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National Policies towards Romani Women in the Western Balkan

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II Country Chapters (available at: <http://www.carenwb.org>)

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Croatia

Montenegro

Serbia

Introduction

Methodology

The study analyses the national policies towards Romani women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, focusing on the policies in the sectors of education, employment, health, housing, participation and gender-based violence¹.

The study scrutinises the relevant national Roma-related policies (strategies and (Decade) action plans), national gender policies (national gender strategies and action plans) and general social inclusion policies in order to identify their relevance to the situation of Romani women. Due to the ambitions of all four countries to join the European Union, the relevant documents of the European Union with regard to Romani women were further analysed. The relevant country chapters provide for an exact overview of the analysed policy documents.

The study relies on quantitative and qualitative data analysis, based on extensive desk research and the compilation of all relevant and available information on the policies towards Romani women in the four countries. In addition, interviews were conducted with government institutions responsible for Roma-related policies and gender policies, as well as with representatives of the delegations of the European Union in the four countries and with Romani women.

The purpose of the study was not to present new data on the situation of Romani women neither to analyse their actual situation nor to analyse the Roma-related policies solely from a gender perspective².

The main purpose of the study was to develop a background paper that analyses the existing policies towards Romani women and that could assist Romani women in the four countries in their advocacy activities to improve national policies towards Romani women.

Two lead questions were guiding the research process:

- How far do the policies in place respond to the actual situation of Romani women?
- How much are these policies actually implemented?

In general, Romani women policies should reflect a synthesis of Romani policies, gender policies and social inclusion policies, both at national and international level. Taking into account the extremely vulnerable position of Romani women, the actually implemented policies towards Romani women could serve as a litmus test for the reliability of these policies and show how serious governments are in promoting equality in general, but also in rectifying discrimination of Roma and Romani women in particular.

The first step in this study was to analyze the relevance to Romani women of the measures proposed or envisaged in the relevant documents at national level (laws, strategies, action plans).

¹ Throughout this study the term “Roma” is also used for other communities in the Balkans such as Ashkali and Egyptians. Both of these groups claim not to be related to Roma. Their claim, however, is disputed. However, all three groups face discrimination and the majority of their members share the same difficult living conditions.

² Neither could the study analyse all relevant sub-sectors of the policies (e.g., in education to analyse the policies in pre-school education, primary educations, secondary education, tertiary education, adult education, drop-outs, etc) nor was it possible to look into the situation of different sub-groups of Romani women and analyse their policy options (intersectionality). For a gender mainstreaming assessment see Maria-Carmen Pantea, Gender Mainstreaming in the National Action Plans for the Decade of Roma Inclusion, Bratislava December 2009; on Romani women and intersectionality see inter alia Kocze, Angela (with contributions from Raluca Maria Popa), ‘Missing Intersectionality: Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Current Research and Policies on Romani Women in Europe’, Budapest 2009, Jasminka Dedic, “Roma in European gender equality policy debates: intersectionalized and feminized” available at <http://www.quing.eu/files/WHY/dedic.pdf> (accessed 29 July 2011); Alexandra Oprea, Intersectionality Backlash: A Romani Feminist’s Response in Roma Rights 2, 2009: Multiple Discrimination available at http://www.errc.org/en-research-and-advocacy-roma-details.php?page=3&article_id=3564 (accessed 29 July 2011)

All countries have adopted Roma strategies and action plans in the framework of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (education, employment, health and housing) and gender policies and action plans. The Decade Action Plans have to consider gender as a cross-cutting issue.

In order to meet the political criteria for the accession to the European Union, the European Commission analyses the progress made, including improvement of gender equality or improvement of the situation of Roma, and proposes in close cooperation with the countries concerned, concrete activities or projects that should target the fulfilment of the political criteria. The individual country chapters will therefore also refer to the stipulations contained in documents guiding the accession process (e.g., European/Accession Partnership, Progress Reports, Multi-Annual Indicative Planning Documents (MIPD), and Annual Programmes).

In the **second step**, the study analysed briefly the respective underlying approach and the methodology of the relevant policies.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion put up requirements for the Action Plans and the emerging Roma inclusion policy of the European Union set new standards with regard to Roma-related policies. Further, the study analysed how far the Romani women-related policies are based on comprehensive, coherent and sustainable approaches, making use of methodologies such as Rights Based Approach (RBA), Programme Based Approach (PBA), Evidence-Based Approach (EBA) or Participatory Approach.

However, it was not possible to look into the institutional framework for the development, implementation and monitoring of the policies or projects addressing Romani women and if innovative mechanisms such as gender budgeting/Roma-related budgeting or gender reviews/Roma-related reviews of national budgets exists.

The findings of the research are presented in a summary document (at-hand) and in addition in more detailed country-specific papers that analyse the relevant policies, including a description of the respective situation. The country-specific papers are attached as a CD to this document and will be made available on the website of CARE NWB (<http://www.carenwb.org>) and on the websites of the four partner organisations Romani Women Association Bolje Buducnost (Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Romani Women Organisation Romsko Srce (Jagodnjak, Croatia), Centar za Romske Inicijative – CRI (Niksic, Montenegro) and Romani Women Centre Bibija (Belgrade, Serbia).

The summary document focuses on:

- General analysis of the policies and conclusions
- Relevance of the strategies/programmes and action plans
- Methodological considerations
- Summary of the National Strategies/Programmes for Roma and of the Action Plans

The analytical papers for each country chapters focus on:

- Overview on relevant data on the situation of Romani women in the six selected sectors
- Overview over the political framework in the respective countries,
- Policies/measures implemented in the countries in the six selected sectors
- Activities of the European Union in the framework of the accession process

Data on Situation of Romani Women

In order to find answers to the lead questions, it was indispensable to analyse the existing situation of Romani women, if possible in relation to Romani men or non-Romani women (gender analysis).

In all four countries nation-wide, comprehensive data on the socio-economic situation of the Roma or even Romani women do not exist. Nation-wide statistics are in general based on the census results; Roma, however, in majority do not disclose their identity in census-taking which creates a serious obstacle for the production of reliable data.

Therefore, the study when describing the current situation of Romani women made often use of the results of surveys. Many of these surveys, however, face limitations:

- Some surveys were conducted in a geographically limited area or focus on certain issues determining the socio-economic situation of Roma which could create obstacles for comparing data across countries or for assembling data sets into a common data set.
- Not all surveys produced gender-disaggregated data.
- Different surveys might produce data that do not always (absolutely) match.
- Several of the data sets were created a few years ago and in consequence of activities in the last few years, the situation might have (slightly) improved or changed in general.

However, overall one can assume that the data which were used for this study provides for an overview of the situation of Romani women in the sectors of education, employment, health, housing, participation and gender-based violence, in particular having in mind that it is not the purpose of the study to present (again) the extremely vulnerable position of Romani women in these four countries, but to analyse the existing policies that should address their situation by making use of existing data describing their situation.

Remarks

The research was conducted in the framework of a three-year regional project "Roma Women Empowerment Regional Project" and was realised through a grant of the Telethon Fund (CARE Norway).

The research was conducted from January 2011 through July 2011. The availability of data and of policy documents varied from country to country. Therefore, one country chapter can be more detailed than the other.

The following organisations assisted the author in the research: Bolja Buducnost (Tuzla/Bosnia and Herzegovina), Romsko Srce (Jagodnjak/Croatia), Centar za Romske Inicijative (Niksic/Montenegro) and Bibija (Belgrade/Serbia).

The author is very thankful for the assistance of these organisations and owes his thank to the interlocutors, however, bears the full responsibility for any omission of important documents or their misinterpretation.

International Policy Context

The year of 2011 saw important developments with regard to the creation of the European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies and the adoption of two relevant documents.

- European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, COM (2011) 173 final, Brussels 5. April 2011
- Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, 3089th Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting Brussels, 19 May 2011 The European Commission adopted this framework and calls upon its Member States to adopt national strategies and/or action plans.

With regard to the accession countries the relevant Communication from the Commission states that “the EU Roma integration goals are equally relevant to these countries. Their national Roma integration strategies and Action Plans (developed in most cases in the framework of the 2005-2015 Decade of Roma Inclusion) should be reviewed in line with these goals.”³

The Communication on the EU framework also received criticism that “substantive proposals concerning the principle of gender equity and effective measures to address the multiple discrimination faced by Romani women are absent from the Communication”.⁴

While the Communication neglected the gender perspective, the “Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 of 19 May 2011” stress that “special attention should be paid to the interests and difficulties of Roma women and girls, who face the risk of multiple discrimination, and thus a gender perspective needs to be applied in all policies and actions for advancing Roma inclusion”.⁵

Already one of the 10 Common Basic Principles on Roma Inclusion which were presented at the first European Roma Platform meeting on 24 April 2009 referred to Romani women “Principle 5) awareness of the gender dimension”.⁶

All four countries participate in the Decade of Roma Inclusion and had to develop action plans in the sectors education, employment, health and housing with the cross-cutting issues gender equality, anti-discrimination and anti-poverty.

The International Steering Committee of the Decade of Roma Inclusion adopted in its session on 28 June 2011 in Prague a pledge that includes *inter alia*:

“We will update and further develop our Decade National Action Plans to meet the Council conclusions’ invitation for states to develop a fully comprehensive approach to Roma inclusion. We will set achievable national goals in the priority areas of education, employment, healthcare and housing;

3 European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, COM (2011) 173 final, Brussels 5. April 2011 available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf (accessed 29 July)

4 Bernard Rorke, An EU Framework for Roma Integration by 2020: A New Departure or Much Ado about Nothing? Available at http://www.romadecade.org/much_ado (accessed 29 July 2011)

5 Council of the European Union, Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020, 3089th Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council meeting Brussels, 19 May 2011 available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lsa/122100.pdf (accessed 29 July 2011)

6 The Ten Common Basic Principles are available at <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=761&langId=en> (accessed 29 July 2011)

we will put in place monitoring mechanisms to measure and report annually on progress made; and we will make existing EU funds more accessible for Roma inclusion projects so that they effectively “address new needs, simplify delivery and speed up the implementation of priorities”.⁷

Though the pledge, unfortunately, does not refer to the gender perspective of the action plans, it creates, in combination with the request stemming from the new EU Framework Policy to review existing strategies and action plans, a general opportunity to “update and develop” the national policies towards Romani women.

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Policy-making has to be based on evidence and has to address

- the socio-economic situation of the women: primarily through activities in the four Decade sectors education, employment, health and housing;
- the attitude of the majority population: involvement of majority population in common activities, provision of adequate information to majority, beneficiaries from majority community in activities but also participation of Roma in public and political life and Romani role models to tackle prejudices, etc;
- the attitude and policy of the authorities at central and local level: existence of a comprehensive and integrated policy, accountability, stronger involvement of local authorities in planning and implementation of activities in particular to close the gap between the “wishful thinking” planning of central authorities and the resistance of local authorities to implement bottom-down projects, etc;
- traditions and attitudes within the Romani communities: in particular the patriarchal understanding of roles of men and women, but also of the value of formal education and employment for girls and women.

Some might argue that the change of the socio-economic situation will lead to a change in the other three determinants too and that it would be sufficient to focus on them. However, the four determinants are all interrelated and, e.g., addressing the traditions and attitudes within the Romani communities in terms of women and girls finishing higher education in particular and of the role of women in general, would change the other three determinants.

In other words, a comprehensive and integrated policy approach addressing all features of the situation of Romani women and all determinants would be necessary. Having in mind the severity of the disadvantaged position of Romani women, the lack of financial resources in the four countries and the danger that focusing on Romani women could create tensions with the majority population, a long-term perspective is necessary and only a gradual improvement of the situation is realistic.

The policies should also take into account good practices from other countries and facilitate an exchange and evaluation process that would allow for applying successful approaches that are tailor made for a specific country situation.

⁷ Decade of Roma Inclusion Endorsement Pledge to Support the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 available at http://www.romadecade.org/20th_isc_meeting_eu_roma_framework_pledge (accessed 4 July 2011)

⁸ Montenegro is currently in the process of drafting a new Roma Strategy and a Romani Women Action Plan. While the new strategy is developed under the leadership of the government with assistance of Romani civil society, is the Romani Women Action Plan developed under the leadership of Romani women organisations with assistance of government institutions. Both documents should be finalised in 2011.

I Policies towards Romani Women in the Western Balkan

1. General Analysis and Conclusions

1.1. Roma-Related Policies

The national strategies or programmes for the inclusion of Roma should constitute a larger political framework for the Roma-related policy in a given country while the action plans should reflect what the country envisages to implement with regard to Roma in the given sectors in a given period of time. However, policies towards Roma are also determined by general national social inclusion policies and policies towards Romani women by the national policies for gender equality.

The main focus of this analysis is on the Roma-related inclusion policies. In light of the complexity and severity of the problems Roma face, Roma-related policies have to be comprehensive and integrated. The position of Roma has to be improved in all spheres of life and the interrelation of the policies in the different sectors has to be taken into account.

The National Strategies and Programmes for Roma were primarily developed in the framework of the accession process to the European Union since it was understood that their development constitutes a requirement of the European Union.

The development of the action plans were primarily initiated by the Decade of Roma Inclusion, since participation in the Decade required the development of action plans in education, employment, health and housing with the cross-cutting issues gender, anti-discrimination and anti-poverty.

The action plans should include clearly defined goals with measures/activities designed to achieve these goals, (SMART) indicators allowing the measurement of the progress made, the time-frame for the implementation, the implementing authority/institution and the budget needed for the implementation of the measures in order to achieve the goals.

Although the action plans for Roma inclusion differ very much in substance and methodology from country to country, a few common features characterise them:

- (i) The action plans reflect rather a collection of possible interventions – being partly very impressive in the volume – than a comprehensive or integrated policy approach;
- (ii) The amount of proposed measures makes it impossible to implement the action plans in total in the given time-frames;
- (iii) The financial resources for their implementation are not available;
- (iv) Many action plans were not developed with due diligence and are weak from a methodological perspective;

This leads to a situation in which on the one hand it is impossible to implement the given action plans and on the other hand gives governments the “free choice” to select some of the interventions proposed in the action plans or to “justify” interventions with similar proposals in the action plans without actually implementing a comprehensive policy based on the policy documents.

The multiple discrimination towards Romani women compounds the complexity and severity of the situation of Roma in general and would in consequence require a specific policy focus in the

framework of a comprehensive and integrated Roma-related policy or at least the consideration of gender as a cross-cutting issue as required by the Decade of Roma Inclusion. From the gender perspective the following issues are important:

- (i) Gender is not always considered adequately as a cross-cutting issue;
- (ii) Romani women are often not considered as a target group in the strategies/programmes and action plans (even when a specific problem affects them in particular such as drop-outs from school);
- (iii) Gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators either do not exist at all or are not appropriate or the activities of the action plans that include gender-sensitive indicators are not implemented (e.g., with regard to education in Serbia).
- (iv) A cursory analysis of available project fiches (IPA projects) reveals a similar tendency that Romani women are not explicitly defined as a target group and/or that indicators are neither gender-disaggregated nor gender-sensitive
- (v) Issues that specifically concern women are not appropriately addressed in the policy documents (e.g., gender-based violence)
- (vi) Even if they are mentioned as a target group, there is no guarantee that these activities are actually implemented.

Yet only Serbia developed an Action Plan on the Status of (Romani) Women and only the Serbian National Strategy for Improving the Position of Roma contains a chapter on women. Montenegro is currently developing an Action Plan for Romani Women while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia did not develop specific policies or action plans for Romani women.

The laudable efforts of Serbia however, created further problems: (i) the measures proposed in the Action Plan on the Status of (Romani) Women do not necessarily match the measures proposed in the "mainstream Roma action plans"; (ii) the amount of (necessary) measures proposed makes it even more unlikely that they will be all implemented.

The first will be briefly illustrated by the issue of participation: There prevails a lack of an adequate inclusion of Romani women into the general proposed measures for improving the participation and representation of Romani women. The main requests regarding the participation and representation of Romani women remain within the Action Plan on Women and are not transferred into the relevant Romani mainstream Action Plans (political participation and representation, housing).

The analysis supports the impression that, in general, Roma-related policies are rather a collection of several measures than the basis of a policy. It seems that the strategies and action plans have been more developed to meet the requirements of the European Commission and of initiatives such as the Decade of Roma Inclusion than to serve as documents guiding a policy towards Roma. Through the existence of these policy documents the formal requests of the EU or the Decade of Roma Inclusion are fulfilled. However, these documents have to be implemented too; a request which is regularly brought forward by the European Commission in its Progress Reports.

