vinica stated that the municipality does not have the capacity to implement IPA projects, while the municipalities Gostivar and Suto Orizari believe that they need human resources that are experts in the implementation of IPA projects, and the municipality of Kumanovo did not make a statement on this issue.

INDEX OF APPLICABILITY OF ROMA POLICIES

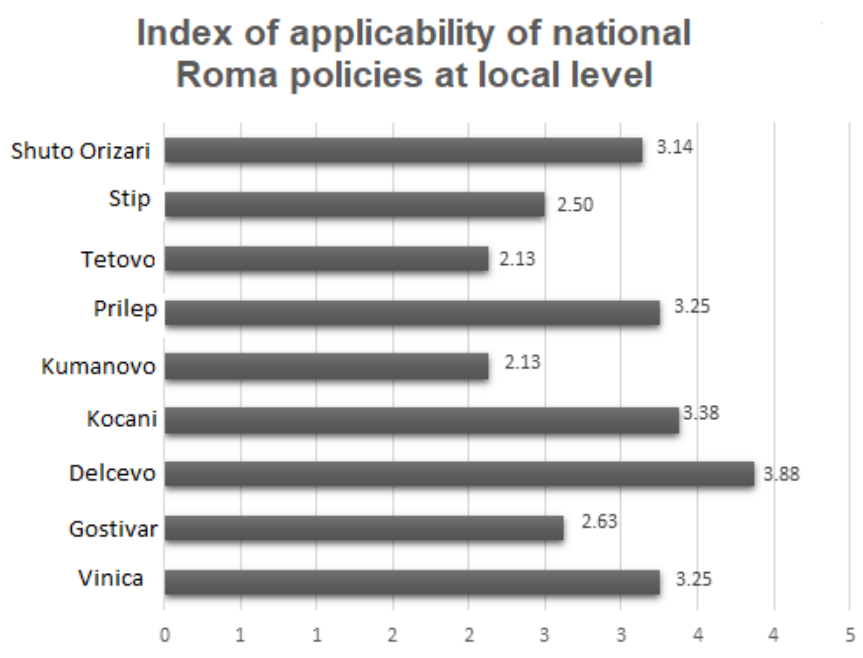
On the basis of the responses received from the representatives of the municipalities we have developed an index of applicability of national Roma policies at the local level. The process of creating the index started with the assessment of municipalities in relation to the given issues that are crucial for the integration of the Roma, and they are foreseen in the national policies themselves. The response scale was done by one which is the lowest index point to five which is the highest index point.

- Index point 1 - This index point applies when Roma are not included at all in general local policies: there are no gender-disaggregated data; Roma issues / gaps are not named; there is no reference to the relevant local policies for Roma, there is no consultation with Roma civil society organizations and networks.
- Index point 2 - Public policies fall below the minimum standard: politics include data on Roma and / or identification of specific issues, but problems are not named; there is no reference to relevant Roma policies and no consultations with Roma civil society organizations and networks.
- Index point 3 - Improving needs. This point applies when public policy is close to meeting the minimum standard: it includes data on Roma and naming Roma problems, policies are adopted by central and / or local authorities; and has consultations with Roma civil society organizations and networks.

- Index point 4 - minimum standard. This is a minimum for which Roma inclusion in main policies is expected to be achieved: data on Roma are included; there are some issues specific to Roma and some analyzes with discussion about the determinants of Roma inclusion; identification of agencies / actors responsible for implementation; policy is informed by national and / or local policy; and has consultations with Roma civil society organizations and networks.
- Index point 5 - exceeds the minimum standard. The policy exceeds the minimum standards and clearly articulates the inclusion of Roma: there is an explicit reference to issues that are specific to the Roma and is comprehensively involved in identifying the determinants of differences; policy is informed by national and / or local policies; Roma sensitive indicators / outcome measures have been identified; and has consultations with Roma civil society organizations and networks.

According to the index, the municipality of Delcevo is the closest to reaching the minimum standard for inclusion of Roma in public policies with 3.88 index points. Delcevo is one of the municipalities that has most worked in the past period for full integration of the Roma community. Then the municipalities of Kocani (3.38), Vinica (3.25), Prilep (3.25) and Suto Orizari (3.14) belong to the group of municipalities that are moving towards improving the needs of the Roma community. Then, the municipalities of Gostivar with 2.63 and

Stip with 2.50 index points are located among the implementation of public policies that lead to improvement of the needs of the Roma community and public policies that fall below the minimum standard for Roma integration. The municipalities of Tetovo (2.13) and Kumanovo (2.13) implement public policies for Roma that are below the minimum standard and do not contribute to the integration of the Roma population living in these two municipalities.



