

# ROMA ACTION+

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY

### POLICY BRIEFS

Review of Roma priorities at the local level and recommendations for inclusion in the local public policies

(Cair, Suto Orizari (Skopje), Tetovo, Gostivar, Bitola, Prilep, Stip, Kumanovo, Delcevo, Vinica, Kocani and Berovo)





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# MUNICIPALITY CAIR



## Introduction

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According to the census, the number of Roma in the Municipality is 3,500, but according to estimates of local NGOs this figure is higher. The majority of Roma live in Topaana, where according to estimates of local NGOs (Sumnal) about 4500-5000 citizens belong to the Roma nationality. A large number of Roma families in the Municipality face housing problems that have long been a known feature of the Municipality of Cair. Although in the last years in the part where the Roma population lives, more infrastructural activities have been undertaken, water and sewer networks installed, edited sidewalks, etc. However, the long-lasting process of transition of the society has caused the impoverishment of the largest number of citizens. Roma as the most vulnerable group are most affected by this wave of impoverishment.

### MUNICIPALITY ID:

The Municipality of Cair is one of the smaller municipalities under the City of Skopje, located 2km away from the city center. With a total area of 3.52 km<sup>2</sup>, the Municipality of Cair borders the municipalities of Butel, Centar, and Gazi Baba. According to the latest census of population in 2002, there are 17,107 households with 64,773 inhabitants in the Municipality of Cair, of which 32,374 are men and 32,399 are women. The Municipality of Cair is included in the municipalities with a high fertility rate and natural increase in the Republic of Macedonia. The majority of the population in the Municipality of Cair are the Albanians with 57%, then the Macedonians with 24.7%, the Turks with 6.9%, the Roma with 4.7%, the Bosniaks with 4.5% and the others with a lower percentage.

## Problem Analysis

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The report "The Roma Community in the Republic of Macedonia - Conditions and Challenges in Housing and Health" emphasized that: "Roma families often live in poorly built substandard homes, where there

is no adequate supply of drinking water and sanitation; Roma families' homes are small, planned to carry out and provide basic needs, with a living space of less than 5 square meters per family member in more than 50% of the population. Even 77% of families have a sanitary knot (or polish toilet) in the yard, and 58% use a water tap outside the home; and still almost 10% of the Roma population has no supply of drinking water and daily hygiene, and it is estimated that about 50% of these families do not have a proper solution for draining waste water from their homes". The Roma population in the municipality of Cair is the most populous in the settlement Topana and Teneke Maalo. The dwellings of Roma families in these two places are unplanned built with an inexpensive infrastructure, poor access from one facility to another facility, open atmospheric channels without water, electricity and sewerage network. Also, these two places where the Roma population lives do not have street lighting. Local authorities have not yet taken drastic measures to change this situation. Regulating the housing of Roma in the municipality of Cair is possible through the legalization of illegally built facilities and this measure is one of the key to addressing the housing issue. According to Habitat Macedonia after the adoption of the Law on Legalization of Illegally Built Objects, Topaana Roma within the project implemented by the organization, about 106 families submitted requests for legalization. According to Habitat research conducted in early 2017 with a sample of 736 Roma respondents reported that 96% of them live in houses, 2% in the apartment and 2% in temporary accommodation. Most often, homes in the Topaana neighborhood have an area of about 50m<sup>2</sup>, but there are homes that are bigger and have an area of 100m<sup>2</sup>. According to the poll, the most problematic rooms in the homes are toilets and bathrooms, as one third of the respondents answered that the toilets ie the baths are not inside their homes but outside the house. Roma this settlement is facing a problem in the sewerage network, namely that one part of the settlement has such a network and it is set up with self financing, the

citizens themselves have collected funds to make such a network. However, certain parts do not have a sewage system and therefore there are open weather channels that pass through the settlement and are unsafe especially for children. An additional problem in the settlements is street lighting, the construction of sidewalks parks and greenery. Roma people from Topaana also face the problem of garbage collection, namely PKK teams do not always collect waste from the streets. Due to the inefficiency of the teams, in Topaana, a number of garbage areas are collected in certain places, which grow into small landfills and then they are burned.

Roma living in Topaana and Teneke Maalo are facing serious housing and infrastructure problems. The settlements are unplanned and densely built with objects connected to one another. Around the habitats, especially those living on the road, do not have a proper infrastructure, that is, there are no sidewalks where pedestrians can move freely, they must move on the very street that is quite frequent with vehicles, especially during the summer period. The safety of Roma children in these settlements is also at risk because there are no green spaces and places for recreation in and around the settlements where children could spend their free time. An additional problem, as was mentioned, is the lack of street lighting, and the lack of a sewerage network. In the settlement there are canals that are not protected and due to lack of lighting, there is a serious risk that people walking along the street will fall into these unprotected canals.

## Recommendations

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1. Municipal authorities should implement the DUP adopted in 2007, although it is difficult to implement it since it was adopted ten years ago. Otherwise, they need to prepare a new DUP that will meet the needs of the Roma and it will solve the problems that the community faces in this settlement.
2. The municipality allocates funds from the local budget for the construction of a sewage network. If there is no financial opportunity

- to finance the sewerage network by one hundred percent, the authorities with a project proposal can apply for foreign donations.
3. The municipality, in cooperation with EVN, should set up lighting in all streets in the settlement, because it is an obligation of the municipal authorities, but also of EVN as a distributor of electricity and a competent institution that should take care of lighting the streets.
  4. The municipality, in cooperation with the Communal Services Enterprise, regularly collect garbage and clean the streets more often. If they do not clean the waste, small landfills will be converted that will negatively affect the community itself, but also the small landfills will contribute to the additional cost of the Communal Services Enterprise to clean them, since additional removal of the mini-landfills will require additional mechanization.
  5. The NGO sector in the Topaana neighborhood to raise awareness among the local population about the consequences of waste dumping in the streets themselves, that is, illegal places.
  6. Construction of green spaces around the settlement, but also on the same area to build sports grounds and recreational requisites.

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# MUNICIPALITY SUTO ORIZARI



## Introduction

In the absence of an adequate budget for the municipality of Shuto Orizari, the promotion of the position of the Roma community is a serious challenge because of the inability of the local authorities to attract funds for realization of projects and activities. In the past period, the Municipality of Shuto Orizari had a Local Economic Plan 2014-2020, but the political crisis and other priorities contributed to the process of adopting the new LAPs to be slower.

In general, about 80% of the population is entrepreneurially oriented and functioning in the so-called gray sector, with a large number of them being beneficiaries of social assistance. Regarding the problems that the Roma community faces, within the workshop with local representatives, the reconstruction and rehabilitation of streets, roads, stormwater and fecal sewers, as well as the development of the local economy have been identified as key priorities for the municipality to work on. Although the local self-government has undertaken certain infrastructure projects in the domain of water supply and asphaltting of certain secondary streets, still certain parts of the Roma settlements are not connected with water supply and sewerage. In the past period, many Roma have sought asylum in the countries of Western Europe and more often young Roma see as way out. However, due to the large influx of asylum seekers from Macedonia, a large number of Roma have been returned and they are out of the system of social protection, education employment because they have lost some of the rights that arise from it. Unemployment is also a major problem as well as functioning in the gray sector, with the

### **MUNICIPALITY ID:**

Suto Orizari is the only Roma municipality where 50% of the total Roma population is concentrated. Area: 7.5 km<sup>2</sup>. Population: 23,017 inhabitants. Population density: 2943 inhabitants m<sup>2</sup>, Roma: 13342.

The Roma language is official, 95% of the Roma in Kindergarten April 8<sup>th</sup>, two primary schools and one high school.

Center and Social Affairs, Health station

The majority of the employees in the municipality are Roma 1881 Unemployed Roma, 740 Women.

same problem arising as revenue generating problems by municipal governments. The purpose of this brief is to identify the priority problems faced by the Roma community in Suto Orizari and offer recommendations for overcoming them with the aim of involving Roma at the local level.

## Problem Analysis

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According to a study of Habitat, the general conclusion is that in the municipality of Suto Orizari there is overcrowding density of population and part of the population still live in substandard conditions. Certain Roma settlements are cut off, have no connection to the water supply network, no electricity, and many houses are without number and do not have a proper address. The traffic in the municipality is significantly aggravated due to the high population density and lack of sufficient parking space. Still, a large number of requests for legalization are not processed primarily due to political manipulations, but also because of the lack of capacity of employees. With the introduction of visa liberalization, a large number of Roma, especially young people, are increasingly leaving the state and seeking a solution in the Western countries through various mechanisms - seeking asylum, employment, and marrying in order to escape the bad socio-economic conditions in the state. In doing so, driven by the thought that they will remain there, some of them sell their entire property only to provide enough funds to reach certain countries. In the past period, many of them are returning to Macedonia because their asylum requests have been rejected because the motives are mainly for economic reasons. After returning them, they can not be registered in the employment agency, they can not exercise the right to health care, children are excluded from education, and many have no place to stay because they have previously sold their homes. This group is subject to a number of social risks and appropriate measures need to be found by the competent institutions for their reintegration into the system. According to EARM data, most of the unemployed Roma in 2016 are in the municipality of Skopje. 1,779 unemployed Roma, mainly due to the largest distribution of Roma in this

municipality - almost 50% of the Roma population lives in Skopje. It can be noted that young Roma up to 25 years of age have the largest share in the unemployment rate of Roma by age groups, and given the upper limit of up to 29 years, this percentage is almost 31%. The data indicate that young Roma who are unemployed face an increased risk of marginalization, especially those coming from families with lower socio-economic status and from rural and underdeveloped areas. If we consider separately the registered persons of Roma nationality, according to their educational structure, the number of Roma registered without education and primary education in Skopje, out of the total registered unemployed Roma, is highest, 87% are without education and primary education. According to a survey conducted by CEA, it can be seen that in 2016, beneficiaries of measures are only 1.5%, i.e. 30 persons are of Roma nationality.

## Recommendations

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The analysis shows that the municipality of Shuto Orizari has serious internal challenges - insufficient human capacity, indebtedness and low budget, and as a result, the municipality can not answer to the numerous challenges that the Roma community faces at the local level. In order to meet the relevant problems, the municipality should primarily employ highly educated staff capable of writing and implementing projects as well as to find suitable solutions for attracting donors and foreign investors in the municipality. The recommendations in this section will be directed at all stakeholders who contribute and work for the development of the Roma community and the socio-economic inclusion of Roma in the society.

1. Construction of atmospheric and fecal sewerage network in the entire municipality. Given that the municipality does not have enough funds for the implementation of capital projects, municipal authorities should consider the possibilities for borrowing and attracting grants by institutional investors starting with this ambitious project.