The research focused on policies towards Romani women and two lead questions were guiding the research: (i) how far do the policies in place respond to the actual situation of Romani women and (ii) how much are these policies actually implemented?

Another, “collateral” question appeared during the research: is there any policy towards Romani women implemented at all?

Looking at the Roma-related policy documents, it remains questionable, if all of the four countries follow a comprehensive policy with clear cut goals and indicators which intends to achieve a measurable and sustainable improvement of the situation of Romani women.

No doubt there are projects that include Romani women and girls, no doubt that Romani women could benefit from activities, no doubt that the number of Romani girls enrolling in secondary schools and universities increased and that Romani women received (vocational) training and were included in further active labour market measures, no doubt that the situation of Romani women is now more in the focus of national gender institutions and women representatives.

On paper, the policies address most of the issues relevant for the situation of Romani women, but primarily in a more general form without defining adequately and consequently Romani women as target groups and the change of their situation as indicators. The respective Action Plans on Employment could serve as good examples:

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** the chapter on Employment of the Strategy does not include any reference to Romani women while the Action Plan on Employment containing five objectives and 42 measures, proposes two measures under Objective II for Romani women. The employment-relevant sectors of the Gender Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2006) do not refer to Romani women. The National Employment Strategy 2010 – 2014 refers to Roma as a vulnerable group, but does not include any goals, priorities or measures referring explicitly to Roma or Romani women.

The chapter on Employment of the National Programme of **Croatia** includes one activity that includes Romani women (training programmes especially for young people and women); an activity which is also included in the overall Action Plan (2005-2015). The Action Plan does not provide for any gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators. The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 proposes “an analysis and plan for employment of Roma women” that should have been implemented in 2006/2007. The National Plan for the Promotion of Employment 2011-2012 contains both, a goal specifically referring to women that include Romani women as a target group and several measures specifically targeting Roma. The “implementation indicators” of the activities targeting Roma ask for “number and gender of persons belonging to the Roma national minority” who have participated in the activities.

The Strategy of **Montenegro** recommends on a total of ten measures with regard to employment; one of the envisaged measures requests special attention to be given to the training of Romani women. Measures promoting employment or self-employment do not refer to Romani women. The Action Plan on Employment intends to achieve four goals. Neither the goals nor activities nor the indicators refer to or include Romani women. Only one measure (organisation of campaigns for equal opportunities) of the employment component of the Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012) refers to Romani women. The Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion Strategy proposes a couple of measures which focus on active labour market measures for Roma, however, without referring to Romani women.

The Strategy of **Serbia** contains recommendations on the inclusion of Romani women in employment programmes. Both Action Plans on Employment and on Status of Women promote affirmative measures aiming at increasing the number of employed Romani women (public and private sector), increasing the number self-employed Romani women and improv-

ing the employability of Romani women. The Action Plan on Employment refers in several of its nine goals explicitly to Romani women. Several of the envisaged 25 measures and activities to achieve the goals as well as some indicators are gender-sensitive and mention explicitly women. The Action Plan is very ambitious with aiming at the implementation of all the 25 activities within the time-frame of 2009-2011. The Action Plan on the Status of Women contains one goal referring to employment and two main activities, targeting the “introduction of affirmative measures in the process of employment” and “creating opportunities for self-employment”.

The National Employment Strategy 2005 – 2010 identifies Roma as one of the most vulnerable groups, however does not mention Romani women. The National Employment Action Plan 2010 identifies Roma as a specific target group and determines the need of increased participation of Roma in active employment measures as one of the priorities for 2011 and 2012. The chapter on the “economic position of women” of the National Gender Strategy contains the specific objective “reduce the economic inequalities that appear as a consequence of multiple discrimination” that refers inter alia to Romani women.

It stipulates to prepare special programs “in other state strategies and plans” and recommends to introducing measures such as employment programmes, facilitation of access to credits, training on entrepreneurship, training programmes for Romani women.

When it comes to issues specifically important for Romani women (or more important than for Romani men) such as drop-out of girls, gender-based violence, access to property titles, etc, the policies in place do even less “respond to the actual situation of Romani women”. More details can be found in chapter 3) Relevance of the Strategies/Programmes and Action Plans. Chapter 3) Relevance of the Strategies/Programmes and Action Plans provide also answers to the second lead question “How much are these policies actually implemented?”

Most of the policy documents are too ambitious that they could be fully implemented. The lack of finances prevents the full implementation (e.g., currently the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina provides annually € 1 million for the implementation of the Action Plan on Housing; however, all measures of the Action Plan would require more than € 216 million, which means that it would take 216 years for it to be implemented at the current pace and without external donors. Other action plans require the implementation of all measures mentioned in a short period of time which is actually impossible (e.g., the education-related components of the Serbian Action Plan on Status of Women).

Consequently, across the countries many of the proposed measures remained unimplemented, even basic measures that were proposed such as researches and base-line surveys.

On the other hand, some measures that had been not foreseen in the Roma-related policy documents were implemented – as it is the case with the active labour market measures in Croatia.

An important feature determining the success of any policies towards Romani women lies not directly within the competencies of the authorities: the attitude of the majority of Romani men towards Romani women and girls. In many communities they still reject a “public role” of women, or do not accept that their wives and daughters work or that their daughters remain in schools after they entered puberty.

The authorities seem to be reluctant to implement the policies consequently. With regard to school attendance and/or drop-outs the relevant authorities play an important role. According to the majority of the interlocutors across all four countries, school authorities are “less tolerant” with non-Romani children and parents when enforcing school attendance, meaning school

authorities should put more pressure on Romani parents to send their children to school just as they do it with non-Romani parents.

Another serious problem which has to be addressed is gender-based violence within Romani families and the attitude of the institutions (police, Social Work Offices, etc). According to the interlocutors a similar pattern prevails with regard to the authorities as with school attendance. The authorities are more “tolerant” when it comes to gender based violence in Romani communities/families than in non-Romani communities/families. Authorities seem still to consider this often as part of a “Romani culture or tradition”.

The lack of comprehensive and nation-wide data is always quoted as an obstacle for monitoring and evaluating Roma-related policies. This could partly be overcome by making use of gender-disaggregated data gained through the existing monitoring and evaluation processes of projects and/or programmes currently implemented (see as an example the activities in the employment sector in Croatia and Serbia). This data could be used as baseline for setting new indicators that could demonstrate progress made or the lack thereof.

With regard to provided data, it is also important to look into both the absolute numbers and the percentages of Romani women who are beneficiaries, e.g., women constituted 50% of the beneficiaries in Croatia that participating in the measure “Co-financing employment for 24 months” – the positive impression might be shattered when being aware that the total number is two women.

The number of Roma enrolled in secondary education in Montenegro might serve as another example: from 2005 to 2010 Montenegro saw an increase of more than 800% which means that in 2010 57 Roma attend secondary schools while in 2005 there were only seven. In addition, the number of university students increased from zero to eight students. This means that the government achieved the goal of the Action Plan: (i) “increase the number of Roma children who successfully attend and complete high school (vocational and general)”.

In many spheres, the four countries made considerable progress, even if this progress didn’t translate yet into an overall improvement of the situation of the Roma or of Romani women. Though the employment policies in Serbia and Croatia did not bring a large number of Romani women into employment yet, they could serve as good practices. They identify Romani women as target groups and apply gender-sensitive indicators and increased the number of Romani women participating in general in active labour market measures.

In Serbia, in the year 2010, 8840 Romani women were beneficiaries of these measures while in 2009, 5306 women participated; this constitutes an increase of 66.6% in the first 10 months of 2010 compared to 2009. The comparison of the available data for 2009 and 2010 demonstrates considerable increases in the number of Romani women participating in training and/or counselling for entrepreneurship (2009: 130; 2010: 302) or for whom individual employment plans were developed (2009: 2351; 2010: 5398), but also a decrease of the already low number of Romani women finding subsidised employment (2009: 52; 2010: 18).

Further good practice could be identified in Montenegro. While the previous policy documents were developed without Romani women, they are now included in the development process and took the lead in developing in cooperation with the government an Action Plan for Romani women. The government further showed its interest in employing Romani women within the central government and in local administration.

The bi-annual update of the Action Plans in Croatia could also serve as a good practice for

other countries.

All Roma-related policy documents have room to improvements – the new European Framework for National Roma Policies opens up the opportunity to integrate improvements and good practices and develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable policy towards Romani women.

1.2. Gender Policies

A short summary of reflections on the national gender policies in the four countries:

All four countries adopted national strategies/policies and or action plans promoting gender inclusion that refer in different ways to Romani women. Some of the policies propose specific measures targeting explicitly Romani women while other policies refer to “multiple discriminated groups” that amongst others include Romani women. In addition, the indicators – if available – are also general and hardly refer to Romani women directly.

The Gender Equality Strategy of Serbia identified more than a dozen different groups (refugee women, women from rural areas, older women and several other groups together with Romani women) as “multiple discriminated groups” though they face specific problems and would need different approaches and measures to address their problems.

Due to lobbying of the Romani women organisation Bibija, a Romani woman became a member of the Gender Equality Council of the Government of the Republic of Serbia while members of the Roma Women Network are lobbying for Roma participation in the local gender equality councils.

The two organisations “Women Space” and “Bibija” are advocating the development of the local action plans for Romani women, including the active participation of Romani women in the development of those documents.

Further, it seems that in some cases at least the gender strategies and/or action plans were designed for women of the majority population. The proposed measures address their problems and in case Romani women experience similar problems, measures are proposed that should include or target Romani women.

Looking at the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 of the Republic of Croatia, it does not propose any measures with regard to health and housing – important issues for Romani women. The document only mentions that the “implementation of measures of the National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for “Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” will be systematically monitored, to improve living conditions and social integration of Roma women”.

The 2010 CEDAW Alternative Report provides for a negative assessment of the gender policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It concludes that “public policies adopted by BiH in the field of gender equality and protecting women’s human rights neither recognize the problems and needs of Roma women, nor provide for special measures aimed at prevention and elimination of double discrimination that Roma women are subjected to”.

Regarding employment, the Action Plan on the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012) contains only one measure (organisation of campaigns for equal opportunities) that refers to Romani women while the Gender Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina does

not refer to Romani women in the sections on employment at all.

2. Recommendations

Recommendations for Policy Making

- The governments should regularly (bi-annually) review and revise their policy documents
- The governments should adhere to the proposal of the European Commission to review their Roma-related policies in light of the new European Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies
- The governments and the civil societies should make use of this momentum and introduce a review process that is fully participatory, i.e., involving Romani women
- The governments, in close cooperation with the civil society, should take the lead in the process of reviewing the policies and guarantee the inclusion of a stronger gender perspective in the policy documents
- The governments have to assume the responsibility for an adequate implementation which would require sufficient financial resources and institutions with sufficient leverage within the government to guide and coordinate the implementation
- The governments should activate more efficiently external donors for Romani women-related policies.
- The “new policies” should be based on a rights-based and programme based approach
- The review should rectify the contradictions and omissions in the current documents
- The governments should recognise the need in some areas for gender-specific interventions focussing on girls/women (targeted projects)
- Within the framework of the Roma-related policies, Romani women should either be mainstreamed in the measures or constitute specific target groups – in both cases it would be indispensable to introduce gender-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators
- The newly created policies should be realistic with goals that actually could be achieved and measures that could be implemented in the given time-frame
- These policies should reflect a comprehensive and integrated policy and serve as the basis and the guide for the measures to be implemented and should not be reduced to a pool of potential measures from which governments chose “randomly” a few measures
- Further, governments and civil society should also scrutinise the existing gender policies in order to identify, if they consider appropriately the situation of Romani women
- Governments and civil society should jointly address the phenomenon of gender-based violence against Romani women
- Governments should conduct or encourage and support civil society in conducting comprehensive base-line surveys on specific features of the situation of Romani women
- Governments and civil society with the assistance of international donors should promote the participation of Romani women in decision-making structures and in public administration

3. Relevance of the Strategies/Programmes and Action Plans

The relevance of the National Strategies/Programmes and of the Action Plans can be discussed from two perspectives:

- (i) the relevance of the documents to the actually implemented policies or measures;
- (ii) the relevance of the documents to the actual situation of Romani women

3.1. Relevance of the Documents to the Actually Implemented Policies or Measures

Relevance of the policy documents to the actually implemented policies and measures could be analysed from the perspective, if the proposed measures are actually implemented and from the perspective, if the implemented policies and measures were actually foreseen in the policy document.

The Action Plans for Bosnia and Herzegovina provide for an "example" for the impossibility to implement the given Action Plans from a financial perspective: The proposed measures of the Action Plan on Employment (2008) would require a budget of BAM 170 million (ca. € 85 million). In the years 2009 and 2010, BAM 702.000 (ca. € 350.000) each were allocated from the state budget for active employment measures.

The measures of the Action Plan on Health (2008) would require a budget of BAM 34.700 million (ca. € 17.350 million). In 2010, € 100.000 was allocated from the state budget for the implementation of health-related activities.

The budget provisions mentioned in the Action Plan on Housing (2008) amount to BAM 433.550 million (ca. € 216.775.000). In the years 2009 and 2010, the government allocated from the state budget € 1 million each for housing.⁹

Bosnia and Herzegovina is not in a position to finance the Action Plans from the state budget and calculated therefore that 30% of the financial resources for the implementation of the Action Plans for Roma should come from external resources. However, the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has then to activate external resources more efficiently and, e.g., develop in cooperation with the European Commission projects addressing the situation of Roma (and Romani women) on the labour market or in the education system as well in all other sectors.

The Action Plan on the Status of Women of the Republic of Serbia might serve as an example for the difficulties to actually implement the measures and to meet the indicators.

The Action Plan provides for very detailed activities with regard to women and girls in education and for gender-disaggregated data. However, the time-frame for the implementation of the Action Plan is 2009-2011 and yet hardly any of the proposed measure and activities has been implemented.

9 Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report 2010, Sarajevo 2011

| Measure 9.9: Support to educational programmes and teaching Roma women to read and write | |
|---|--|
| 9.9.1. Introduction of affirmative measures for permanent education of Roma women | |
| Activities of the Action Plan | |
| Providing mechanisms for monitoring regular class attendance and drop-out rates for girls during school education | |
| Introduction of affirmative measures by providing a quota for Romani women in SE and PSUE* | |
| Providing scholarships and loans to Roma women | |
| Promoting positive models of Roma women in a wider community, through media, publishing, and teaching programmes | |
| Providing monitoring and support programmes to girls and young women in the education process through psychological/social support in schools, with active participation of professional services | |
| Development of special support measures for girls with special needs | |
| Development and organisation of abbreviated education programmes for primary schools and crafts for girls who are too old for primary schools, but younger than 15 | |
| Support to young mothers who continue their school education through free kindergartens and possibility of attending summarized education programmes | |

*SE: secondary education; PSUE: post secondary university education

The Action Plan provides for the following relevant indicators:

- (i) Number of Roma women with completed school: primary education is completed by 100% of the enrolled, secondary education is completed by 20% of those with primary education, higher education - 30 places annually at the universities in Serbia, 10 at each university each year;
- (ii) Number of girls subject to the monitoring and support programme in schools;
- (iii) Number of girls with special needs who are included in support programmes;
- (iv) Number of young mothers and women who continue and complete education.

Though there were no targeted measures, Romani girls could participate in general measures, but since gender-disaggregated data are available, it is difficult to track down their inclusion.

The Action Plan clearly identifies Romani women as a target group and provides for gender-sensitive indicators and could have served as a good practice, if these measures would have been implemented and if the indicators and the time-frame of 2009 – 2011 would have been realistic.

Ambitious indicators such as “100% of the enrolled girls complete primary education” and “20% of the girls with primary education complete secondary education” can not be met in such a short period of time.

The Action Plan focuses strongly on primary education and on different forms of adult education which is important in light of the low level of education.

Although the Action Plan above recommends the introduction of quota for girls and women in secondary and post-secondary university education and aims at 20% of the girls with primary education completing secondary education, it does not recommend on any immediate activities on how to increase the number of Romani girls in secondary and tertiary education (the provision of scholarships could contribute to such an increase). The Action Plan proposes a quota for Romani girls in secondary and tertiary education, but the quota will not tackle the underlying causes for the extremely low number of girls enrolling and finishing secondary schools.

The proposed activity “education of parents in the need for educating female children” refers explicitly to “acquiring primary education” as well as the activity “establishing mechanisms of supervision to ensure equal share of female children in preschool and primary school programmes”.

On the other hand, one can identify measures (with relevant gender-sensitive indicators) which were not proposed in the policy documents. Obviously, the policy documents such as the national strategies/programmes and action plans were not always used for the development of actual activities and the implementation of a policy for Romani women.