Graph 4. Index of applicability of national Roma policies at local level

CONCLUSION

From the public policies analyzed in this document, it can be concluded that most of them have a positive impact on the integration of Roma in the Republic of Macedonia. However, it can be noted that these public policies, initiatives and projects are based from the previous Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, which at the moment are only translated into the new Strategy 2014-2020 and continue with implementation.

In this analysis, all of these policies were introduced at a time when the Roma Strategy was adopted in 2005 and the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015. Therefore, it can be concluded that after the adoption of the new Strategy for Roma 2016-2020, a new more significant public policy that will contribute to better and faster resolution of the problems of Roma community in the country is still lacking. In the area of housing, there were great expectations that with the adoption of the Law on Legalization of Illegally Built Objects, the problems of the Roma will be solved, but it did not contribute enough to solve the problems of Roma in the area of housing.¹⁵ The reason for this result is that local authorities have not adopted the DUP in the parts where Roma live, especially in settlements where the Roma live in a dominant number and due to this fact they cannot legalize their dwellings.

¹⁵ Nova TV, the Roma hardly reach the legalization of the houses. Roma live in substandard conditions, and a large part of them still did not solve the problem of legalization of houses even though the process started in 2011. Six citizens' associations are included in the joint action for "Adequate housing of Roma", namely the National Roma Center (NRC) together with "Avena" Kocani, "Pralipe" Kriva Palanka, "Bairska Svetlina" Bitola, "Romska Solza" Prilep, "Ambrela" Suto Orizari and "Pablik", came to the following statements. The action is being implemented in nine municipalities: Karpos, Suto Orizari, Kriva Palanka, Bitola, Kumanovo, Kocani, Prilep, Tetovo and Stip in Roma-inhabited settlements. Available at: <https://goo.gl/JKvcM8>

According to the conducted analysis of the policies and measures adopted at the national level it can be established that they have a certain positive effect at the local level in the municipalities that are the subject of this analysis. In the part of education, as a result of the project for inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education, significant progress can be reported on the rates for enrollment of children in kindergartens. There is an insignificant improvement in the part of employment. According to the analysis "Entrepreneurship policies in Macedonia for overcoming the otherness towards the Roma" - a result of the research prepared by Mr. Deniz Selmani under the mentorship of the Center for Economic Analyzes - CEA, certain employment policies at national level have a positive effect on the unemployment of the Roma community at the local level. Namely, formal and informal entrepreneurs are involved in active measures and programs for self-employment and development of entrepreneurship. On the other hand, the representation of women on the labor market at the local level is quite low in relation to women from other ethnic communities. In the area of health care mediators contribute to facilitating access to health care, especially in the area of immunization of newborns in the Roma community.

According to the Evaluation of the Roma Policy Applicability Index, the municipality of Delcevo is closest to achieving a minimum standard for inclusion of Roma in public policies. Following next are Kocani, Vinica, Prilep and Suto Orizari. On the secondary level according to the evaluation are the municipalities of Gostivar and Stip, while Tetovo and Kumanovo are below the minimum standard and their contribution to the integration of the Roma is very small.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a major part of this analysis, the generated recommendations are aimed at providing clear guidelines that municipalities should undertake regarding the integration of the Roma community at the local level, as well as how Roma policies should be integrated into the mainstream policies of the municipalities.

1) Municipalities should first involve the Roma community in the creation of public policies that affect the community itself, as well as the civil society organizations that are active at the local level. It is also necessary for the municipalities to regularly hold informative meetings with the Roma community and to hear the problems of the Roma they face in their municipalities.

2) Municipalities should respect the principle of equitable representation, that is, to employ Roma in the municipal administration, which will work with all the citizens of the municipality.

3) All municipalities should adopt the Local Action Plans 2017 - 2020, whereby within the municipal budgets, there should be a budget line for the implementation of the action plans. Because the practice shows that solving the problems of the Roma community, that is, the implementation of the local action plans is most often not realized due to the lack of predicting the funds in the municipal budget.