2. Social housing / subsidizing the housing of Roma families who have the status of homeless persons. Given that the largest number of homeless persons are of Roma nationality and having in mind that other municipalities are not interested in solving this problem, the municipality should provide a spatial location and in cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Communications to start building social houses.
3. Continue the process of legalization and provide loans without interest for Roma who are recipients of social assistance to cover the costs of legalization. Taking into consideration that the previous government did not show interest in solving the problem of legalization of illegal settlements due to the control of the electorate, the current local authorities should advocate for opening an office of the Property Relations and Dispersed Office of the Cadastre Agency real estate in the municipality of Suto Orizari to solve the problem of legalization in the shortest time possible.
4. Reception center for returnees from abroad. Many have sold their houses and they have nowhere to accommodate when they return from abroad. Therefore, it is of particular importance to build a reception center for returnees who will provide temporary accommodation for 60 - 90 days in order to find a temporary solution and provide space for finding a long-term solution.
5. Involving the labor market. Returnees from abroad should be allowed to apply as active job seekers in order to increase their chances of employment and have sufficient income for housing and normal functioning.
6. Reintegration of children in education. Additional curricula, as well as support from a social worker and a special educator to reintegrate children into education, should be provided.
7. Development of the technological industrial zone and attracting foreign investments. In order to attract foreign investments, the municipality should first of all build the appropriate infrastructure - access roads, water supply network, fecal and atmospheric sewers, as well as to develop the capacities of the employees to respond to the requests of investors in issuing licenses and other administrative techniques documents. In parallel, it should invest in the marketing and promotion of the municipality and target those sectors that are

labor intensive because they need cheap labor. At the same time, the municipality should stimulate the Roma diaspora for investing in the municipality and opening new companies.

8. Encourage Roma to participate more actively in active employment measures and stimulate entrepreneurship. Hence, in each of the envisaged measures, introduce a targeted approach for a certain number of Roma to be covered by the various programs, as well as to introduce an additional measure for education, since a larger number of the Roma population has primary education. In addition, programs for the mentoring of Roma entrepreneurs and grants for starting a business should be introduced, in particular the formalization of illegal businesses and the use of registration opportunities for companies with a start-up capital of EUR 1 which is projected after January 2018.
9. Guarantee network for increasing the skills of young Roma. Considering that the Republic of Macedonia should start with the implementation of the youth guarantee network, the municipalities should map the population and identify those who are neither in education nor employees and to properly create measures that will target the qualification and additional qualification for this category of Roma.
10. Incubator for development of new companies. Stimulating and developing micro, small and medium enterprises by providing access to services and technical support and trainings, Mentoring from foreign to domestic companies, mediating in financing organizing networking events as well as benefits for spatial capacities. This business incubator should target young Roma in order to open new companies - agencies, IT companies, bureau of accounting services, consulting companies, etc.

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# MUNICIPALITY TETOVO



## Introduction

The multi-ethnic coexistence in the city contributes to mutual cooperation and the use of multiple languages at the local level. Depending on the place of residence, a large proportion of the Roma, apart from Romani language, use Albanian and Turkish as their mother tongue. Roma from Tetovo mainly live in urban settlements and mixed places, such as Potok, Centar, Upper Bazaar, Teke etc. The settlement Krasniqi is the only settlement in Tetovo where the Roma live in poor conditions without water and sewage infrastructure.

### MUNICIPALITY ID:

Tetovo is ranked as one of the big cities in the Republic of Macedonia. Macedonia with a total area of 1 053 km<sup>2</sup>, located in northwestern Macedonia in the Polog region. The city is famous for its natural mountain beauties and the multiethnic coexistence of the citizens. According to the latest census data in 2002, the total population in Tetovo includes 86 580 inhabitants, of which about 23% Macedonians (20.053 Macedonians), 70% Albanians (60 886 Albanians), 2.72% Roma (2 357 Roma), 2.1% Turks (1882 Turks), 0.69% Serbs (604 Serbs), 0.18% Bosniaks (156 Bosniaks), 0.01% Vlachs (15 Vlachs), and 0.72% Others (627 Others).

According to the latest data, Tetovo is ranked as the city with the highest unemployment rate in the country. Over 8 thousand citizens are registered as active jobseekers. According to data from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, in the centre of employment, a total of 13,917 citizens were registered as unemployed in 2017, of which 3 186 or 22.8% are Macedonians, 10 247 or 73.6% Albanians, 286 or 2% Roma, 104 or 0.74% Turks, 29 or 0.2% Serbs, and 63 or 0.4% Others. In the last 5 years (from 2013 to 2017), the fact that the unemployment rate among the Roma ethnic community has increased by 100%, from 143 unemployed Roma in 2013 to 286 unemployed in 2017, is noticeable. This trend among Roma families most often results in going abroad for a job or looking for better living conditions beyond the borders of Macedonia. The monthly income of an average of four in Tetovo is around 150-250

euros, depending on the occupation and the number of employees in the family. If the whole family is unemployed then in most cases the family depends on the monthly income of their relatives from abroad or from social assistance that hardly covers the basic cost of living. A large number of Roma in Tetovo deal with traditional crafts such as coinage, locksmiths, carpentry, construction, sheet metal, trade, hairdressing etc.

## Problem Analysis

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Tetovo, like other cities, faces with several problems from different perspectives. In order to identify the problems at the local level, we conducted a short survey with the representatives of the local government. According to the obtained survey information, the local government strives to prioritize and solve the following problems:

1. Infrastructure (without water supply network)
2. Personal documentation (50 persons)
3. Employment (Opening a factory that will contribute to reduction of unemployment in the municipality)
4. Social protection (persons who do not have documentation)
5. Housing

From the answers received, we can conclude that the representatives of the local government cannot prioritize the problems since all problems are equally important and urgent for solving. The main focus of this brief is the area of Roma employment, identifying existing measures and programs for their employment, and giving directions for future steps towards mainstreaming Roma policies. Starting from its independence to this day, the Republic of Macedonia is struggling to reduce the unemployment rate. In 2017, in the Republic of Macedonia there are 104,958 persons registered as unemployed, 13,917 or 13.2% are registered in the municipality of Tetovo, out of which 2% are Roma . Although official figures show 2% of unemployment among the Roma ethnic community, our field experience shows that the figure is even greater. Because the problems that Roma face at the local level are interconnected and create more difficulty in solving them. Lack of personal documentation, lack of information, institutional discrimination,

and low level of education are part of the existing problems that increase the unemployment rate among Roma in Tetovo. In practice, there are various national and local action plans to reduce the unemployment rate among Roma. National Roma Strategy 2014-2020, National Action Plan for Roma Rehabilitation 2016-2020, Opening Programs and Active Employment Measures 2007-2017, and Local Action Plans (EU-IPA Component 4) are part of the developed plans that aim to solve the existing problems of Roma on national and local level. The lack of systemic coordination and infrastructure between local and national authorities often results in failure in the implementation process. Generally, all produced documents strive towards one goal, "reducing the unemployment among the Roma", but unfortunately the task of this complex issue requires the creation of an infrastructure for cooperation with all interested parties (employers at national and local level, public institutions, politicians, local citizens, Roma, representatives of Roma communities, non-governmental organizations, etc.) and regular discussion in the local council and sessions. From the minutes of the local sessions in the municipality of Tetovo, the fact that the Roma issue is mostly excluded from the discussion agenda is noticeable, pointing out that the Roma issue is mild and only in paper. The analysis shows that the municipality of Tetovo implements the LAP in order to reduce the unemployment rate among the Roma. On the one hand, the Roma in Tetovo are tempered in the local agendas and excluded from the discussion, but on the other hand, the municipality of Tetovo is shown as an example of a successful practice for implementing the LAP in the field of employment. Through the measure - Macedonia employs together with the measure Self-Employment for the first time in Tetovo, seven businesses are run by persons of Roma nationality. This points to the fact that many Roma are interested in opening up businesses. By correctly defining and implementing goals, activities, and focus groups, municipalities can easily show positive results.

# Recommendations

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In order to successfully overcome the unfavorable situation of Roma in the labor market and create positive results at the local level, we point out the following recommendations:

1. Creating a systematic infrastructure from a process of defining to a process of implementation between different levels: one of the first steps before undertaking any measures is to create systemic cooperation with all interested parties, their active involvement in the overall implementation process, starting from the process to define the priority problems, actions, until their reporting. Here, the Roma play an important role in identifying and addressing needs at the local level. A model is needed that will involve all stakeholders, in particular the Roma non-governmental sector, in order to improve joint cooperation and action on the ground.
2. Mapping at the local level for identifying the needs of entrepreneurs and youth of Roma nationality: in order to facilitate the prioritization of Roma problems at the local level, mapping data to identify their needs would facilitate the identification process and use it to create concrete steps in the future.
3. Creating initiatives for developing entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship skills and encouraging to start their own businesses among young people / Roma as a means of realizing their employment, bearing in mind that self-employment is the second most common form of employment for young people after employment with another employer.
4. Technical support in the process of registering businesses and exemption from taxes or lump sums.
5. Offering grants for financial support / non-refundable funds for opening a business - a special focus on young Roma.
6. Creating policies with the private sector to attract their interest in employment of Roma at the local level (smaller taxes).
7. The revival of the "Activation" process primarily through strengthening the human and material resources in the Employment Centers such as "Guarantee for Youth", bearing in mind the huge number of NOET youth in the Republic of Macedonia.

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# MUNICIPALITY GOSTIVAR



## Introduction

Since 2002, many factors have influenced the structure of the population in the municipality, especially in the last few years when residents from different ethnic communities tried to immigrate to Western Europe. Over the years, the municipality has been trying to make the most of its efforts to maintain its population in Gostivar by increasing the economic opportunities that aim to create a better quality of life. Demographically, the municipality is home to 2,237 Roma citizens, according to the latest results from the 2002 census. This figure is projected to vary with a small margin that is triggered by the push and pull factors of migration, economic security and other additional factors that generally

### MUNICIPALITY ID:

Gostivar is a municipality in the northwestern part of the country, which covers about 650 square kilometers. The city is an administrative, political, business and cultural center for about eighty thousand inhabitants, of whom almost 36,000 live in the city core. The municipality is home to several ethnic communities. Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Roma and other ethnic communities live in Gostivar. The composition of the population is: Albanians with about 66.6%, Macedonians 19.5%, Turks 9.8%, Roma 3.8% and others 0.3%.

affect the general population of the municipality. Roma in the municipality of Gostivar for several years in a row in the local elections secured with the mobilization of the electoral body a Roma councilor who is included in the lists of Macedonian political parties. In the last three mandates of the municipality, the Roma community had at least one Roma councilor within the municipal council, although according to the number of Roma electorate in the municipality, Roma have the capacity to elect at least two councilors. In addition to this fact, the biggest impact on the Roma community is created by the civil society organizations with a constant dedication and efforts for improving the situation of Roma in the municipality. According to the available data for the municipality of Gostivar, it can be noted that the problems of the

Roma are interconnected. In addition to the stated problems, there are additional problems that make life difficult for Roma in the municipality. In the context of the problems, discrimination and persons without personal documentation are added. There is still hidden structural discrimination in the municipality, which is often reported by citizens in local civil society organizations. While the problem with the persons without personal documentation is a coup for practicing the rights as citizens in the municipality. With this problem, in fact, phantoms can not acquire the right to education, health services and often the same persons are subject to discrimination. Overall, the municipality of Gostivar is making efforts to harmonize problems and find solutions. Municipal bodies often focus on the general problems of the municipality without a specific focus or direct agenda for the needs of the Roma. The organization and operation of the council as the main body of the municipality is regulated by permanent commissions that are created according to the needs of the municipality. These commissions are created according to the statute of the municipality and their work and competences are described in detail in the municipality. According to the statute there are ten (10) commissions for various spheres of the social life of the inhabitants of the municipality:

- Commission for Establishing Marriages
- Commission for Determining the Market Value of Real Estate
- Commission for Mandate Issues, Elections and Appointments
- Commission on Finance and Economic Development
- Commission for Planning and Arranging of Space and Protection of Environment and Nature
- Commission for Communal Affairs and Traffic
- Commission for Public Activities
- Commission on Normative - Legal Issues
- Commission for Equal Opportunities between the Gender
- Commission for Inter-Community Relations

All commissions have a different domain of work and different participants in these commissions. The councilors participate in these commissions together with experts at the local level who are consulted for finding solutions to the problems of the citizens. According to the mentioned commissions, it can be noted that the Roma issue is not a special focus of the municipality, but it is still connected with the work of the other commissions with special emphasis on the commission for relations between the communities.