The **National Programme and Action Plan on Employment in Croatia** constitutes a good example: The chapter on Employment of the Strategy and the overall Action Plan (2005-2015) request training programmes in particular for young people and women; the overall Action Plan does not provide for any gender-disaggregated indicators while the Action Plan for Employment 2011-2012 provides only for certain activities gender-disaggregated indicators; in particular the measures targeting employment (and not training or counselling) do not provide for gender-disaggregated data.

In fact, Romani women were targeted in several employment-related activities and not only included in training programmes and the 2010 Progress Report on the Implementation of the Decade further reveals the existence of gender-disaggregated data.

The **National Plan for the Promotion of Employment 2011-2012** contains both a goal specifically referring to women that include Romani women as a target group and measures specifically targeting Roma. The “implementation indicators” of the activities targeting Roma ask for “number and gender of persons belonging to the Roma national minority” who have participated in the activities.

3.2. Methodological Considerations to the National Strategies/Programmes and Action Plans

The brief analysis will provide general comments to the approaches applied, including the consistency of the methodologies, but will not refer to the consideration of gender theories for the development of the policy documents.¹⁰

The new European Framework for National Roma Policies and previous documents such as the 10 Common Basic Principles recommend a policy approach that allows for both targeting and mainstreaming measures and that follows an evidence-based policy making approach. From a methodological point of view, the Strategies/Programmes and the Action Plans differ

¹⁰ For a general discussion of the Decade Action Plans from a gender perspective see: Maria-Carmen Pantea, Gender Mainstreaming in the National Action Plans for the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2009)

considerably. Most of the policy documents do not explicitly spell out the parallel process of targeting and mainstreaming in general; when it comes to Romani women the policy documents (with the exception of Serbia) do hardly include measures explicitly targeting Romani women. The omission of specifying Romani women as a target group is continued with regard to the indicators that are seldom gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive.

In general all strategies and action plans were developed in a participatory approach, involving Romani representatives; however, not all were developed with the participation of Romani women, e.g., the previous Strategy and the Decade Action Plans in Montenegro were developed without the participation of Romani women. However, the expert group for the development of the new Strategy includes a Romani woman while the new Action Plan for Romani women is developed under the leadership of Romani women.

The National Strategy and the Action Plans of Serbia follow a rights-based approach and were developed in participatory approach, involving also female Romani representatives, which also led to the inclusion of a chapter on Romani women into the Strategy and the development of an Action Plan on the Status of Women.

The lack of reliable and comprehensive, nation-wide data makes it, in general, difficult to base the policy documents on evidence. As long as large parts of the Roma (and Romani women) do not disclose their ethnicities in census-takings, studies and surveys have to be used for "determining evidence" which, however, has been hardly done with regard to Romani women. And in cases, when the policy documents proposed the conduct of studies and surveys, they haven't been conducted.

Several times, strategies and the action plans for their implementation are not compliant, i.e. measures proposed in the one document do not appear in the other document; this is also sometimes the case with gender-specific activities for Romani women. In many cases, it is unrealistic to expect that all of the measures/activities mentioned are implemented in the given time-frame, even if a budget for its implementation would be available.

Further, the action plans are not always fully in line with methodological requirements. Goals or indicators are actually activities or measures, activities or measures are actually indicators, indicators are too general, time-frames are too general or unrealistic, budget allocations are missing, or indicators are not clearly linked to the measures or indicators.

A comparison of the Croatian overall Action Plan on Health with the bi-annual Action Plan on Health 2011-2012 might serve as an example for inconsistencies: The overall Action Plan on Health contains five goals, which are taken up by the Action Plan on Health 2011-2012, however, are now called measures (sic!).

The Serbian Action Plan on Women provides for indicators, but they are not clearly linked to the respective measures or indicators do not exist for all measures.

Looking at the methodology of the action plans from a gender perspective, things get even worse. Women are very seldom identified as target groups, even when a specific problem affects them in particular (e.g., drop-outs from school) and gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators are seldom provided.

Two examples might serve as an illustration:

Serbia: Strategy and Action Plan on Education: The Strategy refers to the prevention of drop-

outs of girls in pre-school and primary education. The Action Plan on Education refers explicitly to girls only at one occasion when proposing an activity to overcome traditional gender roles in looking for jobs with a gender-disaggregated indicator. In total, the Action Plan proposes more than 100 activities. It does not include any gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators. The Action Plan on the Status of Women contains seventeen activities aiming at improved participation of Romani girls in the education system with relevant indicators. However, indicators are either missing or do not fully refer to activities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Strategy and Action Plan on Employment: The chapter on Employment of the Strategy does not include any reference to Romani women. Out of 42 measures proposed in the Action Plan, two include Romani women as a target group and only one indicator asks for gender-disaggregated data.

3.3. Relevance of the Documents to the Actual Situation of Romani Women

In the following chapter, examples from the six selected sectors (education, employment, health, housing, participation and gender-based violence) that are particular important for Romani women shall demonstrate the relevance of the policy documents to the situation of Romani women. In two sectors (employment and gender-based violence) the policy documents were analysed more in general while in other sectors issues have been identified – either by the Romani women partner organisations or during the research – that are of particular importance for Romani women.

The brief overview will demonstrate how the respective Roma-related strategies/national programmes and action plans as well as gender policies (with regard to gender-based violence) deal (or not deal) with these issues.

One general weakness with regard to the relevance of the existing policies to the actual situation lies in the fact that most countries focus their Action Plans on the four Decade priority sectors which could lead to the exclusion of important issues such as participation of Romani women or gender based violence. Gender-based violence is not consequently addressed in the policy documents and if, the proposed measures focus more on working with victims than on preventing the occurrence of gender-based violence within Romani communities. A similar situation prevails with the phenomenon of trafficking of Romani girls and women that, despite differences among the countries, is not adequately addressed by the policy documents.

Another issue not appropriately addressed in the policy documents is working with Romani men in order to improve the situation of Romani women in relation to education, employment or gender-based violence. In this regard one might conclude that Romani policy documents are written for men while gender strategies are written for women belonging to the majority population.

The statement within the chapter “demographic and population policy, domestic matters, gender equality and children’s rights” of the Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the “high birth rate” of Romani women deserves a specific remark. Instead of focusing on increasing the participation of Romani women in education or in the labour market, it puts the high birth rate among Roma into the centre of attention. It might be worth quoting the UN Populations Fund: “When a girl in the developing world receives seven or more years of education, she marries four years later and has 2.2 fewer children” (United Nations Population Fund, State of World Population 1990).

3.3.1. Education: Drop-out of girls from schools

"The attendance rate is lowest in the first grade. The maximum is reached between the ages of 8 and 10, and after that, a serious drop is visible at the age of 11 with girls, and at the age of 12 with boys."¹¹

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Strategy recognises the problem of drop-outs ("moreover, the number of Roma children who start primary school and drop out is not at all small"), however, without referring to girls.

The revised Action Plan on Education stipulates the inclusion of both gender into preschool, primary and secondary schools, but does not provide for any indicators. Neither does the revised Action Plan refer to drop-outs in general or of girls in particular.

The framework document of Bosnia and Herzegovina for promoting education, "Strategic directions for the development of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2008-2015" refers a few times to Roma, however, not to Romani girls or women and to the phenomenon of drop-outs.

Croatia

Croatia made considerable progress in increasing the number of Romani girls and boys in the education system.

The chapter on education of the National Programme for Roma does not make any reference to Romani women or girls.

Croatia developed an Action Plan for the Decade period (overall Action Plan) and in addition, it develops action plans covering one or two years. The latest Action Plan covers the period 2011/2012.

In most of the sections, the overall Action Plan on Education refers to women (e.g., within goals: "increase the number of Roma students (male and female)" or the indicators mention: "number of Roma students (male and female)"), however not consistently. Goal 4 of Primary Education refers to drop-outs from primary schools, however, does not propose gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators, though, in general, in particular Romani girls drop out of schools.

The 2011/2012 Action Plan outlines in the narrative part the priorities for 2011/2012, which however, do not include activities targeting dropping-out from school. Neither does the Action Plan itself refer to the issue of drop-outs at all.

Montenegro

A research of the Centre of Roma Initiatives (CRI) in 2009, found out that 50% of the Roma drop out of schools. 52.6% of the children between six and fifteen years were not going to school. The data of some individual schools in Berane, Niksic and Podgorica demonstrate that in particular girls leave schools early.¹²

An UNDP report from 2006 confirms the high drop-out rate among Roma and nearly half of the Romani respondents attributed leaving school to poverty, as opposed to only 3% of the

11 UNICEF, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Belgrade 2005

12 See the leaflet Centar za Romske Inicijative Niksic, Ja imam pravo, hocu u skolu!

majority population.¹³

According to the 2009 research of the Statistical Office of Montenegro 47.21% of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians in the age of 15 and older, did not complete primary school. The percentage among Romani women is however, by far higher than among Romani men: 59.87% - 34.93%.¹⁴

The Action Plan on Education consists of an “explanatory part” and the actual action plan. The Action Plan intends to achieve ten goals with a couple of activities. According to the explanatory part, the Action Plan intends to achieve within the framework of Goal 2, Goal 3 and Goal 4 to “foster motivation for education” which should be reached inter alia through activities such as the acquisition of general knowledge, including education on women’s rights, and to developing “programs for preventing girls’ dropout from school”.

The explanatory part to Goal 6 refers again to drop-outs by proposing the design of programs for working with groups with specific needs (e.g., girls dropping out of school to get married)”. However, the actual Action Plan on Education (and not the explanatory note) does not mention these activities anymore and does not refer to girls or women at all, nor does it provide for any gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators.

Serbia

According to statistics of the Ministry of Education, 5,997 children or 7% of the total pupil number dropped out from primary schools in the period of 2000 – 2008. It is estimated that Romani children represent the majority of those children.¹⁵ Further, it is estimated that 30-40% of enrolled children do not make it to the 5th grade of primary school and 60-80% of children do not complete primary school.¹⁶

The high illiteracy rates could also serve as an indirect indicator for drop-outs, however the available surveys provide for conflicting data (between ca. 50% of the Romani women in the age between 15 and 24 and 80% among Romani women at all are literate).¹⁷

Many reasons are identified for high dropout rate amongst Roma children; the most common are discrimination from peers and teachers, poverty and lack of awareness of the value of education amongst Roma parents. Socio-cultural phenomena prevalent in Romani communities such as early marriages (and/or arranged marriages) and that girls do not decide on their own future contribute to the high number of drop-outs among girls. 12% of the Romani women from Roma settlements got married before the age of 15 (only 1% among women of the overall population).¹⁸

The Strategy refers, among the priorities, to the drop-outs of girls (“promoting the education of girls, especially those that abandoned education or dropped out of the system for other reasons”), however, only with regard to pre-school and primary education.

The Action Plan on Education mentions with regard to the measures “monitoring the quality of children’s knowledge” and “monitoring school performance of children in PSIs, EE and SE”, dropout rate as an indicator. However, neither the measures, the related proposed activities nor the indicator are gender-sensitive.

13 UNDP, Roma and Displaced (2006); data sets available at <http://vulnerability.undp.sk/> (accessed 11 April 2011)

14 Crna Gora Zavod za Statistiku, Baza podataka RAE populacije u Crnoj Gori, Podgorica 2009

15 Government of Serbia, Decade of Roma Inclusion, Progress Report 2010, Belgrade 2011

16 MDG Report (2006)

17 UNICEF, MISC (2005); UNDP Serbia, At Risk (2006)

18 UNICEF, MISC (2005)

Further, the Action Plan proposes (i) a measure “Creation of systemic conditions for education of children”, including children who got out of the system and (ii) a measure “Support to inclusion of youth and adults who abandoned education in the Second Chance of Education programme”. Both measures do neither address the prevention of drop-outs (but to include children into schools who have already left the education system) nor do the measures refer to girls nor do they propose any relevant indicator.

The section on education of the Action Plan on the Status of Women proposes “providing mechanisms for monitoring regular class attendance and drop-out rates for girls during school education”, but not measures to prevent drop-outs.

Some of the proposed measure could, however, have the effect of preventing and/or reducing drop-outs (e.g., providing scholarships and loans to Roma women; support to young mothers who continue education through free kindergartens and possibility of attending summarized education programmes; education of parents in the need for educating female children).

However, not a single indicator refers to the prevention and/or reduction of drop-out rates of Roma girls and women.

In order to address the problem of drop-out rates, the value and importance of education for girls and women has to be promoted among Roma communities. The Action Plan proposes an activity to educate the parents on this issue.

3.3.2. Employment

Among Roma women prevails a high unemployment rate which is recognised by the governments, but addressed in a limited way in the policy documents. Taking into account the low level of formal education and the general high unemployment rate, it is a difficult endeavour to find workplaces for Roma women and only to propose training programmes as in the respective action plans of Croatia and Montenegro can not be enough to remedy this situation. However, in practice Croatia and Montenegro included (small) numbers of Roma women into job placement activities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Recently, the first projects targeting the increase of employment among Roma, primarily making use of financial incentives for employers, were initiated, however, with limited success, e.g., the entities did not spend all the money allocated for active employment measures.

The chapter on Employment of the Strategy does not include any reference to Roma women while the Action Plan on Employment containing five objectives and 42 measures, proposes two measures for Roma women.

The employment-relevant sectors of the Gender Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina (2006) do not refer to Roma women.

The (Draft) Social Inclusion Strategy 2008 – 2013 lists Roma as one of the vulnerable target groups. In order to achieve the Goal “Social Protection in the Function of Employment”, one measure (“improve instruments of active labour market for inclusion of the socially excluded categories”) mentions Roma.

The National Employment Strategy 2010 – 2014 refers to Roma among the vulnerable groups.

However none of the goals, priorities or measures refers explicitly to Roma or Romani women.

Croatia

The chapter on Employment of the National Programme includes one activity that includes Romani women (training programmes especially for young people and women); an activity which is also included in the Action Plan (2005-2015). The Action Plan does not provide for any gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators.

The 2010 Progress Report on the Implementation of the Decade of the government of Croatia quotes gender-disaggregated data and demonstrates that Romani women were targeted in several employment-related activities.

The National Plan for the Promotion of Employment 2011-2012 contains both, a goal specifically referring to women that include Romani women as a target group, and several measures specifically targeting Roma. The “implementation indicators” of the activities targeting Roma ask for “number and gender of persons belonging to the Roma national minority” who have participated in the activities.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 proposes primarily research on the situation and the collection of data and the “analysis and plan for employment of Roma women” on the basis of the estimated number of unemployed Romani women. All these activities should have been implemented in 2006 and 2007.

Montenegro

The Strategy recommends a total of ten measures with regard to employment which should be implemented in a four-year period following its adoption. One of these envisaged measures requests special attention to be given to the training of Romani women. The other measures, e.g., promoting employment or self-employment, do not contain any reference to Romani women. These measures should be implemented by the Ministry of Economy and the Employment Agency in cooperation with the local self-government authorities and relevant Romani NGOs.

The Action Plan on Employment intends to achieve four goals. Romani women and their specific situation on the labour market are not mentioned at all. Neither the goals nor activities nor the indicators refer to or include Romani women. (Comment: It should be borne in mind that the Strategy has been later adopted than the Action Plan)

Only one measure (organisation of campaigns for equal opportunities) of the employment component of the Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012) refers to Romani women.

The Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion Strategy proposes a couple of measures which focus on active labour market measures for Roma, however, without referring to Romani women.

Serbia

The Strategy contains recommendations on the inclusion of Romani women in employment programmes.

Both Action Plans on Employment and on Women promote affirmative measures aiming at increasing the number of employed Romani women (public and private sector), increasing the number self-employed Romani women and improving the employability of Romani women.

The Action Plan on Employment refers in several of its nine goals explicitly to Romani women. Several of the envisaged 25 measures and activities to achieve the goals as well as some indicators are gender-sensitive and mention explicitly women. The Action Plan is very ambitious with aiming at the implementation of all the 25 activities within the time-frame of 2009-2011.

The Action Plan on the Status of Women contains one goal referring to employment and two main activities that were also referred to in the general Roma Action Plan on Employment, targeting the “introduction of affirmative measures in the process of employment” and “creating opportunities for self-employment”.

The National Employment Strategy 2005 – 2010 identifies Roma as one of the most vulnerable groups, e.g., among the long-term unemployed and when it comes to discrimination on the labour market, however it does not mention Romani women.

Roma are mentioned in the section “fight against discrimination of particularly disadvantaged groups”, but contrary to the other “particular disadvantaged groups”, disabled persons and refugees, no specific guidelines or indicators are foreseen for Roma. The section on gender equality does not refer to Romani women at all.