4) Municipalities that have not entered the Roma settlements in the detailed urban plan should as soon as possible adopt a decision for their inclusion in the urban plan of the municipality.

5) Municipalities should invest more in developing human capacities for absorption of IPA funds available to municipalities. Civil society organizations through their experience and expertise can contribute to the development of the capacities of the municipal administration. This step would also strengthen the cooperation between the civil sector and the administration itself.

6) In order to carry out their responsibilities, the local coordinating bodies in accordance with the Strategy should be supported by the MLSP and the municipal authorities.

7) Reports prepared by local coordinating bodies should be made publicly available in order to inform citizens about their work. Regarding the reporting, local coordinating bodies should also publish information related to the monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects.

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ANNEX 1 : QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

Within the framework of the project "ROMA ACTION + CIVIL ENGAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY", implemented by the Association Initiative for Social Change - InSoC, the experts engaged in this project prepared this questionnaire to determine the existing situation of Roma at the local level in the 12- the municipalities where the project is being implemented. The purpose of the questionnaire is to obtain basic information on the Roma situation, the problems they face, the level of implementation of activities at the local level as well as the future priorities of the municipality for Roma integration at the local level.

The information that will be obtained from this questionnaire will help in the preparation of specific policy proposals and will be exclusively used for the project objectives.

The questionnaire is anonymous.

Please list the municipality you represent:

1. Do you have a demographic data¹ for the Roma community within your municipality?
☐ Yes, we have such data
☐ Partially available
☐ We do not have such data
☐ I do not know

2. Are you familiar with the public policies for Roma in the Republic of Macedonia - National Strategy for Roma, National and Local Action Plans?
 - a) We are very familiar
 - b) Partially
 - c) We are not familiar at all

¹ Demographic data include data on the number of Roma in your municipality, age, gender, educational status, marital status, unemployment.

3. Has your municipality adopted Local Action Plans for the Roma for the period 2017-2020?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I do not know

3.1 What is the reason that made you adopt / not adopt LAP?

4. On a scale of 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum) please indicate in which of the areas listed below the municipality has achieved results related to the Roma community?

Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Education	1	2	3	4	5
Health	1	2	3	4	5
Housing	1	2	3	4	5
Infrastructure (roads, sewage system, water supply, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Culture	1	2	3	4	5
Discrimination	1	2	3	4	5
Gender involvement	1	2	3	4	5

5. List three key priorities for Roma in your municipality?

★ _____

★ _____

6. Who in your opinion is responsible for solving Roma problems at the local level?

(a choice of two options is also possible)

☐ The state

☐ The municipality

☐ Roma Community

☐ EU and other international actors

☐ NGOs

☐ Other (please specify)

7. Are policies stemming from the National Roma Strategy incorporated into local municipal strategies?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not know

8. Please spread out on a scale from 1 to 5 that addresses these problems

Lack of personal documentation	1	2	3	4	5
No sewerage network	1	2	3	4	5
Substandard living conditions	1	2	3	4	5
Unemployment	1	2	3	4	5
Bad health	1	2	3	4	5
Not accepted by other communities	1	2	3	4	5
Low level of education	1	2	3	4	5
No water in the Roma settlements	1	2	3	4	5

9. Does the municipal budget allocate a certain percentage to solve the problems that the Roma community faces?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I do not know

9.1 If so, what is the percentage and for what purposes is it separated?

9.2 If no, what is the reason?

10. Are Romani referents employed within your municipality?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I do not know

10.1 If yes, what is their role - do they work exclusively on Roma issues or in general?

11. If you are not employed, do you think that Roma officers should be employed?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I do not know

12. Are Roma settlements included in the municipal urban plans?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I do not know

12.1 If not, what are the causes?

13. How often do you hold informative meetings with the Roma

community or Roma NGOs?

- a) Very often
- b) Often
- c) Once a month
- d) Only when needed
- e) Rarely

14. Does your municipality have capacity (human resources, resources 20% municipal participation) for implementing projects from IPA funds?

- ☐ Yes, the municipality has human capacity and resources
- ☐ People with knowledge and experience are needed
- ☐ Resources are needed
- ☐ No, the municipality has no capacity

15. What are the priorities of the municipality in the next 3 years?