## Problem Analysis

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According to the priorities of the representatives of the workshop, Gostivar emphasizes the following five (5) urgent priorities.

1. Legalization of property and transfer of property lists and personal documentation
2. Unemployment – companies terminate their business
3. Education – There is qualified staff, but has not yet been hired.
4. Cultural integration
5. Infrastructure

According to the urgency of the priorities of Roma in Gostivar, legalization is the first priority, then unemployment and qualified staff and the third main priority is education, that is, the already qualified staff ready for work is not adequately employed. In addition to these priorities, the Roma in Gostivar face housing problems, the mainstreaming of gender mainstreaming, health and other aspects.

1. Legalization as the main problem in the context of the Municipality of Gostivar is an old and new problem, which has already been intervened with efforts by the civil society sector in cooperation with local authorities and the mayor's political will to solve the problem. The specificity of this problem is that the families living in the unurbanized environment on the periphery of the city core are often in a problematic situation because they cannot legalize their houses because the land is not registered in the detailed urban plan as a space with elementary

conditions for residence. As an option for this problem, the acceleration of the process with registration or renewal of a detailed urban plan is envisioned, in which the homes of the endangered citizens in the city including the Roma will be entered. This procedure proves in practice that it takes long and often the local self-government does not have much interest in creating a new urban plan. However, in the good of all citizens, the urban plan should be renewed in order to avoid new additional problems and at the same time solve existing problems. To ensure a sustainable and fast process, this problem should be a focus to a particular group or team in the urbanism sector that will work with a particular focus on rebuilding and registering the problem areas of the city in the urban plan.

2. As already noted in the descriptive part, the Municipality of Gostivar deals with the general trends from the national level. Many young people decide to immigrate to Western European countries and thus reduce the economic potential and workforce of the municipality. Already existing companies that have established themselves in the municipality work without any problem, but the number of such companies is limited and the qualified staff is limited. Unemployment among Roma often reflects the socio-economic status of the entire community and thus causes discrimination.

This problem, although interconnected with many other aspects and domains in society, plays a major role in determining whether families or individuals would leave the country or would remain. Although this problem is two-sided, as an option for unemployment, the local self-government should invest more efforts than the citizens. On the one hand, citizens need to adapt and reclassify according to the needs of the labor market, even though they have already acquired higher education. On the other hand, the local self-government should use the economic potential of the municipality. The municipality should attract foreign investments in designed TIDZs, but also to encourage local small and medium-sized businesses with more measures that would facilitate the process of opening up new businesses. There are several measures that would be of great benefit and relief if the local government decides to use the maximum of the municipality. Among most of the options, the

local government can offer equipment, small loans, subsidies, tax exemptions in a certain period, non-refundable funds and other innovative measures that would encourage young people to invest in the municipality.

3. The education, that is, the qualified staff of Roma who already exist in the municipality of Gostivar has difficulties in integrating in the labor market. The politicization of jobs at both national and local levels plays a major role. Thus, the most often non-politicized Roma staff suffers most, although one might be qualified for positions in public institutions or local institutions. Apart from the qualified Roma staff, the Roma who are not qualified for what is offered on the labor market either suffer the most from education or practice with which they will secure a job.

For full integration of Roma at both national and local level, it depends on how many institutions are open to employment of minorities in institutions. There is a huge gap between the employees of the Macedonian and Albanian ethnic communities compared to the members of the Roma ethnic community. For years, the Municipality of Gostivar has not appointed a referent or sector that would work on the priorities of the community, nor as part of the municipal administration. The most commonly open institution for Roma is Communal Services Enterprise, while other institutions such as police, social welfare centers, employment agencies, kindergartens, primary and secondary schools remain with one, two or some institutions with no Roma employed, although there are already qualified staff. By opening and securing employment for Roma in these institutions, the Roma will have a sense of belonging and contributing to the progress of the city. Although Roma in Gostivar are 3.8% with already qualified staff, the most affected by unemployment in the city are Roma. Only with openness of the employment, institutions and the incentive to establish a local small or medium business can solve the problem of educated Roma in the municipality.

## Recommendations

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1. Accelerating the process of registering or rebuilding a detailed urban plan that will include the homes of the endangered citizens in the city including the Roma.
2. In order to ensure a sustainable and fast process, this problem should be a focus on a specific group or team in the sector of urbanism that will work with a special focus on rebuilding and registering the problem areas of the city in the urban plan.
3. The economic potential of the municipality should be used. The municipality should attract foreign investments in designed TIDZs, but also to encourage local small and medium-sized businesses with more measures that would facilitate the process of opening up a new business.
4. Local government may offer the provision of equipment, small loans, subsidies, tax relief in a certain period, grants and other innovative measures that would stimulate young people to invest in the municipality.
5. By opening and securing employment for Roma in these institutions, the Roma will have a sense of belonging and contributing to the progress of the city.
6. Only the openness of the employment institutions and the incentive to establish a local small or medium business can solve the problem of educated Roma in the municipality.

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# MUNICIPALITY BITOLA



## Introduction

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As in the other cities in the Republic of Macedonia, the same is in Bitola, the Roma community encounters a number of problems in their everyday life. Roma settlements still face a lack of infrastructure, without water, electricity and elementary living conditions in a constant fight against poverty and discrimination.

### MUNICIPALITY ID:

Bitola is a city located in the southwestern part of Macedonia. It is known as the city of consuls because during the Ottoman Empire in this city there were the consular offices of European countries. Bitola is the second largest city in the Republic of Macedonia according to the number of inhabitants. According to the latest population census held in 2002, there are 95,385 inhabitants in Bitola, out of which 2,613 are members of the Roma community.

An additional problem in the part of housing is that Roma living in the Bair settlement in Bitola are not yet able to legalize their illegal buildings because the municipality has not yet developed a detailed urban plan for this part of the city. The Roma community in the Bair settlement also faces segregation in the educational process, namely after a long period of segregation in the primary school "Gorgi Sugarev", the European Center for Roma Rights from Budapest initiated a procedure before the competent court in Skopje for this case.

## Problem Analysis

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A large number of Roma students in Bitola are enrolled in the elementary school "Gorgi Sugarev". The total number of students in this school is 604, out of which 474 are Roma, or in percentage, the number of Roma students is 80%. As can be seen from the table from year to year the number of Roma students increases while the number of non-Roma students decreases. This is due to the fact that parents of non-Roma children enroll their children in other schools. According to the research of the Institute for Human Rights from Skopje, it was also noted that in

the school year of 2015/2016, eight non-Roma children were enrolled in this school but one year later in the academic year 2016/2017 they were written off so the entire class was only with Roma students.

According to the reorganization of the municipality of Bitola, almost all the

Number of students enrolled in the first grade in "Gorgi Sugarev" Academic year	Roma	Others	Total	children from the "Bair" settlement, which is predominantly populated with Roma population, should be enrolled in the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school, although at the same distance there is the another school "Todor Angeleski" where there are only a few Roma children enrolled in that school.
2011/12	51	20	71	
2012/13	68	12	80	
2013/14	59	16	75	
2014/15	57	25	82	
2015/16	42	8	50	
2016/17	31	5	37	

In the conducted research at the elementary school "Todor Angeleski" in Bitola, a total of 952 students were enrolled in the academic year 2015/2016, of which only 10 students are Roma. Ethnic composition in this school, besides students of Macedonian nationality, are: 10 Roma, 10 Turks, 3 Serbs, 2 Albanians and 1 Vlach.

Academic year	Roma	Others	Total
2011/12	1	94	95
2012/13	4	100	104
2013/14	1	118	119
2014/15	2	118	120
2015/16	1	109	110
2016/17	1	118	119

Number of students enrolled in the first grade in "Todor Angeleski"

According to these data, it is evident that the ethnic composition in both schools is different in which only Roma are enrolled in "Gorgi Sugarev" while only Macedonians are in the "Todor Angelovski" primary school. Such a composition brings the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school to be considered a school that segregates Roma children. Also in the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school, the average grade for the school year 2015/2016 is 3.27 for non-Roma children and 2.15 for Roma students. While the middle grade at the primary school "Todor Angeleski" for the academic year 2015/2016 is 4.2 for non-Roma students and 3.9 for Roma children. According to the interviews made with the director, the employees, part of the teachers, the parents of the Roma children and the municipal authorities, almost all agree that although many of the non-Roma children should be going to the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school but they do not respect this decision and enroll in the "Todor Angeleski" primary school. Some of the interviewees believe that Gorgi Sugarev primary school is considered Roma school and for this reason they do not enroll non-Roma children in this school. This problem is also reported in the Ministry of Education and Science, but from the Ministry they state that the parents of Macedonian students do not want to enroll in that school, while also the law gives them the opportunity to enroll their children in a school where parents want. It is evident that the school "Gorgi Sugarev" becomes a school exclusively with Roma children and therefore there is a perception that it has been turned into a Roma "bad" school. The high concentration of Roma children coming from poorer families and experiencing academic difficulties tend to diminish the expectations of teachers and their families for their educational opportunities. For these reasons, it is possible that some teachers leave their jobs and all this can affect the quality of teaching. According to the statements of the municipal authorities and the Ministry of Education, it can be concluded that they do not make every effort to change this situation. According to their non-reaction they allow the formation of such schools in order to avoid possible conflicts with parents who do not want their children to study with children from vulnerable groups. The lack of measures that the competent institutions should undertake contribute to the full concentration of Roma children in the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school and the lower quality of education.