The National Employment Action Plan 2010 identifies several priority target groups for inclusion in the active employment policy measures. Roma are identified as a specific target group and constitute considerable shares of the other target groups. The inclusion of Roma has not been satisfactory and the responsible ministry identified the need of increased “participation of Roma in the implementation of the measures for active policy of employment” as one of the priorities for 2011 and 2012.

The chapter “Improve the economic position of women and achieve gender equality” of the National Strategy For Improving The Position Of Women And Promoting Gender Equality contains the specific objective “reduce the economic inequalities that appear as a consequence of multiple discrimination” that refers among other groups explicitly to Romani women.

The National Gender Strategy stipulates to prepare special programs “in other state strategies and plans” and recommends to introducing measures such as employment programmes, facilitation of access to credits, training on entrepreneurship, and general training programmes for Romani women and public campaigns against stereotypes attributed to Romani women.

3.3.3. Health: Reproductive Health, Discrimination and Health Mediators

Across all countries in the Western Balkans, the health status of Roma in general is by far worse than the health status of members of the majority populations. In addition, access to health care is in many cases limited, either due to discrimination or to lack of documents or financial resources. “Voluntary” financial contribution to doctors and nurses are a custom in the Western Balkans and the availability of financial resources can influence access to health care.

Three issues could be identified as of crucial importance: (i) reproductive health, (ii) discrimination in health care and (iii) introduction of health mediators.

Some countries made positive experiences with the introduction of “health mediators” who are primarily women. The health mediators facilitate and improve the relations between Romani communities and health institutions and contribute to the improvement of the health status while the activity also raises the self-confidence of the women and provides income to them.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Strategy includes a chapter “Health Care” that, however does not specifically address the situation of Romani women while the chapter “Demographic and population policy, domestic matters, gender equality and children’s rights” elaborates on the high birth rate among Roma and the need to reduce it.

The Action Plan on Health contains three objectives and several measures; a few of the proposed measures refer indirectly to Romani women.

One measure foresees the training of 50 Roma trainers in preventive health care. The persons should be proposed by the Roma Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina “including consideration for gender equality”, but the indicator refers only to “number of trained local Roma trainers”.

On the other hand the Action Plan on Health proposes the measure “Financial support by governmental and nongovernmental organisations to education and training of medical staff within Roma national minority” for which no “gender equality consideration” is foreseen.

According to the Explanatory Note to the Action Plan on Health, these measures should last until end of 2015 while already in the first year after adoption of the Action Plan 50 Romani trainers should be trained.

Another envisaged measure should address “reproductive health and maternity”, even as a priority programme of preventive health care. However, no further reference is made to women. Chapter “Social inclusion” of the Gender Action Plan proposes the activity „to initiate activities in order to provide access to basic services for marginalized groups of women and men in urban areas”.

Chapter “Health, prevention and protection” proposes the “to educate population, particularly population that belong to vulnerable groups, on reproductive health issues and to raise awareness on importance of family planning by both partners through educative measures, in order to prevent resorting to abortion and to protect women from negative health consequences”.

The (Draft) Social Inclusion Strategy 2008 – 2013 refers to the health situation of Roma, however, not in the section on recommendations of priorities and measures.

Croatia

The government focused its activities in the health sector on “improvement of health and health care”, in particular conducting a vaccination campaign among Romani children and on a “health education programme”. The health education programme has been implemented in several counties, introducing health awareness and health protection activities.

The chapter on health of the National Programme for Roma contains six goals; two of them specifically targeting Romani women.

Goal 1 aims at training Romani women to become health assistants. Goal 6 aims at improving access to health care by inviting “different actors (...) who have information pertaining to violations of the right to health care of Roma women and children (...) to inform about it the director of the health care institution”.

The Action Plan on Health contains five goals; only one of the goals or their indicators refers to Romani women. The main implementing agencies are the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare and/or the Croatian or County Public Health Administration.

The goal of the National Programme to train Romani women to become health assistants has

not been included into the Action Plan and the authorities are still in process of developing programs for health assistants.

One of the sub-chapters of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 is dedicated to Romani women which however, only refers generally to the monitoring of the implementation of the action plans.

Montenegro

Two of the projects implemented with government funds for the implementation of the strategy/ action plans were related to health. One project with a budget of € 6.600 targeted Romani women and had the main purpose to inform and educate Romani women about the importance of reproductive health. Health Mediators do not exist in Montenegro.

A Task Force consisting of representatives of the government, the Health Insurance Fund of Montenegro and Romani NGOs should be in charge for the implementation of the health-related measures. 10% of the annual government contribution to the implementation of the strategy should be spent on those measures.

The Strategy contains a chapter "Social status – housing conditions, health and health insurance, social security and insurance".

With regard to "health and healthcare" the description of the situation focuses on the situation of young Romani women who give birth to 4.7 children on average, mostly at a very young age and hardly visit doctors, especially gynaecologists. The four basic objectives refer only once explicitly to Romani women ("inclusion of as many Roma citizens as possible, especially women and children, in the basic healthcare package, particularly on the primary level").

In order to achieve the objectives, eight measures that partly explicitly target Romani women, were identified e.g., "carrying out permanent, periodical measures for the control of health of future mothers and children", "undertaking of special, medical and educational measures for the purpose of improving reproductive health and securing healthy Roma population descendants", but also the conduct of a "detailed two year medical research on the condition, problems, and needs of the Roma in the domain of health and healthcare".

With regard to the component "social security and insurance", the Strategy contains the objective "Drafting and implementing special programmes of social protection for Roma women, especially for those with three or more children, as well as for those who take care of the old and the infirm"

The introduction to the Action Plan on Health emphasises the need to create a National Program and to address the health situation of women, in particular to provide better information. One of the four goals mentions women while the other goals are more general: (i) "preservation and improvement of health conditions of Roma population and disease prevention with an activity referring to women.

The Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012) identified two goals that inter alia should achieve an improvement of the health status of Romani women: (i) "provide the qualitative availability of the health protection of poor, rural, Roma, disabled and non retired women" and (ii) "improve education on gender sensitive health protection".

The section on health of the Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion Strategy stipulates to improving the quality of health service for "socially endangered groups", but does not refer to

Roma in general or Romani women in particular.

Serbia

The Action Plan on “Health” contains goals and measures that should mainstream women, however, only two measures refers directly to women (“improvement of reproductive health; engagement of Roma women as health mediators). The only indicator directly referring to Romani women is “number of Roma women engaged as health mediators by local self-government units”.

The issue of discrimination in relation to access to health care is neither explicitly addressed in the Action Plan on “Health” nor in the Action Plan on “Status of Women”.

The Action Plan on “Status of Women” contains one goal referring to health. It takes up the requests of the Action Plan on “Health” of employment of women as health mediators and addressing reproductive health through (i) organising informative public lectures for Roma women and (ii) familiarising health professionals with specific needs and culture of Roma women.

The Action Plan on “Documents” is also of importance for the right to health care. Envisaged measures such as facilitation of registration of habitual residence could lead to better access to health care.

In 2010, the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with international organisations employed 60 Romani women as health mediators.

The National Gender Strategy recommends, in order to facilitate health care for “women from multiply discriminated groups”, to establish mobile teams for early detection of diseases, to educate the women on health care and on their rights, but also to improve their living conditions. The Gender Strategy does not explicitly recommend measures against discrimination of Romani women in access to health care.

3.3.4. Housing: Property Rights and Property Titles

As a general rule, property (land, houses, apartments) is – if at all – registered in the name of the father or husband and in very few cases in the name of the wife or mother. Even property brought into a marriage by women is in general registered in the name of her husband.

Women are excluded from inheriting property or receiving property in case of a divorce, but the lack of property creates further obstacles: women do not possess collaterals that would allow them receiving credits for opening up a business. This “tradition” prevails in all the four countries and not only among Roma, but could be overcome as it happened in other societies.

The slum-like housing conditions of many settlements and the informal character of many of them are big problems in all four countries. Authorities with the assistance of international donors are involved in formalising settlements and (re-)constructing dwellings. This process would create an opportunity to promote the ownership of women over land and houses or apartments. All four countries adopted action plans on housing, however none of it refers to the issues of ownership – only the Action Plan on the Status of Women of Serbia addresses this issue:

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Neither the relevant chapters of the Strategy nor the Action Plan on Housing refer to Romani

women. The Roma Action Plan on Housing contains three objectives that do not directly refer to Romani women. In addition, neither the measures nor the results or indicators explicitly refer to Romani women.

Taking into account the specific situation of Romani women and that they are in general excluded from inheriting property, the Housing Action Plan could have had referred to the issue of "inheritance by women" in the framework of Objective II (Training and raising society and Roma population awareness of addressing housing issues, legislation, housing culture, etc).

The Gender Action Plan (2006) includes the activity „initiate activities in order to provide access to basic services for marginalized groups of women and men in urban areas“, but does not refer to property rights.

The Social Inclusion Strategy (2008-2013) identifies Roma as a priority group and states that 50% to 70% of the Roma live in informal settlements and are exposed to the danger of forced evictions; however, no reference is made to Romani women.

Croatia

The legalisation and upgrading of the housing and infrastructure constitutes one of the focuses of the Roma-related policy of the Government of Croatia.

The Strategy contains the activity “encouraging the resolving of property issues pertaining to state-owned land”, but does not refer to women at all.

The Action Plan on Housing 2005-2015 contains three main goals; one of it refers in particular to ownership: Regulating property ownership patterns. None of the goals or the indicators refer to Romani women.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 does not refer to Romani women and property.

Montenegro

Neither the Strategy nor the Action Plan on Housing refers to Romani women and property rights.

Neither the Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012) nor the Poverty Alleviation and Social Inclusion Strategy refers to housing problems.

Serbia

The Roma Action Plan on Women constitutes a remarkable exception. It contains a goal that refers to property (“increasing the share of Roma women in ownership over immovable property and their knowledge about proprietary rights) which should be achieved with the measure “raising Roma women’s awareness of proprietary rights through education”.

The Strategy requests that “the needs of Roma women and children, and especially single mothers and victims of domestic violence, should be taken into account in housing programmes”, but does not refer to property.

The measures/activities or proposed indicators of the Action Plan on Housing do not explicitly refer to Romani women. Taking into account the specific situation of Romani women and that

they are in general excluded from inheriting property, the Housing Action Plan could have had referred to the issue of “inheritance by women” in the framework of Goal 2.1) “introduction of the principles of affirmative action in housing legislation and related legislation and strategic documents”.

The National Gender Strategy requires gender-disaggregated data on property ownerships and refers in general to Romani women, however, does not include the issue of property rights and Romani women.

3.3.5. Participation: The Local Level

Irrespective of the country and ethnicity, societies in the Western Balkans can be considered, in general, as traditional, patriarchal societies with a limited participation of women in political and public life which has been reinforced through the wars in the 1990ies.

Participation of Romani women in political and administrative structure is indispensable for any positive change. The interviews with Romani women emphasised the need for the involvement of Romani women at local level and at community/neighbourhood level as in general, recommendations to Romani policies emphasise the need for participation at local level.

Yet, very few Romani women are members of municipal assemblies: one woman each are members of the city assemblies of Podgorica and Zagreb. Some Romani women are members of local community councils, e.g., in Croatia while others are members of local minority representative structures or of local gender equality councils.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Law on Gender Equality was recently amended and stipulates a quota of 40% for women within the public administration, but this is not implemented in practice. In municipalities with at least 3% of the population being members of national minorities, Councils for National Minorities have to be established; these councils exist in 31 municipalities. There is no quota for the participation of women in these structures.

The Strategy contains a chapter “Demographic and Population Policy, Domestic Matters, Gender Equality and Children’s Rights” which does not address the issue of participation of Roma at all. A respective Action Plan on participation or representation of Romani women does not exist.

Chapter V of the Gender Action Plan (2006) proposes to “develop a strategy for increasing a number of women from rural areas and Roma women in decision-making organs at local level” which should have been realised two after adoption of the Gender Action Plan.

The draft Social Inclusion Strategy 2008-13 does not address the issue of participation and representation at all.

Croatia

The 2010 Progress Report of the European Union states that “women continue to be under-represented in economic and political decision-making bodies”.

In units at local and regional level where Roma make up more than 1.5% of the total population, Councils of the Roma National Minority have to be established that are only advisory bodies. In

addition, representative of Romani NGO could be members of specialised bodies at local level. The National Programme contains three goals with regard to participation of Roma; one explicitly targeting Romani women (higher representation of women in representative bodies and their involvement in decision-making processes).

The National Programme further elaborates that it is necessary to “raise awareness among Roma, especially among Roma women, about the opportunities and ways in which they can exercise their rights”. It defines as an expected effect the “establishment of Roma councils in counties, towns and municipalities in compliance with the relevant legislation and proportional representation of women in those councils”. In order to achieve these goals the National Programme proposes the conduct of “training of Roma representative, especially women and youth, for participation in decision-making process, exercising their rights and greater involvement in social life”. The Action Plans do not refer to the participation of Roma or Romani women.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 proposes the “cooperation of organisations of Roma women with other non-governmental organisations, representatives of state administration and local and regional self-government units” in order to increase the participation of Romani women at local level.

Montenegro

The government of the Republic of Montenegro assists four female graduates of secondary schools in order to prepare them for the public administration entrance exams. According to a group of Romani women, it is recommended that they should work as “local coordinators”, since the actual problems have to be solved at local level. However, none of the graduates has been employed in local administration yet.

In six municipalities exist currently local Councils for Gender Equality; the Romani Women Action Plan that is currently being developed proposes the inclusion of Romani women in these councils. Local action plans for Romani women do not exist.

The Strategy identified “political representation of Roma” as one of the priority fields. It formulated as a basic objective the “professional, functional, and personnel training of the Roma community on its rightful participation in public and political life, for the sake of enjoying fundamental human rights, its integration into civil society, and the protection of existential needs and interests”. In order to achieve the objective, five measures are proposed that however; do not refer explicitly to Romani women.

The Gender Equality Action Plan (2008-2012) includes a goal that proposes to develop a strategy for an increased representation of Romani women in decision-making bodies at local level. Though the time-frame for its development was 2008-2010, it has not been developed yet.

Serbia

The **Strategy** dedicates a chapter to the issue of Political Participation and Representation. It stipulates inter alia that the “participation of Roma women in public and political life should be promoted” and that “Roma women must have the opportunity of participating on an equal footing with men in consultative and other mechanisms established for the purpose of better access to all areas of public and political life”.

Further, the Strategy identified as recommendations to “secure equal voting rights of women” and to encourage inclusion of Roma men and women in public services even by introducing

special measures if necessary.

The chapter “Political Participation and Representation” of the Strategy contains a single priority: “Increasing the participation of Roma women in public political life”.

The Action Plan on Political Participation and Representation contains three goals and several measures and activities. One goal “Contribution to equal share of Roma men and women in public services” and its related activities and measures specifically refer to Romani women. The indicators, however, are not gender-sensitive. All the goals should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011.

In addition, the Action Plan on Women contains goals regarding participation and representation. The goals should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011.

Further, the Action Plan on Housing contains Goal 2.5) “Action training of inhabitants of Roma settlements for inclusion in the work of local decision-making bodies and forming local self-government bodies in the territories where Roma settlements with 1000 to 5000 Roma citizens are located”. The goal envisages activities such as “training and motivating individuals from ghettos” and the forming of “Council of Inhabitants” in settlements with 200 to 1000 inhabitants and of “local offices” in settlements with 1000 to 5000 inhabitants. However, neither the activities nor the indicators refer explicitly to the inclusion of Romani women.

Obviously, a lack of adequate inclusion of Romani women into the general proposed measures for improving the participation and representation of Romani women exists. The main requests regarding the participation and representation of Romani women remain within the Action Plan on Women and are not transferred into the relevant Romani mainstream Action Plans (political participation and representation, housing).

Due to lobbying of the Romani women organisations, a Romani woman became a member of the Gender Equality Council of the Government while members of the Roma Women Network are lobbying for Roma participation in the local gender equality councils.

Romani women organisations are advocating the development of the local action plans for Romani women, including the active participation of Romani women in the development of those documents.

The National Gender Strategy intends to achieve preconditions for the participation of women from doubly and/or multiply discriminated groups in public and political life”. Multiple discriminated groups are encompassing more than a dozen groups, including Romani women. The Strategy recommends a few specific measures to improve participation of these groups without explicitly referring to Romani women.