The situation with segregation in the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school has a negative impact on the Roma children and non-Roma, with the students associating only with children from the same ethnic community and thus will not be able to learn about the diversity of most communities. The division of students according to ethnicity will also increase the divisions in the society, but will also build stereotypes and prejudices towards the children who study at the "Gorgi Sugarev" primary school. Because this school in the municipality of Bitola is recognized as a "bad" school where only Roma children are taught. This picture will increase mutual mistrust among the Roma and the majority. On the other hand, the role of schools is not only to educate children but also to socialize them. The division of schools has a negative effect on the moral and emotional development of Roma students, who will be under constant pressure that they perform much less than the students in the other school.

## Recommendations

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1. Amendment of the Law on Protection against Discrimination. The Law on Protection against Discrimination should be amended by adding paragraphs in which segregation will be treated as a form of discrimination.
2. Modification of the decision for reonization. According to the practice of implementation, it can be determined that there is a different interpretation of the same, and due to such interpretation the competent institutions can not instruct their parents to enroll their children in the schools where they are regionally owned.
3. Equitable distribution of students. The municipality and schools should take into account the number of children from different ethnic communities when enrolling in a particular school or class. They should distribute these children appropriately and equitably with students from other ethnic communities in order not to form classes with an ethnic community.

4. Research on the effects of segregation on children and the whole of society is needed. In the Republic of Macedonia, there are several schools that have segregated classes, but unfortunately there are no thorough research on the effects and consequences of segregation. For these reasons, the state should actively engage in a campaign against segregation in schools.

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# MUNICIPALITY PRILEP



## Introduction

For several years now, the Municipality of Prilep is in attempt to solve the problem of water supply. Although the Municipality of Prilep has much to offer in terms of both economical and touristic resources, the city still deals with unpaved streets and lighting problems. In general, the problems in this municipality are mostly related to infrastructure. As already mentioned, this municipality has a total of about 4,433 Roma citizens, which makes it the second most populous municipality with Roma population in the Republic of Macedonia, besides the municipality of Suto Orizari.

This number of Roma population represents a great potential for the municipality in general. Prilep is one of the municipalities that has consecutively at least one Roma councilor in the municipal council. Roma in the municipality of Prilep actively participate in the social trends at the local level. In addition to this capacity, Prilep also has several Roma civil society organizations that are in constant contact with the community and are committed to improvement of the quality of life of Roma in the municipality. In the municipality, besides the councilors, there is also a small number of Roma who are employed in local institutions. Education is not at a high level, and it is noted as one of the main problems of Roma in this municipality. Segregated classes are still one of the most serious challenges in education at the local level. Roma in Prilep live in an urban environment. The situation of Roma housing in Prilep is also a big challenge because the houses are not registered within the detailed urban plans of the municipality. However, a revised housing plan is envisaged including Roma houses. The situation with Roma health in the

### **MUNICIPALITY ID:**

The Municipality of Prilep is located in the southern part of the Republic of Macedonia, which covers an area of about 1194,44 square kilometers.

Prilep is a political, administrative, business and cultural center for 70,878 citizens in which 68,331 citizens live in the city of Prilep, while the rest are settled in the surrounding villages that are part of the municipality of Prilep. This municipality is also the home of several ethnic communities among which Macedonians live with about 93.2%, Roma 6%, Turks about 0.2%, Serbs 0.2% and others with about 0.3%.

municipality of Prilep is a serious problem because the Roma in the settlements do not have access to health services. The project for health mediators covers the municipality of Prilep. According to the available data for the municipality of Prilep, it can be noted that the municipality has adopted local action plans for the Roma in the period 2017-2020. Although the problems of Roma are interconnected as in most municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, the most urgent focus is on the legalization of homes in the 'Trizla' settlement, healthcare and access to health services and infrastructure, i.e. elementary living conditions in settlements where Roma are inhabited. CSOs have long been pushing for response and greater engagement of the local government to solve the problems that the Roma face. In the context of this municipality, besides the adopted action plans for Roma, they do not have implementation budget. The same was noted as a recommendation by the civil society organizations for the continuation of the initiative for support of Roma 2020 and at the same time recommendations related to health services, infrastructure needs such as public lights, sewerage and other needs. It is also important to notice within the municipality that there is a hidden structural discrimination that often Roma citizens report to local civil society organizations. In general, the Municipality of Prilep is working to reduce the problems of all citizens, including the problems of Roma in the municipality. Municipal authorities are often focused on the general problems of the municipality without a direct focus or plan for the needs of Roma, although local action plans are adopted locally. The Council as the main body of the municipality is divided into permanent commissions which are created according to the needs of the municipality. These commissions are created according to the statute of the municipality and their work and competences are described in detail in the statute. According to the statute there are nine (9) commissions for different spheres of the social life of the inhabitants of the municipality:

- Commission for financing, budget and local economic development;
- Commission for urbanism, communal activities and environmental protection;
- Commission for Social Activities and Children's Rights;
- Commission for the Statute and regulations;
- Commission for marking important events, celebrities and holidays;

- Commission for Natural Disasters;
- Commission for local self-government;
- Commission for Gender Equality;
- Commission on Mandate Issues, Elections and Appointment;

According to the working conditions, commissions have different scope of work and participants in these commissions. Councilors participate in these commissions, together with experts at local level who are consulted for finding solutions to citizens' problems.

## Problem Analysis

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According to the priority of the representatives of the workshop<sup>1</sup>, the municipality of Prilep prioritized the following five (5) most urgent problems of the Roma community

- Education
- Housing
- Personal documentation
- Employment
- Health

According to the urgency of the needs of the Roma in the municipality of Prilep, education is the first priority, then the housing and the third main priority in the municipality of Prilep is personal documentation. In addition to these priorities, the Roma in Prilep face employment problems with the remark that the number of Roma employed in local institutions and health care is very small as a problem where awareness and information about the services is very low and other aspects.

Education as the main problem of Roma from the municipality of Prilep is a problem because there is a significant small number of Roma children involved in pre-school and primary education. In addition, Roma students still deal with segregated classes. Although the municipality of Prilep is one of the most populated municipalities with Roma, without raising the level of education in the municipality, this figure will depend on social assistance. Roma education in this municipality is often

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<sup>1</sup> Workshop of InSoC with representatives of local self-governments in the project "ROMA ACTION + civic engagement of local community"

associated with discrimination on the whole community. To address this problem, the first most pressing step, as an option, is to examine the rash, consider the causes, and reintegrate Roma students into pre-school and primary education. Both education processes are required by law, and therefore parents are obliged to register in the education system. On the other hand, educational institutions, together with the help of local authorities, will pay attention to a mobile team that will visit Roma settlements and will motivate children to continue their education. In addition to these problems in education, segregation in education is a serious threat and the reason why Roma students do not continue their education. In order to solve this problem it is necessary for local educational institutions in cooperation with civil society organizations to condemn this practice and to ensure that segregated classes would not be allowed in the future. Local authorities must understand the sensitivity of segregation that can leave long-lasting consequences for Roma students. As already noted in the descriptive part, the municipality of Prilep handles generally elementary needs for a normal life. Housing as one of the biggest problems of the Roma in Prilep is a constituency of the citizens to provide normal living conditions in Prilep. The municipality still has problems with water supply, sewage system, drainage and supply, electricity, fecal and atmospheric sewers and a long list of needs of Roma living in the 'Trizla'. Legalization as the main problem in the context of the municipality of Prilep is an old problem that has already been intervened with efforts by the civil society sector in cooperation with local authorities and the mayor's political will to solve the problem. What is special about this problem is that families live in an unurbanized environment and are in a problematic situation because they can not legalize their place of residence because it is not registered in the detailed urban plan as a space in which there are conditions available for people to live there. As a solution to this problem, the acceleration of the already started process for the renewal of the detailed urban plan is envisaged, in which the houses of the endangered citizens in the city including the Roma will be entered. This procedure proves in practice that it is long and often the local self-government does not have much interest in creating a new urban plan. However, in the good of all citizens,

the urban plan should be renewed in order to avoid new additional problems and at the same time solve existing problems. In order to ensure a sustainable and fast process, this problem should be the focus of a special group or team in the urbanism sector that will work with a special focus on rebuilding and registering the problem areas of the city in the urban plan.

As for the issue related to the personal documentation of Roma, this is a problem that is reflected at the national level. In the municipality of Prilep there is a low awareness among the Roma citizens about the connection of many other problems with the personal documentation. Although this problem is expected to be resolved at the central level, there are already several generations of Roma who live without any documents and thus are outside the health services, the education system, unemployed and a series of other problems. Although a coordinated approach to address this problem is already expected at the national level, the ministries, together with civil society organizations, considered possible solutions for the integration of Roma without documentation. The temporary solution to this problem is issuing temporary ID cards and other documents so that citizens can use the services of the state, while the ministries do not find a permanent solution to this problem. To solve this problem, an option is listed as a change to laws that will provide documents to people without documents. Once these decisions are adopted, the municipality should first consider the possibilities to involve the mechanisms at the local level for registering persons without documentation. Of course this solution depends not only on the national level process. At the local level, the most important thing is the political will to resolve this issue and the openness of the institutions for and incentive for cooperation with the civil sector for faster and more effective resolution of the problem.

## Recommendations

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1. Educational institutions, together with the help of local authorities, should pay more attention in mobile teams to visit Roma settlements and motivate children to continue their education.

2. Local education institutions, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to condemn the practice of segregation and to ensure that in the future it would not be allowed to have segregate classes
3. Accelerate the already initiated process for rebuilding a detailed urban plan that will include the houses of vulnerable citizens in the city including the Roma.
4. In order to ensure a sustainable and fast process of legalization, this problem should be a focus on a specific group or team in the sector of urbanism that will work with a special focus on rebuilding and registering the problem areas of the city in the urban plan.
5. The municipality should consider the possibilities to urgently involve the mechanisms at the local level for registering persons without documentation
6. Openness of institutions and incentives for cooperation with the civil sector for faster and more effective resolution of the problem

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# MUNICIPALITY STIP



# Introduction

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The inclusion of Roma at the local level is a real challenge for the local self-government, primarily due to the unwillingness of the institutions at the local level to respond to the problems and challenges that the Roma community faces. Although Local Action Plans were prepared in almost all municipalities with a significant Roma population and Memoranda of Cooperation with Municipalities were signed, concrete actions and results at the local level for the Roma population are still far from desirable. The purpose of this brief is to identify the priority problems faced by the Roma community at the local level and provide a series of recommendations for overcoming them with a view to involving Roma at the local level.

The Municipality of Stip has adopted documents referring to the needs and problems of the Roma, and one of the more important is the Local Action Plan (LAP) for the implementation of the Roma Decade in Stip. Despite the fact that the local self-government has undertaken a series of measures to improve the conditions for housing and urban development in the Roma neighbourhoods but these efforts are insufficient. The main changes in the area of housing were made in part of the infrastructure solutions - street asphaltting, provision of sewage, water supply and street lighting, as well as improvement of the conditions in the elementary school in the settlement. According to local

## MUNICIPALITY ID:

Municipality Stip is located between the heights of the Isar, Merite and Kumlak, along the length of the two banks of the dry ravine Otinja extends our city which is an east Macedonian center and one of the oldest cities in Macedonia. Area: 556 km<sup>2</sup>. Population: 47,798 inhabitants: Roma: 2,195 (1039 F and 1156 M), 80% of Roma live in 2 settlements "Cerenja" and "Tsar Samoil", former "Radanski Pat" and "Kosovska", and about 20% live in other parts of the city.

One representative in the Council of the Municipality, two employees in the local self-government, 240 Unemployed Roma, 122 Women

NGOs and representatives of local self-government, housing continued to be one of the most pressing problems facing the Roma community. Particularly worrying is the situation with the homelessness of about 50 families, as well as the inclusion of the Roma neighborhood of Sv. Nedela in the DUP where numerous Roma families are not connected to the networks, without electricity, water and sanitation. Although the municipality and the Ministry of Transport have promised to build social housing, Roma families still live in substandard conditions. Employment is the second important problem that occurs in the Roma community. Although the relative figure is small (due to the small number of Roma registered in the employment agency), it is still twice as large as the rest of the communities.

## Problem Analysis

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The Municipality of Stip is the sixth in a row on the national level according to the number of Roma population, where the Roma account for 4.1% of the total population. About 80% of Roma families live on the streets of "Radanski Pat", "Kosovska", "Sutjeska", "Duzlacki Rid" and "Sirok Dol" in unplanned buildings, with irregular infrastructure, unresolved approaches, open atmospheric channels, inadequate water supply and sewerage network, poor quality power supply, insufficient energetic connections and no street lighting coverage<sup>1</sup>.

The legalization of illegally constructed buildings is one of the key issues for Roma housing. Within the project "Legalization of housing in the Roma", implemented by "Habitat Macedonia", about 170 families from Stip received approved loans for legalization of the home. According to Habitat's indications, around 500 others are waiting for the completion of the documentation, and in the extended period, 100 new requests for legalization from Roma camps were submitted. Another problem with regard to housing is that in some streets, more new habitats spring up, which make it difficult for them to permeate and legalize them due to overcrowding of buildings. However, much of the side streets are

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<sup>1</sup> Habitat Macedonia, Initial Study on Roma Housing in Stip, 2017

unpaved, and electricity in some parts of the settlement is with a weaker voltage. There is a need for repairs to the water and sewage network. Roma employment continues to be a key problem despite the fact that only 240 officially unregistered Roma are registered in the Municipality of Stip<sup>2</sup>. According to data from EARM in Stip in 2016, 56 unemployed Roma applied for some of the measures for employment, out of which contracts were signed with 37 persons of Roma nationality.

Compared with other communities, the Roma face twice as high unemployment rates, primarily due to the low level of education, the insufficient number of available jobs, the incompatibility between employers' needs and the qualifications of the workforce, lack of work experience. Another problem that arises in the sphere of employment is the fact that persons of Roma nationality are mostly engaged in performing low-paid jobs (cleaning houses, physical workers, seasonal workers) resulting from the educational profile of the community.

However, the additional problem that arises is the existence of prejudices of employers, especially textile employers, for responsibility in the performance of work tasks, and therefore employers do not prefer to sign contracts or any kind of engagement.

## Recommendations

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From the analysis it can be concluded that while the municipality allocates a separate budget for Roma each year and implements infrastructure projects, it follows that it should set a priority for resolving the housing issue - especially for finding long-term solutions and inclusion in the DUP. In the domain of employment, having in mind that the Municipality of Stip is a developed municipality where the textile industry is blooming, there is a great opportunity for solving the problem of employment of Roma. From the lessons learned so far, in order to solve the complex issues that Roma people face, it is necessary to interdisciplinary and integrative approach which implies a set of combinations of measures of social protection, education, employment

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<sup>2</sup> Employment Agency, Review of Unemployed Persons by Nationality

and housing. The recommendations in this section will be directed at all stakeholders who contribute and work for the development of the Roma community and the socio-economic inclusion of Roma in the society.

1. An integrated set of housing that implies - Build social housing for Roma, include children in preschool education, engage in active employment measures, monitor regularity in education and free primary health care. Roma families who are placed at the nervous department to be given social housing / subsidized rented accommodation for their inclusion in the society and providing a set of public services with a special emphasis on employment.
2. Credit Microfinance schemes with favorable conditions for housing renovation / reconstruction. The purpose of such credit schemes is to enable families living in houses to repair their roofs so that they can withstand the installation of solar panels. One of the goals of the municipality is the development of energy efficiency projects, while placing solar panels in households will significantly reduce energy poverty, positively affect the environment and reduce household heating costs. This measure is aimed at Roma families who have houses, but their construction is poor and living conditions are difficult without adequate isolation, lack of toilet, weak roof, etc.
3. Adaptation of Roma settlements for inclusion in the gasification project of the municipality. One of the announced measures is the gasification of the municipality, which should take the poor infrastructure into account in the Roma settlements, population density and non-involvement in the DUP can circumvent the Roma settlement with the gasification network. Hence, a recommendation to the municipality is before the start of the project to make an adaptation for a feasibility study for the establishment of the gasification network in the Roma settlements.
4. Inclusion of Roma settlements in the area of Cerenja in the existing DUP - change of plans and spatial planning in the settlement in order to prevent the unplanned spread of the settlement.
5. Reconstruction of the road infrastructure and setting of street lighting in the Roma settlements.

6. Records of all unemployed Roma according to certain demographic characteristics (sex, education, marital status etc.) in order to have a more urgent base that will reflect the real state of unemployment of the Roma community in order to create individual solutions and plans for employment.
7. Increase the skills of Roma and educate those who do not have secondary education. Bearing in mind that there are also working universities in Stip, the municipality, in cooperation with the regional unit of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, should also introduce subsidizing of the re-education in order to increase the competitiveness of the labor market as well as greater utilization of the available active measures for employment.
8. Establishing a dialogue with employers for training and employment of Roma women in the textile sector, having in mind that such opportunities are available given the economic profile of the municipality. Hence, the municipality should stimulate cooperation with the textile industry to overcome existing prejudices.
9. Regulating the seasonal work by establishing a pricelist of service prices and temporary employment contracts in order not to exploit the labor force and to pay less in comparison with the others.
10. Encouraging entrepreneurship and granting state land for encouraging agriculture, which should take place through training and providing minimum resources for the cultivation of certain horticultural crops. These measures should be implemented in partnership with NGOs.

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# MUNICIPALITY KUMANOVO



## Introduction

As in all municipalities and in Kumanovo there are many factors that influence the structure of the population. Data are based on the 2002 census. Kumanovo is one of the crossroads in the country that is connected to the eastern part of the state and at the same time with the Republic of Serbia in the north. The municipality of Kumanovo generally faces similar problems as many of the other large municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia. This municipality has a total of about 4,256 Roma citizens, making this municipality one of the most populous Roma municipalities in the country, besides the municipality of Suto Orizari.

### **MUNICIPALITY ID:**

The Municipality of Kumanovo is located in the northeastern part of the Republic of Macedonia. This municipality covers an area of 509.48 square kilometers. The municipality of Kumanovo, beside the city of Skopje, is one of the largest municipalities in the country. This municipality has about 103,205 citizens in which 76,272 live in the city while the remaining 26,993 live in the surrounding villages. This municipality is composed of several ethnic communities. In Kumanovo live around 60.2% of the citizens of Macedonian ethnicity, 26.5% of the citizens of Albanian ethnicity, 8.5% of Serbs, 4.2% of Roma, 0.3% of citizens of Turkish ethnicity, 0.2% Vlachs and 0.1% others.

This number of Roma population represents a great potential for the municipality in general. In addition to most developing options, taking into account the demographics, the result is evident in the mobilization of the community. Kumanovo is one of the municipalities where consecutively there is at least one Roma councilor in the municipal council. In the last term, according to the results, the municipality has two councilors. This fact indicates that the Roma in the municipality of Kumanovo actively participates in the social trends at the local level. In addition to this capacity, Kumanovo also has several Roma civil society organizations that are in constant contact with the community and are committed to improve the quality of life of Roma in the municipality. Despite these results and the fact that Kumanovo is one of the highly populated municipalities with Roma in the country, Kumanovo does not have any referent or officer in the municipality. On the other hand, the Romani language is in official use at the sessions of the Council of the

Municipality of Kumanovo.<sup>1</sup> Education is not at a high level compared to other communities in the municipality. One of the main problems in Kumanovo pointed out by civil society organizations and councilors is employment. There are no Roma employed in the local self-government or in the administration, although there are already graduated and qualified Roma. All other communities are represented in local institutions.<sup>2</sup> Roma in Kumanovo live in an urban environment. The situation of Roma housing in Kumanovo is also a great challenge because there are still settlements that are inhabited by Roma with substandard living conditions. Little progress has been made in the legalization of houses, yet the challenge remains visible because Roma settlements are not included in detailed urban plans. The situation with the Roma health in the municipality of Kumanovo is a serious problem because the Roma in the settlements do not have access to health services. The project for health mediators does not cover the municipality of Kumanovo<sup>3</sup>. In addition to the stated problems, there are additional problems that make life difficult for the Roma in the municipality. In the context of the problems, discrimination and persons without personal documentation are added. There is still hidden structural discrimination in the municipality, which is often reported by citizens in local civil society organizations. According to the available data for the municipality of Kumanovo, it can be noted that the municipality has not adopted local action plans for the Roma in the period 2017-2020. Although the problems of Roma are interconnected in most municipalities in the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, the most urgent focus is directed towards the legalization of homes in the settlement Sredorek, increasing the level of educated Roma, health and access to health services and infrastructure, i.e. elementary living conditions in settlements where Roma are inhabited. CSOs have long been pushing for response and greater engagement of the local government to solve the problems that Roma face. In the context of this municipality, the Roma do not have separate budget lines in the municipal budget for the realization or

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<sup>1</sup> A1on. Accessed on: 11/11/2017. <http://a1on.mk/archives/725428>

<sup>2</sup> Kumanovski Muabeti. Accessed on: 11.11.2017. <http://kumanovskimualeti.mk/vo-opshtina-kumanovo-nema-mesto-za-nitu-eden-od-13-diplomirani-romi/>

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Health. Accessed on: 11.11.2017: <http://zdravstvo.gov.mk/category/proekti/romski-zdravstveni-medijatori/>

improvement of the quality of life of Roma in the municipality. In general, the municipality of Kumanovo is working to reduce the problems of all citizens, including the problems of Roma in the municipality. The municipal authorities are often focused on the general problems of the municipality without a direct focus or a plan for the needs of the Roma. The Council as the main body of the municipality is divided into permanent commissions which are created according to the needs of the municipality. These commissions are created according to the statute of the municipality and their work and competences are described in detail by the municipality. According to the statute there are nine (13) commissions<sup>4</sup> for different spheres of the social life of the inhabitants of the municipality:

- Commission on Mandate Issues, Elections and Appointments;
- Financing Commission and Budget;
- Commission for Local Economic Development;
- Commission for urbanism;
- Commission for communal activities;
- Commission for protection of the environment and nature;
- Commission on Education, Culture and Sports;
- Commission for Social, Child and Health Care;
- Commission for statute and regulations;
- Commission for local self-government;
- Commission for celebrating holidays and manifestations and awarding of awards and recognitions;
- Commission for Equal Opportunities between Men and Women;
- Commission for safety, traffic safety and fire protection;

In accordance to the working conditions, commissions have different scope of work and different participants in these commissions. Councilors participate in these commissions, together with experts at the local level, who are consulted for finding solutions to citizens' problems.