3.3.6. Gender based Violence

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The chapter “Demographic and population policy, domestic matters, gender equality and children’s rights” of the Strategy does not refer at all to the issue of gender-based violence. The four Action Plans do not refer at all to the issue of gender-based violence in general and to the issue of trafficking in particular.

Chapter XI “Domestic violence, violence on the grounds of sex, harassment, sexual harassment and trafficking in human beings” of the Gender Action Plan does not explicitly refer to Romani

women though both gender based violence and trafficking prevail among Romani communities.

Croatia

The National Programme only indirectly refers to the issue of gender based violence by proposing the conduct of workshops for Roma which should address inter alia issues related to family problems, sexual abuse and trafficking. The Action Plans do not refer to gender based violence towards Romani women.

The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 acknowledges the need for further research on the situation of Romani women, but does not mention the issue of gender-based violence.

Montenegro

Neither the Strategy nor the Action Plans nor the introduction to the Action Plans refers to the issue of gender-based violence against Romani women.

The Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012) identified the need to organise public awareness raising campaigns on violence against women among Romani communities, including measure such as a Regional Conference “Men and Violence” and campaigns on violence against women in Romani settlements.

Serbia

The Strategy discusses the issue of gender-based violence only in a limited way, but includes two priorities within the chapter “Status of Women” that deal with gender-based violence:

The chapter “Housing” of the Strategy mentions as one of the basic principles “the needs of Roma women and children and especially single mothers and victims of domestic violence should be taken into account in housing programmes”.

Within the chapter “Social Insurance and Social Care” it is recommended that Romani women “should work on the issues of domestic violence. Further, the Strategy calls upon the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) to develop “special preventive programmes of support to Roma families, primarily women and children”.

The Action Plans refer at several places to gender-based violence. The Action Plan on “Status of Women” contains one goal targeting the adoption of a policy for protection of women against violence with the measures “effective enforcement of law and measures of protection in Roma settlements” and “higher accessibility of services for protection of Roma women against violence”. The Action Plan does not focus on prevention of domestic violence and on working with male Roma in order to prevent domestic violence.

The Action Plan on “Housing” does not include any respective measure. The Action Plan “Social Insurance and Social Care” does not refer explicitly to prevention of domestic violence; it only states as a measure that special prevention programmes to support Roma families, particularly women and children should be developed.

The Roma Strategy (Status of Women) also addresses the issue of trafficking and recommends that “mechanisms (legal and functional) for the protection of women and children from human trafficking and exploitation should be established at all levels”.

The Strategy concludes that with regard to trafficking of Romani women and children, prejudices and stereotypes “turn into open discrimination” and that on the other “prevailing unwritten codes” within the Romani community violate human rights of women.

The National Gender Strategy recommends the introduction of several measures in particular targeting “multiply discriminated groups”, including Romani women. In general the National Gender Strategy does not specify exactly for which groups the proposed measures are envisaged, only once it refers to Romani women: “work on elimination of the custom of juvenile arranged marriages in the Roma community”.¹⁹

The Draft National Strategy for Combating Gender-Based Violence and Family Violence refers to Romani women and two Romani women organisations were involved in the drafting process. However, neither an Action Plan nor a budget has been adopted yet.²⁰

19 Gender Strategy (2009)

20 E-mail from Bibija of 31. August 2011

Bosnia & Herzegovina

4. Summary of the National Strategies/Programmes for Roma and of the Action Plans

The following provides for a short summary of the substance of the national Strategies/Programmes and the Action Plans in the six selected sectors and the inclusion of Romani women in these policy documents.²¹

4.1. Bosnia and Herzegovina

4.1.1. Education

Government Approach towards Inclusion of Roma in the Education System

Education lies within the competencies of the ministries at entity and canton level as well as with authorities of Brcko district. At state level the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) coordinates the education-related activities. In addition there are relevant agencies at state level such as the Agency for Development of Higher Education in B&H and Quality Assurance, the Agency for Pre-Primary, Primary and Secondary Education and the Centre for Information and Recognition of Documents in Higher Education Area.²² In total, fifteen ministries are involved in developing, implementing and monitoring education-related policies for Roma and thirteen different budgets are available for education-related activities.

The overall coordination is done by the Conference of the Ministers of Education. In addition, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR) is in charge of coordinating the Roma-related activities.

The National Strategy and the Relevant Action Plans

In 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the revised Action Plan on the Educational Needs of the Roma People. The Action Plan intends to achieve four goals with a couple of "required actions". Romani women and girls and their specific situation respectively are not addressed throughout the Action Plan though, e.g., Goal 1 would provide the framework for addressing specifically the situation of Romani women or girls (Sub-goal 1.1: Inclusion of Roma children of both genders into preschool programmes; explanation to measure 4 refers to attendance of compulsory primary school of both genders).

The Action Plan defines the responsible institutions, provides for a time-frame for the implementation of the Action Plan and indicates the necessary financial resources for some of the proposed measures. The indicators, however, do not refer to girls.

4.1.2. Employment

Government Approach towards Inclusion of Roma in the Labour Market

The sphere of labour and employment is also overregulated with having relevant labour laws at state level as well as in both entities. In total 178 institutions (ministries, employment institutes, offices and bureaux at all levels, etc.) are involved in labour and employment-related activities whereby the state level institutions (MCA, Agency for Labour and Employment) have only co-

²¹ A more detailed analysis of relevant policies, including a description of the situation, for all the four countries will be made available at the website of CARE NWB

²² Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Council of Ministers, Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Draft Document), Sarajevo 2009

ordinating roles.²³

At state level, MCA and MHMR are in charge of coordinating policies with regard to employment and Roma, while at entity and Canton level the respective Ministries of Labour and Employment, with their cantonal or municipal employment services, are the main actors.

Yet, only few government-led projects targeted Roma or even Romani women. In the field of employment, until 2008 “there have been no specific programmes or incentives aimed at Roma employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina”.²⁴

MHRR allocated in 2009, BAM 702.000 (ca. € 350.000) for the realisation of active labour market measures as envisaged in the Action Plan for Employment of Roma. However, only the Employment Agency of the Federation could spend the full amount while Employment Agency of the Republika Srpska could spend only parts of the funds and in the Brčko District the funds weren’t used at all. Brčko district re-published the tender and could facilitate the employment of nine Roma at a later stage.²⁵

In the year 2009, in the Federation a total of 59 Roma were beneficiaries in the self-employment programme while 39 Roma participated in the employment component. Gender-disaggregated data are not available. In the Republika Srpska, twelve Roma (three women) were employed in the framework of the programme while five Roma (one woman) benefited from the self-employment component.²⁶

The lessons learned from this experience led to recommendations that within future actions the amount of the incentive should be increased, Roma should receive training in business management skills, more information campaigns should be conducted and the procedure for employment should be simplified.²⁷

Roma Strategy and the Relevant Action Plans

The chapter on Employment of the Strategy does not include any reference to Romani women. The Strategy envisages that in general 70% of the overall budget should be provided by the authorities at all levels while donors’ resources should come the missing 30%.²⁸

The proposed measures of the **Action Plan on Employment** (2008) would require a budget of BAM 170 million (ca. € 85 million). The Action Plan on Employment contains five objectives and 42 measures, however, only two measures under Objective II refer directly to Romani women, which does not exclude that Romani women could be beneficiaries of other measures. Only once do Romani women constitute an indicator.²⁹

However, this omission expresses a lack of understanding of the importance to take into account the multiple disadvantaged position of Romani women which will make it difficult to implement gender-specific and gender-tailored programmes while the lack of (gender-specific and gender-sensitive as well as qualitative) indicators will make it difficult to measure progress made.³⁰

23 Council of Ministers BiH, Draft Social Inclusion Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2009

24 Action Plan on Employment, Housing and Health Care (2008)

25 CARE NWB, Baseline study, Implementation of Roma National Action Plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2011

26 CEDAW Report (2010). Other sources mention thirteen Roma who were employed.

27 Dušanić (2010)

28 Council of Ministers, Strategy for Addressing Roma Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005)

29 Action Plan on Employment, Housing and Health Care (2008)

30 For a discussion of the indicators see Maria-Carmen Pantea, Gender Mainstreaming in the National Action Plans

Employment Action Plan – Objective II

| Objective II: Creating stimulating programmes |
|--|
| Measure 6: Provide funds to co-finance Roma women and youth employment and self-employment programmes – no relevant indicator |
| Measures: 13. Create specific employment programmes for disabled Roma, Roma women and young people – indicator: No. of employed disabled Roma, Roma women and young people |

The Explanatory Notes to the Action Plan on Employment generally states that it is necessary to introduce “stimulating programmes” to increase employment and self-employment of Roma.

With regard to Measure 6) it states that this “measure is to enable co-financing employment programmes for target categories within the Roma community, and these are Roma women and youth”. Regarding Measure 13) it states that this “measure places an obligation on competent bodies and authorities responsible for employment to create specific employment programmes for persons among the Roma population that are difficult to employ, such as disabled persons, women and youth”³¹; referring to both employment and creating conditions for self-employment.

4.1.3. Health

Government Approach towards Health Situation of Romani Women

The general financing, provision, management and organisation of the health care system, including the implementation of Roma-related health policies lie within the responsibility of the entities and of Brcko district.³² At state level, MHRR is in charge of co-ordinating and monitoring Roma-related policies and activities while the Health Section within MCA coordinates health activities.

Roma Strategy and the Relevant Action Plans

The Council of Ministers adopted in 2005 the National Strategy for Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The **Strategy** includes a chapter “Health Care” that, however does not specifically address the situation of Romani women. %.³³

The measures of the **Action Plan on Health** (2008) are not proposed with a detailed budget; for all activities of the Action Plan on Health BAM 34.700 million (ca. € 17.35 million) would be necessary. In 2010, € 100.000 was allocated for the implementation of health-related activities.³⁴

The Action Plan contains three objectives and several measures, however, only a few of the proposed measures refer indirectly to Romani women. One measure foresees the training of 50 Roma trainers in preventive health care. The persons should be proposed by the Roma Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina “including consideration for gender equality”, but the indicator refers only to “number of trained local Roma trainers”. The Action Plan proposes further the measure

for the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2009); to Romani women and intersectionality see Angela Kocze (with contributions from Raluca Maria Popa, Missing Intersectionality, Race/Ethnicity, Gender, and Class in Current Research and Policies on Romani Women in Europe, Budapest 2009

31 Action Plan on Employment, Housing and Health Care (2008)

32 Milka Dančević-Gojković (2010)

33 Council of Ministers, Strategy for Addressing Roma Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005)

34 Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report 2010, Sarajevo 2011

“Financial support by governmental and nongovernmental organisations to education and training of medical staff within Roma national minority” for which no “gender equality consideration” is foreseen.

According to the Explanatory Note to the Action Plan on Health, these measures should last until end of 2015, while already in the first year after adoption of the Action Plan 50 Romani trainers should be trained. Another envisaged measure should address “reproductive health and maternity”, even as a priority programme of preventive health care. However, no further reference is made to women. In general, indicators are not gender-sensitive, even when the measures refer indirectly to women, remain the indicators gender-neutral.³⁵

Though proposed by the relevant documents, Bosnia and Herzegovina did not create positions of Health Mediators yet. In the framework of the Global Fund Project work Romani field coordinators for the prevention of HIV /AIDS and of tuberculosis were created.³⁶

4.1.4. Housing

Government Approach towards Improving the Housing Situation of Roma

MHRR is in charge of coordinating and monitoring the Roma inclusion policy and provide advice and technical assistance while the line ministries at entity and/or Canton level have the responsibility to develop and implement their respective Roma-related policies. In the sector of housing, the state government, entities, cantons and the municipalities share responsibilities.

With regard to spatial and urban planning – important for the legalisation of settlements or the development of the infrastructure – the central government provides for the framework while the actual development and implementation of the spatial and urban planning is up to the municipalities. In 2009 and 2010, the government allocated € 1 million each year for housing while individual donors (Sida, Hilfswerk Austria, CARITAS) and municipalities provided further financial resources.³⁷ From the budget provided in 2009, 213 housing units, one sewage network and one road could be constructed while from the 2010 budget, 137 Romani families should benefit from interventions.³⁸

Strategy for Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the relevant Action Plan

Housing constitutes one of the crucial parts of the Roma Strategy and one of the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. In addition to the Roma Strategy, the Government adopted an Action Plan on Housing. However, neither refers the chapter “Housing” of the Strategy nor the Action Plan on Housing to Romani women, nor does the chapter “Demographic and Population Policy, Domestic Matters, Gender Equality and Children’s Rights” address housing issues.³⁹

The **Roma Action Plan on Housing** contains three objectives; none of them refers directly to Romani women. In order to achieve the objectives, several measures, as well as expected results, and indicators are designed. However, neither the measures nor the results or indicators explicitly refer to Romani women. The Action Plan on **“Health”** does not refer to the housing.

35 Action Plan on Employment, Housing and Health Care (2008)

36 E-mail from Bolje Buducnost of 23 August 2011

37 Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report 2010, Sarajevo 2011

38 CARE NWB, Baseline study, Implementation of Roma National Action Plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2011. Some of the projects are still ongoing.

39 Council of Ministers, Strategy for Addressing Roma Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005)

Taking into account the specific situation of Romani women and that they are in general excluded from inheriting property, the Housing Action Plan could have had referred to the issue of “inheritance by women” in the framework of Objective II (Training and raising society and Roma population awareness of addressing housing issues, legislation, housing culture, etc).

4.1.5. Gender-Based Violence

Government Approach towards Gender-Based Violence Against Romani Women

Bosnia and Herzegovina established mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality in general and for protection from gender-based violence; however, most of these mechanisms do not sufficiently take into account Romani women.

According to the Alternative Report on Implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Women’s Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Draft National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence neither recognises nor addresses the vulnerability of Roma women and their exposure to double discrimination.⁴⁰

Strategy for Roma and the relevant Action Plans

The chapter “Demographic and population policy, domestic matters, gender equality and children’s rights” of the **Strategy** does not refer at all to the issue of gender-based violence. It refers to the importance to prevent the Romani “child and girls trafficking” and calls upon the relevant authorities to take appropriate measures in cooperation with international organisations. The four **Action Plans** do not refer at all to the issue of gender-based violence in general and to the issue of trafficking in particular.

Gender Action Plan (2006)⁴¹

Chapter XI “Domestic violence, violence on the grounds of sex, harassment, sexual harassment and trafficking in human beings” of the Action Plan does not explicitly refer to Romani women though both gender based violence and trafficking are present as well among Romani communities.

4.1.6. Participation

Government Approach towards Participation of Romani Women

In general, more than 15 years after the end of the war, the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, based on the General Framework for Peace (GFAP or “Dayton Agreement”) brokered by the international community in 1995, still does not recognise Roma as citizens on an equal footing with Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs. They are still excluded from running for political positions such as member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina which are exclusively reserved for the three main ethnic communities. Despite a ruling of the European Court of Human Rights in 2009, the situation hasn’t changes yet.⁴²

40 Alternative CEDAW Report (2010)

41 Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan available at <http://www.fgencr.com.ba/en/gap.html> (accessed 12 July 2011)

42 The European Court of Human Rights published in December 2009 a ruling, in the case *Sejdic and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina* (application nos. 27996/06 and 34836/06), that the Constitution is not in line with European Convention on Human Rights. For the judgement and a press release see the website of the European Court of Human Rights at <http://www.echr.coe.int/echr>

The respective authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina set up structures for the representation of Roma in decision-taking structures though most of the participatory mechanisms do not exceed an advisory role. At state level an Advisory Board on Roma exists with the Council of Ministers and in the Republika Srpska a Council of National Minorities has been established.

In municipalities with at least 3% of the population being members of national minorities, Councils for National Minorities have to be established; these councils exist in 31 municipalities. There are no quotas for the participation of Romani women in these structures.

The Law on Gender Equality requests that a quota of 40% for women within the public administration, but this is not implemented in practice.⁴³

Strategy for Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Action Plans

The Strategy contains a chapter “Demographic and Population Policy, Domestic Matters, Gender Equality and Children’s Rights” which does not address the issue of participation of Roma at all. A respective Action Plan on participation or representation of Romani women does not exist. However, the main focus of this chapter is not on increasing the participation of Romani women, but decreasing the high birth rate among Roma.

The chapter also tasks the Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the gender centres of the entities, in cooperation with other institutions and organisations, to “develop an action plan on gender sensibility of both Roma and those who address their issues and, after it is adopted by relevant authorities, to start the implementation”.⁴⁴ However, this action plan hasn’t been developed yet.

The **Action Plans** do not refer to participation of Romani women.