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<sup>4</sup> Municipality of Kumanovo. Accessed on: 11.11.2017.

<http://kumanovo.gov.mk/komisii-na-sovet/>

# Problem Analysis

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According to the priority of the representatives of the workshop, the municipality of Kumanovo prioritized the following five (5) most urgent problems of the Roma community:

1. Education
2. Unemployment
3. Immigration
4. Infrastructure
5. Health

According to the urgency of the needs of Roma in the municipality of Kumanovo, education is a top priority, followed by the employment situation and the third main priority in the municipality of Kumanovo is immigration. In addition to these priorities, Roma in Kumanovo face infrastructure problems with the remark that there are still cases of Roma living in substandard living and health conditions, that is, information about the services is very low and other aspects. As already noted in the descriptive part, education as the main problem of Roma from the municipality of Kumanovo. Within the municipality there are educational programs such as tutoring Roma students for motivation and assistance in the educational process, however, the number of educated Roma is small. Education as the main problem in the context of the municipality of Kumanovo is a problem that is interconnected with many other problems of Roma. As a solution to this problem, the first most necessary step as an option is to analyze the situation and to examine the dropout, to consider the reasons and to reintegrate Roma students into primary education and secondary education. Both education processes are required by law, and therefore parents are obliged to register their children in the education system. On the other hand, the educational institutions, together with the help of the local authorities and the civil society sector, should pay more attention including a mobile team that would visit the Roma settlements and will motivate the children to continue their education. In addition, as an option to solve this problem, it is necessary for local educational institutions to understand the sensitivity and the need to improve the

education of Roma in the municipality. Roma education in this municipality is often associated with discrimination on the whole community. Tackling unemployment in Kumanovo represents a general trend from the national level. As a solution to this problem, young people often choose to migrate to Western European countries. The already existing economic potential in the municipality has been used, but it still has an additional potential that can be used. Unemployment among Roma in this municipality is often associated with discrimination on the whole community. Despite the fact that the municipality of Kumanovo is one of the most populated municipalities with Roma, without using the human resources in the municipality, this figure will depend on social assistance. At the national level, this problem is most alarming, and this problem is closely linked to many other problems from different aspects and domains in the society. In this context, the Roma are in a position to decide whether to stay in Kumanovo and to invest in their employability, although educated Roma are still unemployed or would leave the state in the hope that existing skills will provide them with economic stability in another European country. This problem has a dual effort to address, yet the municipality should try to use the strategic geo-location for the advancement of economic development. On the one hand, Roma should adapt and reclassify according to the needs of the labor market, even though they have already acquired higher education, they need to capitalize their knowledge in investments into the municipality. On the other hand, the local self-government should use the geographical position and promote economic relations with neighboring Republic of Serbia. The municipality should attract foreign investments in designed TIDZs, but also to encourage local small and medium-sized businesses with more measures that would facilitate the process of opening up a new businesses. There are several measures that would be of great benefit and relief if the local government decides to use the maximum of the municipality. Among most of the options, the local government can offer the provision of equipment, small loans, subsidies, tax exemptions in a certain period, grants and other innovative measures that would stimulate young people to invest in the municipality. After the visa liberalization of the Republic of Macedonia towards EU countries,

immigration, slowly but surely became a trend among the Roma for the desired destinations for variety of reasons such as tourist, economic, educational and other reasons for traveling. However, in addition to these reasons, the number of Roma traveling tend to stay in European countries as asylum seekers or temporary workers. This migration guarantees greater economic stability for the Roma and thus Kumanovo has changed the demographic structure, human resources and the workforce of the municipality. Roma employment efforts in the municipality are increasingly reducing because Roma are more likely to believe in a temporary solution, such as asylum. Given that the education of Roma in this municipality is low, it is very likely that the employability of these people is small. If they no longer have opportunities for regular employment, some are opting for work in a gray economy that offers little economic stability depending on the spending of Roma citizens. In case this opportunity does not succeed as a solution for Roma who do not have higher education, they decide to immigrate to European countries in order to provide economic benefits. Although their range of skills is limited, they manage to find a job that would provide them with some income that would certainly be greater than income in Macedonia for the same job. This logic of thinking is already known to Macedonian institutions at the national and local level. This problem has been alerted by the European Commission for 4 years and offers ways to solve this problem. However, as an option to solve this problem, providing better quality living conditions through opportunities for improving the employability, providing employment opportunities, better conditions in the utilization of health services, infrastructure providing public light, asphalt, water supply, sewerage and all other aspects that will make them generally view the citizens to stay, invest and live in Kumanovo. The municipality must ensure openness to Roma in the city and provide more jobs for Roma, given the number of Roma living in the municipality.

# Recommendations

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1. To analyze the situation and to examine the dropout, to consider the reasons and to reintegrate Roma students into primary and secondary education.
2. Educational institutions, with the help of local authorities and the civil society sector, should pay more attention with a mobile team visiting Roma settlements and motivate children to continue their education
3. The geographical position and promotion of economic relations with the neighboring Republic of Serbia should be used. The municipality should attract foreign investments in designated TIDZs, but also to encourage local small and medium-sized businesses with more measures that would facilitate the process of opening a new businesses
4. Providing equipment, small loans, subsidies, tax exemptions in a certain period, non-refundable funds and other innovative measures that would stimulate young people to invest in the municipality.
5. Providing better quality living conditions through opportunities for improving the employability, providing employment opportunities, better conditions in the utilization of health services, infrastructural development, asphalt, water supply, sewerage
6. Openness to Roma in the city and provide more jobs for Roma, given the number of Roma living in the municipality.

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# MUNICIPALITY DELCEVO



## Introduction

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As in all municipalities and in Delcevo there are many factors that influence the structure of the population. These data are based on the 2002 census. This municipality has been trying to use the economic and tourist potential for years to solve the worst problem in the municipality and that is employment.

According to demographic data, this municipality has about 651 Roma citizens, according to the latest results from the 2002 population census. This figure is of course changed because migration trends for economic or educational purposes attract citizens to immigrate, and on the other hand most emigrate to Skopje as the capital city.

In addition to these factors, the general population of the municipality is generally influenced by several factors. Roma in the municipality of Delchevo are actively participating in the social flows at the local level. Often, during the elections, their mobilization resulted in many positive results and great openness and cooperation with the civil sector. They used their capacity as an electorate on several occasions while Delcevo is one of the municipalities that has a Roma referent in the administration. In addition to the referent, the municipality of Delchevo has several civic organizations, including Roma who have a great influence on the union. Their efforts, together with the cooperation of local authorities, have generated many positive results over the years. One of the positive examples that can be noted is the municipality's

### **MUNICIPALITY ID:**

Delcevo is a municipality in the eastern part of the Republic of Macedonia, which covers about 422 square kilometres. The municipality is strategically situated because it borders the Republic of Bulgaria to the north and the east, while on the west it borders the municipality of Berovo and to the south with Pehcevo. This municipality has about 17,505 citizens in which about 11,536 live in a municipal center with a composition of several ethnic communities. In Delcevo live around 95% of citizens with Macedonian ethnicity, 3.7% Roma, 0.7 Turks and others.

commitment to improving the quality of life of Roma in the municipality of Delcevo. It is important to note that Delcevo has adopted local action plans for the Roma in the period 2017-2020. In addition, the municipality also participates in organizing the celebration of the International Roma Day - April 8th. The municipality also in cooperation with the civil sector allocates funds for two students, one of the primary and one of the high school. It should also be noted that the municipality of Delcevo is one of the few municipalities that introduce the study of the Roma language as an optional subject in the schools. In addition to investing in Roma students, the municipality also allocates funds for cultural events related to the Roma community. In the municipality, besides the referent, there are also other Roma who are employed in local institutions. Education is high because the coverage of children in the municipality is 100%. One of the few municipalities with such a result of involvement of children in the education system. Roma in Delcevo live in an urban environment. In general, the housing situation of Roma in Delcevo is good, the municipality has adopted a revised housing plan that includes the Roma as well. The situation with Roma health in the municipality of Delcevo is somewhat different, although generally everyone has access to health services, the Roma have the worst health status in the municipality. The project for health mediators is not covered by the municipality of Delcevo. According to the available data for the municipality of Delcevo, it can be noted that the problems of the Roma are interconnected. Apart from health, housing, employment and education problems, there are additional problems that make life difficult for the Roma in the municipality. In the context of the problems, generally identified problems at the national level, such as discrimination, are added. There is still hidden structural discrimination in the municipality, which is often reported by citizens in local civil society organizations.

Overall, the municipality of Delcevo is working to reduce the problems of all citizens, including the problems of Roma in the municipality. The municipal authorities are often focused on the general problems of the

municipality without a direct focus or a plan for the needs of the Roma. The Council as the main body of the municipality is divided into permanent commissions which are created according to the needs of the municipality. These bodies are created according to the statute of the municipality and their work and competences are described in detail in the municipality. According to the statute there are seven (7) commissions for different spheres of the social life of the inhabitants of the municipality:

- Commission for verification, mandate issues, elections and appointments;
- Equal Opportunities Commission;
- Commission on Finance, Budget and LED;
- Commission for public activities;
- Commission for communal affairs and traffic;
- Commission for urbanism, planning and arrangement of space and protection of the environment and the countryside;
- Commission for statute and regulations;

According to the activities, the commissions have a different domain of work and different participants in these commissions. The councilors participate in these commissions together with experts at the local level who are consulted for finding solutions to the problems of the citizens. According to the above mentioned commissions, it can be noted that the Roma issues besides the referent is included in the commissions.