43 Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document, Bosnia and Herzegovina 2010 Progress Report, Brussels, 9.11.2010, SEC(2010) 1331

44 Council of Ministers, Strategy for Addressing Roma Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2005)

Croatia

4.2. Croatia

4.2.1. Education

The Government focuses its activities on the integration of Romani children into the mainstream education system at all levels. It, inter alia, provides scholarships, introduced 25 Romani Teaching Assistants (2010), facilitated the inclusion of Romani children into preschool institutions, among other through the creation of mobile outreach teams, or provided free textbooks and free transportation.⁴⁵

The data quoted above, already demonstrated that the government successfully developed and implemented activities in the field of education in order to increase the number of Roma finishing quality education. The activities were implemented with financial resources from the state budget, European Commission and donors such as Roma Education Fund as well as with contributions from administrations at county and local level.⁴⁶

In July 2010, significant changes to the Law on Education in Primary and High Schools were made, e.g., obliging schools to help children with insufficient command of Croatian language. Roma, though constituting the second largest minority group among pupils (2008: Serb: 4094, Roma: 3 628; Italian: 3 061; Hungarian: 1 241) can not attend schooling in Romani language or learn their language and culture.⁴⁷

The National Programme and the Relevant Action Plans

The chapter on education of the **National Programme for Roma** does not make any reference to Romani women or girls.⁴⁸

The **overall Action Plan on Education** is divided into several sub-sections: primary education, secondary education, higher education, adult education and informal education. However, it does not include a section on pre-school education.

In most of the sections, the Action Plan on Education refers to women (e.g., within goals: “increase the number of Roma students (male and female)” or the indicators mention: “number of Roma students (male and female)”), however not consistently. Sometimes the goals or the indicators do not mention Romani women or girls. As an example, Goal 4 of Primary Education refers to drop-outs from primary schools, however, does not propose gender-sensitive indicators though in general in particular Romani girls drop out of schools.

The main implementing agency is the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports in cooperation with schools. The time-frame provided in the Action Plan for the implementation of most of the activities is “in the course of the Decade”.

In addition, Croatia developed regular annual or biannual action plans, the latest for the years **2011-2012**. Romani girls are in the narrative part of the Action Plan 2011-2012 generally identified as target group (“Roma pupils of both genders”); however, it does not include any tailor-made or targeting activities for Romani girls in the education system. With the exception of adult

⁴⁵ According to the Government Office for National Minorities, ca. thirteen of the Teaching Assistants are women. Interview with Office for National Minorities, Government of the Republic of Croatia, Zagreb 7 July 2011

⁴⁶ Protection of Roma in Croatia (October 2010)

⁴⁷ For the data on minority pupils see Ana, Blazevic, Language Minority Education in Croatia: Current Issues and Challenges in Practice and Theory in Systems of Education, Volume 5 Number 1 2010 available at <http://www.freeweib.hu/edu/science/1102BlazevicAna.pdf> (accessed 9 June 2011)

⁴⁸ Government of Croatia, National Programme (2003)

education and informal education, the Action Plan requires gender-disaggregated indicators. For the period 2011-2012, the Action Plan proposes priorities for each education level:⁴⁹

| |
|--|
| <p>Preschool education</p> <p>Measures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subsidizing of the parental share for members of the Roma national minority in preschool education programs 2. Subsidizing of preschool programs for members of the Roma national minority |
| <p>Primary education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enrolment of Roma children of both genders in primary schools 2. Creating preconditions for the inclusion of Roma pupils in extended day programs 3. Qualification/training of associate assistants 4. Creating preconditions to reduce the number of segregated classes (with Roma pupils only) |
| <p>Secondary education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enrolment of Roma children of both genders in secondary schools 2. Provision of scholarships for Roman students of both genders enrolled in full-time secondary schools 3. Provision of accommodation in dormitories 4. Creating preconditions to increase the number of Roma students of both genders who successfully graduate from secondary school, by classes |
| <p>Higher education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing for scholarships for needy Roma students of both genders |
| <p>Adult education and informal education</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion of adult Roma of both genders in literacy campaigns and qualification programs |

4.2.2. Employment

The Government policy aims in the long term at increasing the employability of Roma which is done by combined activities in education and employment. The activities range from information activities and public works to co-financing both training and employment of Romani

job-seekers.

The Croatian Employment Service (CES) does not collect ethnicity-disaggregated data; the provided data are based on estimations, knowledge of Romani language, place of residence, etc.⁵⁰ The 2010 Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report of the Government of Croatia provides for a few data on the activities of CES in the field of employment. In total, CES has provided 671,100 EUR for their implementation (ca. HRK 5 million). The Report reveals gender-disaggregated data and the targeting of Romani women in employment-related activities and not only in training programmes as stipulated by the Programme and the Action Plan (2005-2015).

Croatia: Overview of employment-related activities and number of participants (2010)

| Activity | Number of participants | Romani women |
|---|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Literacy programs for adults | 243 | 81 (33%) |
| Programs for first occupation | 7 | 2 (28.57%) |
| Preparatory workshop for training and self-employment * | 8112 | 3909 (48.19%) |
| Information on employment opportunities, services, and subsidies for education and employment | 1,103 | 568 (51.5%) |
| Individual counselling | 6,440 | 3,150 (48.91%) |
| Training on job searching skills | 265 | 107 (40.38%) |
| Co-financing employment | 272 | 75 (27.57%) |
| Financing of education | 32 | 9 (28.12%) |
| Co-financing employment for 24 months | 4 | 2 (50%) |
| Public works | 268 | 73 (27.24%) |
| Co-financing education | 32 | 9 (28.12%) |
| Professional information and counselling | 493 | 135 (27.38%) |
| Employment on open labour market | 226 | 91 (40.26%) |
| Self-employment | 24 | |
| Total | 17521 | 8211 (46.86%) |

* Preparatory workshop for training and self-employment ⁵¹

Romani women constituted 46.86% of the Romani beneficiaries (8.211 women out of 17.521 persons in total). In addition, CES targeted employers (1511 visits to employers) and held 79 meetings with employers' associations, unions and associations of Roma at local level which led to the employment of Roma on the "open labour market".

National Programme and the Relevant Action Plans

The chapter on employment of the National Programme contains five goals. Within Goal 1), training programmes are proposed that should target women: "training and employment in all

⁵⁰ Government of Croatia, Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2010 Progress Report, Zagreb 2011

⁵¹ This could reflect the activity mentioned in National Programme and Action Plan on Employment

branches of the economy: In order to enhance the employability of this population segment, besides the employment programmes it is necessary to organise training programmes (especially for young people and women).⁵²

The **overall Action Plan on Employment** makes very limited reference to women. Only Goal 1 mentions women (Training and employment of Roma in all branches of industry (especially young people and women)). The indicators for Goal 1, as the indicators for all other goals, are not gender-sensitive (e.g., with regard to several goals the indicators just say: "number of persons". The only reference to women is a "general cross-cutting issue column" relevant to all goals "Combating discrimination and poverty; promoting gender equality". The main implementing agencies are the Croatian Employment Service and regional self-government units. The time-frame provided in the Action Plan for its implementation is "in the course of the Decade".

Action Plan for Employment 2011-2012

The Croatian Employment Service (CES) secured HRK 6 million (ca. € 810.000) in the 2011 Financial Plan for the implementation of measures of the Action Plan while the projections for 2012 are HRK 8 million (ca. € 1,08 million).

The Action Plans provides for certain activities gender-disaggregated indicators, for other activities, however, not. The table above demonstrated that Croatia collects gender-disaggregated data for almost all measures. Interestingly, in particular the measures targeting employment (and not training or counselling) do not provide for gender-disaggregated data.

Croatia: Overview: Action Plan on Employment 2011-2012⁵³

| Measures | Indicators | Romani women |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|
| Goal 1 | | |
| Information on employment opportunities, services, and subsidies for education and employment | 2011: 1300; 2012: 1500 | 2011: 700 2012: 800 |
| Assistance in defining a business profile and in defining an individual plan for job-searching | 2011: 6200; 2012: 6400 | 2011: 3100; 1012: 3300 |
| Training in acquiring job-searching skills | 2011: 400; 2012: 450 | 2011: 200; 2012: 250 |

⁵² Government of Croatia, National Programme (2003)

⁵³ Government of the Republic of Croatia, Action Plan 2011/2012

| | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Employment and qualification of unemployed Roma | 2011: 230; 2012: 280 | |
| - subsidising employment | 2011: 30; 2012: 60 | |
| - financing education | 2011: 20; 2012: 40 | |
| - qualification for self-employment | | |
| Co-financing employment for 24 months | 2011: 10; 2012: 20 | |
| Public works | 2011: 190; 2012: 210 | |
| Co-financing education | 2011: 30; 2012: 60 | |
| Professional qualification for employment without entering into a work contract | 2011: 30; 2012: 50 | |
| Qualification for self-employment | 2011: 20; 2012: 40 | |
| Goal 2 | | |
| Vocational informing and counseling – employment workshops | 2010: 550; 2011: 600 | 2010: 170; 2011: 200 |
| Vocational informing and counseling for persons over the age of 45 – employment workshops | 2010: 150; 2011: 200 | 2010: 100; 2011: 150 |
| Assessment of other work capabilities for purpose of defining jobs a person is capable of performing | 2010: 100; 2011: 150 | 2010: 50; 2011: 100 |
| Assessment of other work capabilities for the purpose of defining jobs (over the age of 45) | 2010: 80; 2011: 100 | 2010: 50; 2011: 70 |
| Goal 3 | | |
| Production of information materials on the possibilities and subsidizing employment of Roma | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------------|
| Targeted visits to employers by employment counselors with the aim of providing information on the possibilities of employing members of the Roma national minority | 2010: 2500; 2011: 3000 | 2010: xx; 2011: xx |
| Organizing joint meetings with participants on the local labor market for the purpose of improving employment and education possibilities for Roma | 2010: 80 meeting 2011: 100 meetings | |
| Employment of Roma in the open labor market | 2010: 400; 2011: 460 | 2010: 155; 2011: 190 |
| Goal 4 | | |
| Organization of group informing on self-employment and possibilities of starting one's own business | 2010: 30 sessions; 2011: 50 sessions | 2010: 2011: |
| Informing and counseling on the possibilities of self-employment | 2010: 50; 2011: 60 | 2010: 15; 2011:25 |

4.2.3. Health

In the field of health care, the government activities focused on the implementation of a programme of health education, vaccination campaigns, raising awareness and introducing both preventive and curative health protection measures.⁵⁴ Indirectly, the conduct of housing and infrastructure measures also contributed to improving the health status.

Roma National Programme and the Relevant Action Plans

The chapter on health of the National Programme for Roma contains six goals. Goal 1) "Health education and raising awareness of Roma" targets in particular Romani women and aims at training Romani women to become health assistants. Goal 6) "Monitoring the health protection of all Roma, and especially women and children" aims at improving access to health care by inviting "different actors (...) who have information pertaining to violations of the right to health care of Roma women and children, are obliged to inform about it the director of the health care institution, who will thereafter act in accordance with the law".⁵⁵

The **overall Action Plan on Health** contains five goals; only one of the goals or their indicators refers to Romani women. The main implementing agencies are the Ministry of Public Health and

⁵⁴ Protection of Roma in Croatia (October 2010)

⁵⁵ Government of Croatia, National Programme (2003)

Social Welfare and/or the Croatian or County Public Health Administration.

Most Relevant Goals and Indicators of the Health Action Plan

Goal 3: Health education focusing on family planning, the protection of reproductive health and measures for safe motherhood, especially for pregnant and parturient **women**

Indicators:

1. Percentage of professionally assisted deliveries among Roma **women**
2. Number of gynaecological examinations per pregnant Roma **woman**
3. Number of deliveries of young Roma women under the age of 16 compared to the national average

Goal 5: Education and training of Roma community members for health care and medical jobs

Indicators:

1. Number of Roma in health care and medical professions
2. Number of scholarships awarded to Roma students training for health care and medical professions
3. Number of Roma training for health care and medical professions

The Action Plan on Health 2011-2012 takes up the goals of the overall Action Plan, however, calls them now measures. However, with regard to goal/measure 3, the goal/measure and the indicators have been slightly changed:

Measure 3 Health Action Plan 2011-2012

Measure 3: Health education focusing on family planning, the protection of reproductive health and measures for safe motherhood, especially for pregnant and parturient women (education of Roma assistants, education of Roma families through domiciliary care teams)

Indicators:

Number of Roma women undergoing gynecological examinations

Surveys with questionnaires and education with focus on reproductive health

Though the measure proposes "education of Roma assistants", it does not propose any relevant indicator and does actually not take up Goal 1) of the National Programme. The 2010 De-

cade Progress Report states to health that Roma have registered in high schools (12 students) and higher education (2 students) and that the authorities are still in process of developing programs for health mediators.⁵⁶ According to the Government Office for National Minorities, the government intends now to make use of an initiative of the Council of Europe to employ Health Mediators.⁵⁷

4.2.4. Housing

The government focused its activities on the legalisation of Romani settlements and housing (re-) construction and infrastructure upgrading in Medjimurje County which is the county with the largest Romani community in Croatia. The activities were primarily implemented with financial resources from the European Commission and the state budget.

Croatia, with the financial assistance of the European Commission, implemented three housing and infrastructure projects within Medjimurje County.

The PHARE 2005 project, worth € 624.796 was awarded for the construction of community roads, water supply and electricity supply in the village of Parag in Medjimurje County).⁵⁸

The PHARE 2006 project with the budget of € 3,254.816 provides for the construction of community roads, water supply and electricity supply in the villages of Lončarevo, Pribislavec and Piškorovec in Medjimurje County.⁵⁹

The IPA Annual Programme 2008 foresees a third infrastructure project with a budget of € 3,333.333 (EC contribution € 2.5 million) in the Romani settlements of Orehovica and Mursko Središće (Sitnice) in Medjimurje County. According to the project fiche, the local authorities in Medjimurje County (6000 Roma live in the county and constitute the largest Roma community in Croatia) have initiated the full legalisation of all illegal Roma settlements, opening the door for structural improvement of the living conditions in these settlements.⁶⁰

According to a Government document seventeen families of the Romani settlement in Donja Dubrava received “solidly built houses” and access to health care and social protection has been improved.⁶¹

Yet, decisions to legalize Roma settlements have been taken according to the National Program for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion. Thirteen out of 14 counties in which Roma settlements exist developed their plans for the legalisation of Roma settlements and improvement of housing conditions.⁶² In total, nine Romani settlements were legalised in the Medjimurje County.⁶³

Roma National Programme and the Relevant Action Plans

The chapter on housing of the National Programme for Roma does not make any reference to

56 Government of Croatia, Decade of Roma Inclusion, Progress Report 2010, Zagreb 2011

57 Interview with Office for National Minorities, Government of the Republic of Croatia, Zagreb 7 July 2011

58 <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services>

59 <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services>

60 http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/croatia/ipa/2008/2008-0101-05_roma_support_project_-_phase_iii_version_081010_en.pdf

61 Protection of Roma in Croatia (October 2010)

62 Protection of Roma in Croatia (October 2010)

63 Joint Memorandum on Social Inclusion of the Republic of Croatia available at <http://www.delhrv.ec.europa.eu> (accessed 7 June 2011)

Romani women.⁶⁴

The **overall Action Plan on Housing** contains three main goals. None of the goals or their indicators refers to Romani women though **Goal 1.3.2** “Regulating property ownership patterns” could have been used to promote ownership among Romani women.

The main implementing agencies are the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Physical Planning and Construction and the regional and local self-government units.

None of the proposed measures or indicators of the **Action Plan on Housing 2011-2012** refers to Romani women.⁶⁵

4.2.5. Gender-Based Violence

Roma National Programme and the Decade Action Plans

The **National Programme for Roma** proposes, as one of the measures in the chapter “Social Welfare”, the organisation of workshops for small Romani groups addressing inter alia issues such as family protection measures and criminal law protection, family relations with particular emphasis on the need to prevent marriages of minors, interventions and assistance in solving the differences between partners and protection from human trafficking and sexual abuse.⁶⁶

Social welfare centres, county institutes for public health, Roma and other NGOs, local and regional self-government units are the responsible implementing authority and it should constitute a continuous activity.

The Decade Action Plans (neither the overall action plans nor the action plans for 2011-2012) do not refer to gender based violence towards Romani women.

National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010⁶⁷

The document dedicated a chapter to Romani women. However, it does not mention the issue of gender-based violence.

National Strategy for the Protection against Family Violence (2005-2007)

The document does not refer to Romani women, however, proposes the measures “ensure dissemination of information about family violence issues to particularly vulnerable population groups”.