# Problem Analysis

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According to the priority of the representatives from the workshop, the municipality of Delcevo has prioritized the following five (5) needs of the Roma community:

1. Unemployment;
2. Infrastructure;
3. Discrimination;
4. Adult education;
5. Legalization of property;

According to the alarming needs of the Roma in Delchevo, unemployment is the first priority, then the infrastructure and the third main priority in the municipality of Delcevo is discrimination. In addition to these priorities, the Roma in Delcevo face problems with providing adult education, property legalization, gender mainstreaming, health and other aspects.

Analysis and options for solving the priority needs;

1. Municipality of Delchevo deals with the general trends from the national level. In addition to the immigration of young people and the emigration to Skopje as a capital city with more employment opportunities, young people also decide to immigrate to Western European countries. The already existing economic potential in the municipality has been used, but it still has an additional potential that can be used. Unemployment among Roma in this municipality is often associated with discrimination towards the whole community. Although this problem is generally remarkable at the national level and at the same time closely related to many other aspects and domains in the society, Roma are in a position to decide whether they would leave the country or stay in the municipality. This problem is two-pronged, yet the local self-government should try to use the strategic geo-location for the promotion of economic development. On the one hand, citizens need to adapt and reclassify according to the needs of the labor market, even though they have already acquired higher education, they need to

capitalize their knowledge in the investments in the municipality. On the other hand, the local self-government should use the geographical position and promote economic relations with the neighboring Republic of Bulgaria. The municipality should attract foreign investments in designed TIDZs, but also to encourage local small and medium-sized businesses with more measures that would facilitate the process of opening up new business. There are several measures that would be of great benefit and relief if the local government decides to use the maximum of the municipality. Among most of the options, the local government can offer equipment, small loans, subsidies, tax exemptions in a certain period, non-refundable funds and other innovative measures that would encourage young people to invest in the municipality.

2. Infrastructure as one of the main necessity of Roma in the municipality is an essential need of every citizen. The specificity of this problem is that the focus of the Roma is small, i.e. the infrastructure services for the Roma in the municipality are smaller than the rest. In general, this problem is also associated with multiple factors and other problems that are indirectly related. Beside the municipality of Delcevo, there are many other municipalities that prioritize this problem because little is invested in solving this problem. In order to solve this problem, the municipality should first consider the strategies for modernizing the city and at the same time take local action plans into account. According to these documents, investment in Roma-inhabited neighborhoods is primarily an investment for citizens from the municipality, and on the other hand it is solving the burning problem of the Roma community. In addition to the investments of the municipality, the civil society sector, in cooperation with the local self-government, has the opportunity to apply for additional grants or other funds that would benefit the provision of infrastructure conditions of the municipality. By doing so, they will provide a quality living standard for all citizens in the municipality and ensure the basic needs of Roma in the municipality. Such measures will provide sewage networks, paved roads and many other conditions that

would ease the lives of Roma in the municipality.<sup>3</sup> Discrimination, like the previous two problems above, is a problem at the national level and at the same time a problem that affects the Roma citizens in the municipality. Already traditionally, the most pressing efforts to solve this problem are being borne by the civil society organizations and, through their campaigns and other activities, the level of discrimination is decreasing. Discrimination is most often reflected in all aspects of social life, in all social trends, from education to employment and access to all other services. Most often, solving this problem has a long process and there is no guarantee for the complete eradication of people's prejudices. However, as already mentioned, the cooperation of the local self-government and the civil society sector promises improvement of the situation. Taking into account that the Roma become more sensitive to the problem of discrimination, problems are being actualized to the competent authorities for solving through a systemic path. In addition to the trend of increased discrimination at border crossings specific to the Roma community, there are also recent examples in which the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination is engaged. One of the most needed options for this problem is to sensitize local institutions for structural discrimination. In addition to this measure, local authorities should provide a local institution in which citizens can report cases of discrimination and at the same time be able to respond with appropriate penalties. It is important that this process would not be passive and citizens lose trust in the authorities to prevent discrimination.

# Recommendations

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1. Municipal authorities should implement the DUP adopted in 2007, although it is difficult to implement it since it was adopted ten years ago. Otherwise, they need to prepare a new DUP that will meet the needs of the Roma and it will solve the problems that the community faces in this settlement.
2. The municipality allocates funds from the local budget for the construction of a sewage network. If there is no financial opportunity to finance the sewerage network by one hundred percent, the authorities with a project proposal can apply for foreign donations.
3. The municipality, in cooperation with EVN, should set up lighting in all streets in the settlement, because it is an obligation of the municipal authorities, but also of EVN as a distributor of electricity and a competent institution that should take care of lighting the streets.
4. The municipality, in cooperation with the Communal Services Enterprise, regularly collect garbage and clean the streets more often. If they do not clean the waste, small landfills will be converted that will negatively affect the community itself, but also the small landfills will contribute to the additional cost of the Communal Services Enterprise to clean them, since additional removal of the mini-landfills will require additional mechanization.
5. The NGO sector in the Topaana neighborhood to raise awareness among the local population about the consequences of waste dumping in the streets themselves, that is, illegal places.
6. Construction of green spaces around the settlement, but also on the same area to build sports grounds and recreational requisites.

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# MUNICIPALITY VINICA



## Introduction

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The main problem in the municipality is the high unemployment, which accounts for as much as 46% of the working population, and therefore requires intensive activities to improve the conditions for new employments. According to the unemployment data, in the year 2017, there were 144 unemployed registered in the Roma community, 35 of whom were Romani women.

Compared to 2003 when 452 Roma were registered as unemployed, it can be concluded that the unemployment of the Roma community in this municipality is drastically reduced. However, for such a figure, the mass migration and the division of active and passive job seekers may be influenced, and with the division itself there is a possibility that this figure does not represent the real situation of the Roma community in Vinica. According to data from the Center for Social Work in Vinica in 2017, the majority of the recipients of social assistance are Roma with a total of 101, followed by Macedonians with 75 recipients of such assistance. Due to this poor financial situation, a large number of Roma families are looking for better opportunities in Western European countries.

### **MUNICIPALITY ID:**

Vinica is a city located in the eastern part of the Republic of Macedonia with an area of 334 km<sup>2</sup> and is considered one of the smaller municipalities in the country. According to the data of the State Statistical Office in the municipality of Vinica there are around 19.274 inhabitants, of which 92% of the total population are Macedonians, and as the second ethnic community living in this municipality are the Roma with a total population of 1230 or 6.2% of the total population.

## Problem Analysis

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After the introduction of the visa-free regime in the Republic of Macedonia, a large number of Roma leave the country and go to Western European countries. According to the NGO sector, a large number of Roma families from Vinica leave the Roma neighborhood in which they live. Data show that more than 50 families have left the

municipality of Vinica. Additionally, according to several schools in the municipality, the number of children attending classes also decreased by that number because they went with their parents. Although a large number of Roma families who have left in European countries have been living there for several years, in the past period several European countries have decided to return them to their home countries. Because of this decision, especially in Germany, a greater number of Roma in several groups have been turned back. Roma returnees upon their return are faced with a number of problems, especially children who are on school. There are certain groups of children who have spent more than four years in the European countries and they have difficulties in speaking the Macedonian language, but also this group of students can not continue their education from where they stopped. Their parents are facing problems of social, health care and lack of proper documentation. There are also cases where certain families before their departure in western European countries sold their homes in order to obtain funds to leave the country. After their returning back to this moment they have nowhere to live, they are forced to live with their close friends and relatives. In addition, in Vinica, with regard to the education of Roma children, it is the problem of going out with their parents for seasonal work, and they do not go to attend classes. Children have to go with their parents because there is no one to take care of them at home. Children return with their parents when the school year is already started or around October. For these reasons, they are unable to engage in school. Children who have returned with their parents from seasonal work and are not admitted back to regular classes and for which the lost instruction is expected to be supplemented in an extraordinary manner. The problem is that these families are usually recipients of social assistance or depend solely on the income they received during seasonal work. They do not have financial support for the child to be able to compensate for the lost instruction through extraordinary passing exams because they are paid. From this it can be concluded that the unemployment in the municipality of Vinica is high, especially in the Roma community. Due to the poor economic situation in which the Roma live in Vinica, some of them in the hope of a better life left the

municipality and left in western European countries. After the negative decisions on recognition of the status of asylum, a large number of Roma, especially from Germany, were returned to their home countries, so is the case with the municipality of Vinica. The biggest victims of all these events are children who in some cases even do not even speak the Macedonian language at all and they can not continue their education from that level where they stopped in the foreign country. An additional case with delay of the teaching is faced by Roma children whose parents must leave for seasonal work outside the municipality.

## Recommendations

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1. Provide free legal advice and assistance in providing documentation. Returnees after returning to Macedonia due to lack of personal documentation can not exercise their rights.
2. Assistance in securing jobs through the Employment Agency. The returnees are immediately registered as active jobseekers in order to apply for active employment measures and training programs.
3. In the part of health care, provide a basic health care package that will be valid until the completion of the procedure for obtaining personal documentation. This way, Roma returnees can be health insured immediately after their return.
4. In the part of the education of Roma children who are being turned back, they should be provided with integration into the education system with additional assistance such as individual training, counseling and maintenance of compensatory classes. Also, in the part of education, a certain type of formal education and adult returnees are also provided. It will increase their opportunities for easier job finding.

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# MUNICIPALITY KOCANI



## Introduction

In the absence of public policies for Roma at the local level, there is no opportunity for systematic implementation of activities to address the problems of Roma and therefore proper planning and allocation of budget for Roma in Kocani.

### MUNICIPALITY ID:

Area: 360 km<sup>2</sup>. Population: 38,092 inhabitants. Roma: 1950 (1039 F and 1156 M), 95% of the Roma live in the following streets Slavche Stojmenov, Mitko Becarski, Partizanska Kolerska cemetery and others. 257 Unemployed Roma, 87 Women.

In the past period, the Municipality of Kocani had a Local Action Plan 2010 -2015, but the political crisis and other priorities contributed to the process of adopting the new LAPs to be slower. According to the number of Roma settlements, the Municipality of Kocani is the seventh in a row at the national level, where the local population makes up 5.13%, although unofficial data by the NGOs indicates the number of 2,300 Roma. A majority of the Romani population as their mother tongue speaks Turkish, and for this reason a considerable number are identified as Turks. Regarding the problems that the Roma community faces, within the workshop with local representatives, infrastructure, employment and housing were identified as the most priority areas where the municipality should focus in the upcoming period. Although the local self-government of the Municipality of Kocani has undertaken a number of measures to improve the conditions for improving the infrastructure by paving the streets, still around 30% of the streets are not asphalted, even some parts of the Roma settlements are not connected with water supply and sewerage. Employment is the second important problem that occurs in the Roma community, especially in the public sector where less than 1% are employed.

The purpose of this policy paper is to identify the priority issues facing the Roma community in Kocani and make recommendations for overcoming them with a view to involving Roma at the local level.