4.2.6. Participation

Roma National Programme and the Decade Action Plans

The **National Programme** contains the following goals with regard to participation of Roma:

- Increasing the awareness of the need to participate in decision-making processes

64 Government of Croatia, National Programme (2003)

65 Government of the Republic of Croatia, Action Plan 2011/2012

66 Government of Croatia, National Programme (2003)

67 Gender Equality Policy 2006-2010

- Higher representation of women in representative bodies and their involvement in decision-making processes
- Meeting of formal requirements for the inclusion of Roma representatives in competent state bodies, regional bodies and bodies of local self-government

The National Programme further elaborates that it is necessary to “raise awareness among Roma, especially among Roma women, about the opportunities and ways in which they can exercise their rights”. It defines, as an expected effect, the “establishment of Roma councils in counties, towns and municipalities in compliance with the relevant legislation and proportional representation of women in those councils”.

The Office for National Minorities is the responsible implementing authority and it should constitute a continuous activity.

According to the National Programme, the participation of Romani women in the self-representation structures of Roma has further to be improved.

The **overall Action Plans** refer to participation in the chapter on education. The sub-chapter “informal education” contains goal 2) “Creating the conditions and training for active participation in public life and decision-making processes at all levels” with the indicator “Number of seminars given to date; number of Roma (male/female) participating in public life and government bodies”.

The **Action Plans for 2011-2012** do not refer to the participation of Roma or Romani women.

Montenegro

4.3. Montenegro

4.3.1. Education

In general, education lies within the competencies of the Ministry of Education and Sports. The relevant laws such as the General Law on Education, Law on Preschool Education, Law on Primary Education, and Law on Higher Education do not explicitly refer to Roma.⁶⁸

The General Law on Education stipulates that “in the municipalities within which the majority, or a significant part of population, is composed of the members of national and ethnical groups, the teaching shall be accomplished in the language of those national or ethnical groups”. This stipulation does not seem to be applicable to Roma. Further, the Law requires that the state budget should finance “the subvention of the textbooks of small circulation, as well as those for the education of national or ethnical groups”.⁶⁹

Montenegro invested efforts in raising the number of Roma attending secondary and tertiary education, primarily through the provision of scholarships to students of Romani origin (secondary school: € 70 – 57 beneficiaries; tertiary education: € 150 – eight beneficiaries) and the provision of assistance for purchasing textbooks and materials. Further, it provided free text-books to students in the first three grades of primary school.

Seven Romani Teaching Assistants are employed on project basis (two each in Podgorica and Berane and three in Niksic).⁷⁰

According to the government Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report 2010, three of sixteen projects targeting the implementation of the strategy/action plan financed by the state budget were in the field of education.

- (i) provision of scholarships and assistance to secondary school and university students (in total: 69.750.00 €);

- (ii) provision of free textbooks and school supplies for students in the first, second and third grade of elementary school for school year 2010/11 (in total € 33,387.50);

- (iii) assistance to a comprehensive approach involving pupils and parents in a school in Podgorica (in total: 22.700.00 €);

The government report does not explicitly refer to the inclusion of Romani girls.

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plan

The **Strategy** recommends on a total of fifteen measures with regard to education which should be implemented in a four-year period following its adoption. Two of these envisaged measures explicitly mentions Romani girls (special attention to female pupils with regard to scholarships and support to “persist in their schooling”; girls as a target group for literacy and additional education). The further measures do not refer to Romani girls.

68 See the relevant laws on the website of the Ministry of Education and Sports at <http://www.mps.gov.me/en/library/zakoni> (accessed 18 April 2011)

69 General Law on Education available at <http://www.mps.gov.me/en/library/document?pagerIndex=5> (accessed 18 April 2011)

70 Interview with Sabahudin Delic, Assistant Minister of Human and Minority Rights, Podgorica 30 June 2011

The measures should be implemented by the Ministry of Education that should establish a commission and relevant sub-commissions (preschool, primary, secondary, university education). Three Roma should be represented in these structures. Further, in municipalities with a Romani population, one local government officer should be responsible for the implementation of these activities at local level.

In 2009, 30% of the total budget for the implementation of the Strategy should have been allocated for the implementation of the education-related measures.

The **Action Plan on Education** consists of an “explanatory part” and the actual action plan. The Action Plan intends to achieve ten goals with a couple of activities. According to the explanatory part, the Action Plan intends to achieve within the framework of Goal 2, Goal 3 and Goal 4 to “foster motivation for education” which should be reached inter alia through activities such as the acquisition of general knowledge, including education on women’s rights, and to developing “programs for preventing girls’ dropout from school”.⁷¹

The explanatory part to Goal 6 refers again to drop-outs by proposing the design of programs for working with groups with specific needs (e.g., girls dropping out of school to get married”).

The actual Action Plan on Education (and not the explanatory note) does not mention these activities anymore and does not refer to girls or women at all. The Action Plan does not define the responsible institutions for its implementation, but provides for a time-frame for its implementation and for the budget necessary for the year 2005. The Action Plan does not provide for any gender-sensitive indicators.

The Action Plan refers also to “cross cutting themes”. Goal 1 “Increase the percentage of registered RAE children” requests gender-sensitive indicators (percentage of registered RAE children, aged 0-18 years (overall, male, female”).

4.3.2. Employment

In 2010, the government financed one project within the sector for employment. The Employment Agency of Montenegro trained 35 Roma (21 men and 14 women) in the project “Creating equal access to work for the RAE population” for five professions: maid, hygienist, street sweeper, ceramist and auxiliary workers in orchards and vineyards (budget in total € 60.000). All participants have successfully completed training and eleven found already employment while for 5-6 persons companies expressed their interest and for nine more persons temporary employment was offered.⁷²

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plan

The Strategy recommends on a total of ten measures with regard to employment which should be implemented in a four-year period following its adoption. One of these envisaged measures requests special attention to be given to the training of Romani women. The other measures, e.g., promoting employment of Roma in public sector or promotion of self-employment do not contain any reference to Romani women; neither requests the proposed monitoring and monitoring structure the compilation of gender-disaggregated data.

These measures should be implemented by the Ministry of Economy and the Employment Agency of the Republic of Montenegro in cooperation with the responsible local self-govern-

71 Decade Action Plans (2005)

72 Government of Montenegro, Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, Progress Report 2010, Podgorica 2011

ment authorities and relevant Roma NGOs. These stake-holders should establish a working group “for the preparation, planning, and implementation of the above-mentioned measures and activities every year”.

20% of the total budget for the implementation of the Strategy should be allocated for the implementation of the labour-market measures.

The **Action Plan on Employment** intends to achieve four goals with a couple of activities each. Romani women and their specific situation on the labour market are not mentioned at all. Neither the goals nor activities nor the indicators refer to or include Romani women.⁷³ The Employment Agency of Montenegro is defined as the responsible institution for the implementation of the Action Plan and for monitoring its implementation. The Action Plan provides for a time-frame for its implementation and for the budget necessary for the year 2005.

Government Approach to Improve Access to Social Security

The Roma Strategy contains a chapter “Social status – housing conditions, health and health insurance, social security and insurance”. Within the component “Social security and insurance” the government intends to achieve as a basic goal the “facilitation of access of the Roma to the system of social security and insurance, i.e. giving a certain degree of preferential treatment on the basis of the principle of affirmative action”.⁷⁴

This objective should be achieved in a four-year period with the implementation of six measures. One of the proposed measures refers explicitly to Romani women: “Drafting and implementing special programmes of social protection for Roma women, especially for those with three or more children, as well as for those who take care of the old and the infirm”.

An inter-sectoral Task Force should oversee and evaluate the implementation “with the assistance of the appropriate public services and NGOs”. 10% of the Strategy budget should be allocated for the implementation of the relevant measures.

4.3.3. Health

In 2009, the government allocated € 600.000 for the implementation of the strategy. 80% of the resources were allocated for three projects targeting the improvement of housing and living conditions (i.e. € 480.000) which, taking into account the health hazardous living conditions of many Roma, should also lead to an improvement of their health status.⁷⁵

In 2010, two of the projects implemented with government funds for the implementation of the strategy/action plans were related to health.

One project “Raising awareness of children and young Roma about the harmful effects of inhalants and other psychoactive substances on health”, targeting around 100 young people in the age between thirteen and seventeen, was implemented in Podgorica and Niksic by the NGO “4 life” and had a budget of € 9.130.

The second project “I want to know what reproductive health is” with a budget of € 6.600 was

73 Decade Action Plans (2005)

74 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy (2008)

75 UNDP, Improving institutional capacity and monitoring capabilities at central and local level for decreasing vulnerability of Roma in Western Balkans, Progress Report No. 5, available at www.ks.undp.org/.../5th_half_year_progress_report_31072009_final.doc (accessed 19 April 2011)

implemented by the Association of Roma and Kovac women “Zensko srce” and targeted more Romani women. Its main purpose was to inform and educate Romani women about the importance of reproductive health.⁷⁶

Health Mediators do not exist in Montenegro.

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the Relevant Action Plan

The **Strategy** contains a chapter “Social status – housing conditions, health and health insurance, social security and insurance”.⁷⁷ With regard to “health and healthcare” the description of the situation focuses on the situation of young Romani women who give birth to 4.7 children on average, mostly at a very young age and hardly visit doctors, especially gynaecologists. The four basic objectives refer only once to Romani women “inclusion of as many Roma citizens as possible, especially women and children, in the basic healthcare package, particularly on the primary level”.

In order to achieve the objectives, eight measures that partly explicitly target Romani women, were identified e.g., “carrying out permanent, periodical measures for the control of health of future mothers and children”, “undertaking of special, medical and educational measures for the purpose of improving reproductive health and securing healthy Roma population descendants”, but also the conduct of a “detailed two year medical research on the condition, problems, and needs of the Roma in the domain of health and healthcare” .

A Task Force consisting of representatives of the government, the Health Insurance Fund of Montenegro and Romani NGOs should be in charge for the implementation of those measures. 10% of the annual government contribution to the implementation of the strategy should be spent on those measures.⁷⁸

With regard to the component “social security and insurance”, the Strategy contains the objective “Drafting and implementing special programmes of social protection for Roma women, especially for those with three or more children, as well as for those who take care of the old and the infirm”

The introduction to the Action Plan on Health emphasises the need to create a National Program and to address the health situation of women, in particular to provide better information (“the Program would make possible increase in knowledge in the area of health promotion, with a special accent on the health of women and children”). The Action Plan intends to achieve four goals; one referring explicitly to women “preservation and improvement of health conditions of Roma population and disease prevention” with an activity referring to women.⁷⁹

4.3.4. Housing

In 2009, the government allocated € 600.000 for the implementation of the strategy. 80% of the resources were allocated for three projects targeting the improvement of housing and living conditions (i.e. € 480.000).⁸⁰

76 Government of Montenegro, Decade of Roma Inclusion 2010 Progress Report, Podgorica 2011

77 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy (2008)

78 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy (2008)

79 Decade Action Plans (2005)

80 UNDP, Improving institutional capacity and monitoring capabilities at central and local level for decreasing vulnerability of Roma in Western Balkans, Progress Report No. 5, available at www.ks.undp.org/.../5th_half_year_progress_report_31072009_final.doc (accessed 19 April 2011)

The 2010 Analytical Report on Montenegro of the European Commission mentions that the majority of funds for the implementation of the Strategy are allocated to housing, “but in segregated areas”.⁸¹

In 2010, the government (co-)financed the implementation of further projects, e.g., the building of a new power station for houses of Roma families in Niksic (contribution: € 15.000), the construction of six houses in Berane (contribution € 30.975) and the assistance to two individual families of activists to legalisation (contribution: € 3.270) and construction (€ 2.956) respectively.

Within the framework of IPA 2011, ninety housing units will be constructed in Konik; the Montenegrin government will co-fund 20% (i.e., ca. € 500.000).⁸²

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the Relevant Action Plan

The **Strategy** recommends on a total of eight measures in order to achieve the objective “urgent improvement of minimum housing conditions, especially in the sense of hygiene and health”. The measures should be implemented in a four-year period following its adoption. The long-term objective with regard to housing is identified as “improvement of general urbanistic-communal housing conditions of the Roma population” which however, would exceed the financial capacity of the government and can only be achieved in a longer-term perspective. None of the envisaged measures refers directly to Romani women.

An inter-sector Housing Task Force with government, local self-government and Romani representatives should draft annual programmes for the realization of the measures and supervise and evaluate the achieved results. 10% of the total budget for the implementation of the Strategy should be allocated for the implementation of the housing measures with local self-governments matching the respective amount.⁸³

The **Action Plan on Housing** contains four goals that should be achieved with a couple of measures. Neither the measures nor the indicators of the Action Plan on Housing refer to Romani women. The Action Plan contains a “column” for “cross-cutting themes”, refers, however, only to the Poverty Reduction Strategy paper (PRSP) and the National Action Plan for Children and not to gender issues.

4.3.5. Gender-Based Violence

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the Action Plans

Neither the Strategy nor the Action Plans nor the introduction to the Action Plans refers to the issue of gender-based violence against Romani women.

Action Plan for the Achievement of Gender Equality in Montenegro (2008-2012)

The Gender Equality Action Plan identified the need to organise public awareness raising campaigns on violence against women among Romani communities.⁸⁴

81 European Commission, Analytical Report (2010)

82 Government of Montenegro, Decade of Roma Inclusion Progress Report 2010, Podgorica 2011

83 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy (2008)

84 Gender Action Plan (2008)

4.3.6. Participation

The government of the Republic of Montenegro recognises the importance of improving the participation of Roma in public and political life. It assists twelve graduates of secondary schools in order to prepare them for the public administration entrance exams. The goal is to increase the number of Roma working in public institutions at central and local level.⁸⁵ With 1 September 2011, the first Romani woman, Behija Ramovic from Podgorica, has been employed within the Office of the Prime Minister.

In six municipalities exist currently local Councils for Gender Equality; the Romani Women Action Plan that is currently being developed proposes the inclusion of Romani women in these councils. Local action plans for Romani women do not exist.

The Action Plan on Romani Women is developed under the leadership of Romani women in co-operation with the Gender Equality Office of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and one Romani women NGO representative is involved in the development of the new Roma Strategy.

Previously, women were neither involved in the development and adoption process of the (former) strategy and the Decade Action Plans.⁸⁶

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the Relevant Action Plans

The Strategy identified “political representation of Roma” as one of the priority fields. It formulated as a basic objective the “professional, functional, and personnel training of the Roma community on its rightful participation in public and political life (...)”.⁸⁷

In order to achieve the objective, five measures are proposed that should primarily be implemented by the Ministry for the Protection of Rights of National and Ethnic Minorities. 10% of the overall allocation from the government for the implementation of the Strategy should be spent on political representation. The measures proposed in the Strategy do not refer explicitly to Romani women.

According to a UNDP paper, the government allocated in 2009, € 30.000 (5% of the overall amount available for the implementation of the strategy) to issues targeting participation in public and political life.⁸⁸

85 Interview with Sabahudin Delic, Assistant Minister for Human and Minority Rights, Podgorica 30 June 2011; three or four of the graduates are women.

86 Interview with a group of Romani women activists, Podgorica 30 June 2011

87 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Strategy (2008)

88 UNDP, Improving institutional capacity and monitoring capabilities at central and local level for decreasing vulnerability of Roma in Western Balkans, Progress Report No. 5, available at www.ks.undp.org/.../5th_half_year_progress_report_31072009_final.doc (accessed 19 April 2011)

Serbia

4.4. Serbia

4.4.1. Education

In the last years, Serbia restructured its education system and paid thereby attention to the situation of the Roma.⁸⁹ In 2009, a new Law on the Foundations of the Education System was adopted that paves the way for an inclusive education including the engagement of Pedagogical Assistants and elimination of the former categorisation procedure used for sending children to special schools.

In 2010, the state budget included for activities in education RSD 66,295.000 (ca. € 611.000).

Budget 2010: Ministry of Education⁹⁰

| Description | Amount (RSD) |
|--|----------------------------|
| Preparatory pre-school programme | 20,000.000 |
| Advanced training of employees in pre-school institutions | 370.000 |
| Activities belonging to primary school education | 16,500.000 |
| Advanced training of employees in primary schools | 370.000 |
| Activities belonging to secondary school education | 4,700.000 |
| Individual support for pupils (secondary school education) | 12,948.000 |
| Individual support for students (university-level education) | 11,407.000 |
| Total RSD | 66,295.000 (ca. € 611.000) |

The main activities, financed by the 2010 state budget:

The activities of the Ministry of Education under the 2010 budget targeted the increased enrolment and school attendance of Roma children at all levels of the education system.