## Problem Analysis

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The Roma settlement in Kocani is included in the municipality's DUP, but the density and the extension of the houses is not in line with the standards and therefore there is no possibility for urban development of the Roma community. About 95% of the Roma population is concentrated and live in 8 streets that are interconnected.

In the municipality, a number of Roma dwellings are not legally connected to the water and sewerage network and there is no paved road to parts of the settlement. Particular attention should be paid to the already existing illegal buildings in the Roma community, i.e. in this context all necessary activities should be undertaken in order to help the population to enable conditions for legalization of their houses. Also, a very important component in this domain is the cooperation with the population in the direction of eliminating the occurrence of wild construction that applies to all newly built objects. In conditions of rain and bad weather, the land slips and causes significant material damage to some of the Roma population..

The housing problem of 25 Roma families living in the old barrack in substandard conditions has not been solved for years. The building is very old and it is in ruins, and besides that the yard is used for waste, which affects the health of the children. In this "accommodation center" there is only one tap and one toilet. Poverty, the low level of education of Roma continues to be a major problem that is interwoven with discrimination, contributes to many Roma not being able to find a job. Therefore, it is often the Roma work as manual workers, collectors of iron and plastic, as well as seasonal workers. According to data of the Employment Agency in Kocani 257 unemployed Roma in 2017 of which 87 are women. Out of the structure of unemployed, most of them have uncompleted education and elementary education which indicates low skilled labor force.

According to the analysis of CEA, during 2016 only 7 Roma were involved in some of the active measures for employment of 420 persons. According to the indications of Roma NGOs, this is primarily due to the records of active and passive job applicants, there are cases where employees of the Employment Agency suggest to Roma to report after six months. This makes Roma passive job seekers and they lose their right to be users of measures for employment. Another problem that arises in the sphere of employment is the fact that the number of Roma employed in the public sector is very small. Most often, Roma people who are employed in the public sector have primary education, most of them in water-supply enterprises (20), in hospital (3) and in court (1) at the lowest non-managerial positions.

## Recommendations

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From the analysis of the budget it can be concluded that the municipality allocates insignificant percentage of the budget for the Roma and implements infrastructure projects, most often street asphaltting. From the lessons learned so far, to address the complex issues that the Roma face, an interdisciplinary and integrative approach is needed, which implies a set of combinations of measures of social protection, education, employment and housing. The recommendations in this section will be directed at all stakeholders who contribute and work for the development of the Roma community and the socio-economic inclusion of Roma in the society.

1. Asphaltting the streets and setting up supporting walls where the Roma live.
2. As a priority of the municipality in the next period according to the submitted program is pavement of all streets, where the streets with predominantly Roma population live, and this process will be monitored to ensure that this problem will be solved.
3. Adaptation of Roma settlements for inclusion in the gasification project of the municipality. One of the announced measures is the gasification of the municipality, which should be taken into account

because of the poor infrastructure in the Roma settlements, population density and non-involvement in the DUP can prevent the gasification network to Roma settlements. Hence, a recommendation to the municipality is before the start of the project to make an adaptation for a feasibility study for the establishment of the gasification network in the Roma settlements.

4. Social housing / subsidizing the housing of the 25 Roma families accommodated in the former barrack and a set of integration measures for education and employment. It is time to resettle these families and provide social housing or subsidized housing with an array package of measures in the field of social protection, education, active employment measures.
5. Continue the process of legalization and providing loans without interest for Roma who are recipients of social protection assistance to cover the costs of legalization. This section requires campaigns and utilization of the extended deadline for legalizing illegal settlements, as well as financial support for the costs of legalization.
6. Inclusion of Roma streets and settlements in the DUP. Within these frameworks, it is necessary to expand the DUP and to include Roma neighborhoods and streets by commencing communal projects in relation to access to water and sewage networks.
7. Employment in the public sector in the municipality, adequate representation of the Roma according to the percentage of the population. It is necessary to create staff with higher education and to employ them (minimum 1) in the public administration and state-owned enterprises in managerial functions.
8. Establishing a dialogue with employers to train the Roma population. The municipality should stimulate dialogue with companies and provide opportunities for employment of Roma and social categories in relation to local community fees reduction in order to support the employment of Roma.

9. Encouraging Roma to participate more in active employment measures and stimulate entrepreneurship. The first step is to remove the requirement for an active job seeker to use the agency's measures, thus enabling all unemployed to be beneficiaries of employment measures. Hence, in each of the envisaged measures, introduce a targeted approach for a certain number of Roma to be covered by the various programs, as well as to introduce an additional measure for education, since a larger number of the Roma population has only primary education. Also, programs for the mentoring of Roma entrepreneurs and grants for starting a business should be introduced.
10. Guarantee network for increasing the skills of young Roma. Considering that the Republic of Macedonia should start with the implementation of the youth guarantee network, the municipalities should map the population and identify those who are neither in education nor employment and properly create measures that will target the qualification and additional qualification.

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# MUNICIPALITY BEROVO



## Introduction

The promotion of the position of the Roma community is a serious challenge, primarily because of the lack of sufficient jobs in the municipality, whereby persons with higher education are working in positions where secondary education is needed.

Such a phenomenon is the reason for young people to leave the municipality and seek for better opportunities in the capital Skopje or in the EU countries.

### MUNICIPALITY ID:

Municipality Berovo is located in the eastern part of the Republic of Macedonia on the border with Bulgaria. Area: 595 km<sup>2</sup>, Population: 13,941 inhabitants, population density: 23.4 inhabitants per m<sup>2</sup>, the average age of the population is 39 years and Roma: 459; Two primary schools, Center for Social Affairs, Hospital. About 15 Roma employed in the public sector, generally on a low level. positions (cleaners, utility companies), 137 Unemployed Roma, 89 Women.

Non-Roma population emigrates in a legal manner with a purchase of Bulgarian passports, Roma seek an exit through an asylum in Western European countries. More recently with the appearance of intermediary agencies for working abroad, a growing number of qualified Roma use this opportunity for a better life outside of Macedonia. Regarding the problems that the Roma community faces, within the workshop with local officials, unemployment and poverty are identified as key priorities for the municipality to focus on. Challenges are even greater taking into account the structure of the local economy as well as the future potential. In the past period, the local self-government has improved the infrastructure in Roma settlements by building streets, water supply network and retaining walls. Additionally, about 14 social apartments are allocated to Roma. Unemployment is one of the biggest problems, especially the unemployment of young people whose unemployment rate is 67%. When it comes to Roma, unemployment is about 10% (137 Unemployed). Municipal development potentials are mainly reflected in

the development of tourism, small, light and non-polluting food industry and the planned use of forest resources that can generate employment. The purpose of this policy paper is to identify the priority problems faced by the Roma community in Berovo and create recommendations to overcome them in order to involve Roma at the local level.

## Problem Analysis

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The largest part of the unemployed persons are unskilled workers (41.4%), with a secondary vocational education (26.9%), while the smallest part (9.7%) are people with higher education. The unemployment rate is 31.9%, out of 2,641 unemployed persons, 1,114 (41.6%) are women. Unemployment among the young population aged 15-24 is 67.3%. The eastern region, in which the municipality of Berovo belongs to, has a far lower unemployment rate of 17% and also the employment rate in this region is higher compared to Berovo and is 49.4%. Another characteristic of unemployment in the municipality is long-term unemployment. From the total number of unemployed people, 31.5% are waiting for employment for eight years or more. The largest part of the unemployed persons are unskilled workers (41.4%), with a secondary vocational education (26.9%), while the smallest part (9.7%) are people with higher education. According to the estimates of the local Employment Agency, the most endangered category of citizens from the aspect of employment are the persons who have completed higher education. They have the consent and interest to employ in the workplaces for which there is a lower level of education in demand and for lower paid jobs. Regarding the beneficiaries of social protection services, it is necessary to consider the possibilities for stimulating their employment through legal measures for favorable conditions and direct support (payment of contributions for a longer period of time). The demand for labor is small and can not contribute to a significant reduction in unemployment. However, the age structure is

disadvantageous (due to the large share of the older, middle-aged workforce), as well as the gender structure (the number of unemployed men is higher, and the greater the demand for female labor force)

Regarding the public sector, 14 Roma are employed, primarily in the communal services enterprise (14) and one Roma employee in the hospital. These are primarily low positions, which require only primary education.

## Recommendations

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1. The analysis shows that the municipality of Berovo faces structural problems - "crushed" local economy, which significantly limits the field of activity towards the Roma community. The municipality should primarily employ staff capacity upgrade in writing and implementing projects as well as to find suitable solutions for attracting donors and foreign investors in the municipality. The recommendations in this section will be directed at all stakeholders who contribute and work for the development of the Roma community and the socio-economic inclusion of Roma in the society.
2. Monthly Income Guaranteed Schemes. Given that social transfers are no longer efficient and motivate passive behavior, a debate has opened in Macedonia on the minimum guaranteed income for each family. According to experts, he would be given only to those people living in poverty and would be conditioned by participating in work programs or accepting the offered job. Its goal would be to extract users above the poverty line, which, according to the State Statistical Office, currently amounts to about 200 euros per household per month.
3. Build a social enterprise. In order to establish a social enterprise, it is necessary first of all to adopt the Law on Social Entrepreneurship to define the mitigating circumstances. Considering that the Berovo

municipality has the greatest potential in the field of tourism, agriculture and animal husbandry, it is ideal to consider building hotel capacities as well as processing plant for vegetables. In this way, many Roma and other social categories who are unemployed will directly benefit from the establishment of a social enterprise.

4. Development of agriculture, beekeeping and animal husbandry. Taking into account the potentials of the municipality, the Roma population should reorient towards the acquisition of skills and knowledge for cultivating a certain agricultural land. There are a number of opportunities, especially from EU funds for development of agriculture, beekeeping and animal husbandry. The municipality should stimulate it by giving state land, initial capital or a certain livestock stock for young Roma to start their own business. Appropriate mentoring by experienced people is necessary because it requires specific skills.
5. Intensification of the local economic development and greater economic exchange with the Republic of Bulgaria. Bulgaria's proximity particularly favors the municipality of Berovo due to the possibility of networking with other municipalities from Bulgaria and joint application of IPA projects for cross-border cooperation. This is especially important for the business sector, opening up new opportunities for local companies to find partners, sharing experiences, launching a joint initiative and hearing lessons on how to adapt to EU requirements in a timely manner. Additionally, opening a border crossing can also contribute to stimulating the economy.
6. Prequalification and further qualification of the workforce to meet local labor market needs. There is a need for re-qualification of Roma in the following positions related to tourism - receptionist, waiter, work with programs in order to respond to the shortage of staff in this field.

7. Stimulating entrepreneurship and accessing finance. The municipality together with the central government should stimulate the opening of new companies by creating a guarantee fund to facilitate access to finance for these firms for their further growth.

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