- Pre-school education: increased enrolment in obligatory pre-school preparation programs; teacher training.
- Primary schools: new enrolment policy; Pedagogical Assistants; training for Pedagogical Assistants and teachers.
- Secondary schools: increased enrolment, covering accommodation costs in students' dormitories; providing scholarships to individual pupils.
- Tertiary education: scholarships for 180 university students and paid dormitory fees.

In addition to the large projects mentioned below targeting vulnerable communities in general and financed through IPA projects or a World Bank loan, Serbia focused on affirmative actions directly targeting Roma such as raising the number of Pedagogical Assistants (Romani Teaching Assistants) 55 (September 2010) to 178; 128 are assigned to primary schools and 50 to

⁸⁹ For more details see website of the Ministry of Education available at <http://www.mp.gov.rs/>
⁹⁰ MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

preschool facilities.⁹¹ Further, the Government provides scholarships to increase the participation of Roma in particular in the secondary and tertiary education. In 2009 scholarships and accommodation were provided to 170 secondary school students and 100 university students. Over the last six years, 626 students were enrolled into universities through affirmative actions.⁹²

Within the framework of the World Bank sponsored DILS project, more than 50 municipalities received financial support to promote the inclusion of Roma in the education system.

The data presented above, demonstrated that Romani girls are in an even worse position than Romani boys. In the following, the available policy documents will be analysed in order to see, if they ensure the inclusion of Romani girls and women – as e.g., requested by the Decade Action Plans that require the consideration of gender as a cross-cutting issue.

The National Strategy and the Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy

The Action Plan complements the Strategy and contains the relevant goals, measures, activities, the institutions in charge for implementing and monitoring the activities and time-frame foreseen for the implementation.⁹³ In addition to general, country-wide action plan, municipalities are encouraged to developing local action plans on education in close cooperation with the local educational institutions and the Roma community. In 2010, 40 municipalities developed Local Action Plans for Inclusive Roma Education.⁹⁴

The chapter on Education of the **Strategy** refers among the priorities to the prevention of drop-outs of girls, however, only with regard to pre-school and primary education. The **Action Plan on Education** intends to achieve the following main goals: (i) inclusion of Roma in the education system and provision of continuity in education; (ii) provision of high-quality education; (iii) respect of diversity and development of intercultural values and (iv) fostering cultural identity.

The Action Plan on Education refers explicitly to girls only at one occasion (Measure 1.4.8.) when proposing an activity to overcome traditional gender roles in looking for jobs with a gender-disaggregated indicator (“school performance of Roma girls”). The Action Plan proposes more than 100 activities.⁹⁵ The Action Plan on Education does not include any gender-disaggregated or gender-sensitive indicators.

Serbia developed, however, a specific Action Plan on **Status of Women** that is more pronounced and proposes a couple of specific measures for Romani girls and women in education.

The Action Plan on **Status of Women** requests the introduction of (i) “affirmative measures for permanent education of Roma women” with eight different activities, (ii) “elimination of gender and ethnical stereotypes from teaching programmes and textbooks with three activities and to reduce the (iii) “number of illiterate Roma women by 50% by introducing affirmative measures and positive discrimination for acquiring primary education” with six different activities.

The affirmative measures for permanent education include inter alia:

91 Government of Serbia, Decade of Roma Inclusion, Progress Report 2010, Belgrade 2011

92 Republic of Serbia, Office of Deputy Prime Minister for European Integration, An Overview of Activities Undertaken By Serbia in 2009 With Respect to 10 EU Common Basic Principles For Roma Inclusion. Not all pedagogical assistants are employed by Ministry of Education.

93 See website of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights. Internet: www.ljudskaprava.gov.rs

94 Government of Serbia, Decade of Roma Inclusion, Progress Report 2010, Belgrade 2011

95 Roma Strategy (2010); For a general discussion of the Action Plan from a gender perspective see: Maria-Carmen Pantea, Gender Mainstreaming in the National Action Plans for the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2009)

- (i) Providing mechanisms for monitoring regular class attendance and drop-out rates for girls during school education
- (ii) Introduction of affirmative measures (quota for girls, Roma women in secondary education and post secondary university education)
- (iii) Providing scholarships and loans to Roma women
- (iv) Development and organisation of abbreviated education programmes for primary schools and crafts for girls who are too old for primary schools, but younger than 15
- (v) Support to young mothers who continue their school education through free kindergartens and possibility of attending summarized education programmes

The Action Plan provides for the following relevant indicators: (i) Number of Roma women with completed school: primary education is completed by 100% of the enrolled, secondary education is completed by 20% of those with primary education, higher education - 30 places annually at the universities in Serbia, 10 at each university each year; (ii) number of girls subject to the monitoring and support programme in schools; (iii) number of girls with special needs who are included in support programmes; (iv) number of young mothers and women who continue and complete education. Indicators for both activity (iii) and activity (iv) are not provided.

The affirmative measures for "acquiring primary education" recommends on activities such as:

- (i) A campaign for education in Roma and wider communities
- (ii) Education of parents in the need for educating female children
- (iii) Mechanisms of supervision to ensure equal share of female children in preschool and primary school programmes and implementation of statutory measures for mandatory school education, and organisation and attendance of additional and extra classes
- (iv) Actions to teach adults to read and write in order to help them acquire functional literacy and formal education
- (v) Forming remote school classes for education of adults in Roma settlements

Interestingly, the indicators do not refer to "primary education", but to education system in general.

4.4.2. Employment

The main ministry in charge for improving the situation of Roma on the labour market is the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development (MERD); most of the relevant activities are delivered through the National Employment Service (NES). Starting with 2009, MERD introduced affirmative actions, directly targeting Roma while until 2009 Roma were included into the broader category of target groups. MERD focuses on four active labour market measures: (i) promotion of self-employment; (ii) promotion of employment (subsidies to employers); (iii) public works programmes; (iv) training programmes. In addition, MERD started with 2010 to

improve its outreach activities and to establish a better cooperation with other ministries, since the first evaluations demonstrated that the proposed activities and measures did not show the expected results.⁹⁶

In 2010, a total of **RSD 65,143.429** (ca. € 638.000) were allocated in the state budget to MERD for the implementation of the employment component of the Strategy and the relevant Action Plans.⁹⁷ However, already end of October 2010, MERD spent more than RSD 86 million (ca. € 843.000) on active labour market measures for Roma.⁹⁸

In addition, within the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), RSD 13,611.290 (ca. € 133.000) within the “Fund for solving problems caused by the negative effects of the global economic crisis”) and RSD 400.000 (ca. € 3.900) within the Department of Gender Equality were foreseen for the implementation of the Roma Strategy and its Action Plans.⁹⁹ However, the MLSP budget lines were not used for specific employment-related activities.

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plan

The Strategy recognises that “it should be emphasised that Roma women face “double discrimination” – on the one hand, it is about discrimination by the majority population, and on the other hand, discrimination within the Roma society itself. This pushes Roma women even more to the margins of the economic society”.

The Strategy further contains “general recommendations” that explicitly refer to Romani women:

- Local self-government units and local branches of the National Employment Service should be assigned greater powers and obligations in creating and proposing programmes for Roma men and women.
- International organisations should support the employment of Roma men and women through the allocation of special programmes and projects for that purpose, especially taking into account the number of persons that will return to Serbia from the EU countries based on the signed readmission agreements, and proposed programmes that will be guaranteed by the Government of the Republic of Serbia.
- Roma men and women should participate in the preparation, application and supervision of programmes and projects at all levels, particularly when long-term development plans of local self-governments are adopted.
- When creating measures, special attention should be paid to particularly sensitive categories within the Roma community, e.g. internally displaced persons, returnees based on the readmission agreement, women, youth, persons with disabilities, etc.

The **Action Plan on Employment** refers in several of its nine goals explicitly to Romani women. Several of the envisaged 25 measures and activities to achieve the goals as well as some indicators are gender-sensitive and mention explicitly women. The Action Plan is very ambitious with planning the implementation of all the 25 activities within the time-frame of 2009-2011. The main institutions for the implementation of the activities and measures are MERD and the

96 Montelatici, Mutual Learning (2010)

97 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

98 E-mail of 16 February 2011 from the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights

99 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

National Employment Service (NES).

The indicators are given in absolute terms (“number of Roma men and women...”) that do not allow for measuring progress compared to the previous situation or in comparison to the situation of the majority population (and probably not even between Romani women and men).

The **Action Plan on the Status of Women** contains one goal referring to employment and two main activities that were also referred to in the general Roma Action Plan on Employment, targeting the “introduction of affirmative measures in the process of employment” and “creating opportunities for self-employment”.

Government Activities to Improve the Situation of Roma on the Labour Market

The following analysis can only refer to the available data that are clearly earmarked for Roma. More funds planned for improving the position of the Roma could be included in budget lines allocated for “mainstream” programmes or projects, but it was not possible to track them down in the framework of this research.

Ministry of Economy and Regional Development (MERD) 2010 Activities

According to the website of MERD, RSD 3.7 billion (ca. € 36.259 million) was envisaged in 2010 to be allocated for active employment measures that should reach out to more than 117.000 people.¹⁰⁰ MERD provides the funds that are transferred to the National Employment Service (NES) that is responsible for the implementation of the envisaged activities.

MERD Envisaged Active Employment Measures 2010

| Active employment policy measures | Funds (RSD) | People |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| Active job search | 5.000.000 | 86.840 |
| Further education and training | 2.095.000.000 | 20.000 |
| Trainees | 1.800.000.000 | 16.000 |
| Training | 295.000.000 | 4.000 |
| Employment subsidy | 900.000.000 | 6.075 |
| Self-employment subsidy | 300.000.000 | 1.875 |
| Job creation subsidy | 600.000.000 | 4.200 |
| Public works | 700.000.000 | 5.000 |
| Total funds/people | 3.700.000.000 | 117.915 |

MERD Budget for Roma-related Active Employment Measures 2010¹⁰¹

| Programme Title | Amount in RSD |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Active search for work and job fairs | 50.000 |
| Supplementary education and training | |

¹⁰⁰ Website of the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development available at <http://www.merr.gov.rs/en/c/sektor-za-zapo%C5%A1ljavanje> (accessed 09 February 2011)

¹⁰¹ The table is taken from MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| - Probationary employees | 2.500.000 |
| - Training | 7.000.000 |
| Employment subsidies | |
| - Self-employment subsidies | 12.800.000 |
| - New job creation subsidies | 5.920.000 |
| Public works | 36.873.429 |
| Total RSD | 65.143.429 |

However, according to the "Action Plan for Implementation of the Strategy for Improvement of the Status of Roma in the Republic of Serbia (2009)", RSD 225 million (ca. € 2.2 million) should be allocated annually from 2009 – 2011 from the MERD budget for the implementation of the Roma Strategy.¹⁰² For the year 2009, the Action Plan gives the following details:

| Programme Title | Amount in RSD |
|--|----------------------|
| Additional education and training (ca. 1000 persons) | 65.000.000 |
| Self-employment subsidies (ca. 500 persons) | 65.000.000 |
| New job creation subsidies (500 persons) | 75.000.000 |
| Public works (ca. 500 persons) | 50.000.000 |
| Total RSD | 255.000.000 |

In addition to the financial means allocated from the budget of the Republic of Serbia, the budgets of autonomous territories and local governments, as well as external financial resources are used for financing active employment measures.

For a couple of the active employment measures exist gender-disaggregated data and Romani women were included in all the different activities of MERD aiming at improving the situation of Roma on the labour market, but in none of the activities Romani women constituted 50% of the beneficiaries. It seems to be important to recall the goals and measures proposed in both Action Plans on Employment and Women. Both Action Plans promoted affirmative measures aiming at increasing the number of employed Romani women (public and private sector), increasing the number self-employed Romani women and improving the employability of Romani women.

According to the tables below, 8840 Romani women were included in active employment measures from January 2010 through October 2010 while in 2009, 5306 women participated; this constitutes a considerable increase in 2010 compared to 2009 (66.6%).

¹⁰² Roma Strategy (2010)

MERD Active Employment Measures 2010 – Budget

| Active employment measures – budget | MERD budget active employment measures (2010)* | Envisaged MERD budget Roma Strategy (2010)** | MERD budget/envisaged Roma budget (%) | Actual MERD budget for Roma Jan-Oct 2010*** | MERD budget /actual Roma budget (%) | Envisaged Roma budget /actual Roma budget/ (%) |
|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Total | 3,700,000,000 | 65,143,429 | 1.76% | 86,082,959,67 | 3.2% | 132.14% |
| Information campaign | | | | 1,031,718,66 | | |
| Development of individual employment plan | | | | 4,471,831,49 | | |
| Employment fair | | | | 310,342,50 | | |
| Active job search | 5,000,000 | 50,000 | 1.00% | 269,580,96 | 5.39% | 539.16% |
| Further training and education | 2,095,000,000 | | | 4,540,834,18 | 0.22% | |
| Trainees (interns) | 1,800,000,000 | 2,500,000 | 0.13% | 751,589,66 | 0.04% | 30.06% |
| Training | 295,000,000 | 7,000,000 | 2.37% | 3,804,244,52 | 1.29% | 54.35% |
| Training and vocational training | | | | | | |
| Entrepreneurship training | | | | 152,691,56 | | |
| Information and counselling on entrepreneurship | | | | 237,092,17 | | |
| Subsidised self-employment | 300,000,000 | 12,800,000 | 4.27% | 16,290,720,27 | 5.43% | 127.27% |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------|
| Subsidised employment | 600,000.000 | 5,920.000 | 0.99% | 10,138,846.50 | 1.69% | 171.26% |
| Employment in public works | 700,000.000 | 36,873.429 | 5.55% | 53,182,190.00 | 7.60% | 144.23% |
| Professional orientation | | | | 43,426.04 | | |
| Facilitating contacts with employers | | | | 996,697.66 | | |

*MERD budget active employment measures (2010)¹⁰³

**Envisaged MERD budget Roma Strategy (2010)¹⁰⁴

***Actual MERD budget for Roma Jan-Oct 2010¹⁰⁵

103 Website of the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development available at <http://www.merr.gov.rs/en/c/sektor-za-zapo%C5%A1tjavanje> (accessed 09 February 2011)

104 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

105 Data from an e-mail from Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of 16 February 2011

MERD Active Employment Measures 2010 – Beneficiaries

| Active employment measures – beneficiaries | MERD active employment measures (2010)* | Roma beneficiaries Jan – Oct 2010 -total** | Roma beneficiaries Jan – Oct 2010 -women*** | Romani beneficiaries (%) | Women among Romani beneficiaries (%) |
|---|---|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Information campaign | | 2.946 | 1313 | | 44.57% |
| Development of individual employment plan | | 12.769 | 5398 | | 42.27% |
| Active job search | 86.840 | 682 | 299 | 0.78% | 43.84% |
| Employment fair | | 750 | 286 | | 38.13% |
| Further training and education | 20.000 | 93 | 31 | | 33.33% |
| Trainees (interns) | 16.000 | | | | |
| Training | 4.000 | | | | |
| Training and vocational training | | | | | |
| Entrepreneurship training | | 436 | 120 | | 27.52% |
| Information and counselling on entrepreneurship | | 677 | 182 | | 26.88% |
| Employment subsidies | 6.075 | | | | |
| Subsidised self-employment | 1.875 | 99 | 29 | 5.28% | 29.29% |
| Subsidised employment | 4.200 | 43 | 18 | 1.02% | 41.86% |
| Employment in public works | 5.000 | 487 | 115 | 9.74% | 23.61% |
| Professional orientation | | 124 | 46 | | 37.10% |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|--|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Facilitating contacts with employers | | 2.864 | | 1,003 | | |
| Total | 117.915 | 21.970 | | 8.840 | 18.63% | 35.02% |

*MERD active employment measures (2010)¹⁰⁶

**Roma beneficiaries Jan – Oct 2010 -total¹⁰⁷

***Roma beneficiaries Jan – Oct 2010 -women¹⁰⁸

106 Website of the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development available at <http://www.merr.gov.rs/en/c/sekto-za-zapo%C5%A1ljavanje> (accessed 09 February 2011)

107 Data from an e-mail of 16 February 2011 from Ministry of Human and Minority Rights

108 Data from an e-mail of 16 February 2011 from Ministry of Human and Minority Rights

A comparison of the 2009 and 2010 data shows the following:

| | Romani participants 2009* | | Romani participants first 10 months of 2010** | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------|---|--------------|
| | Total | Women | Total | Women |
| Information campaign | 4.968 | 2.191 | 2.946 | 1.313 |
| Development of Individual Employment Plan | 5.910 | 2.351 | 12.769 | 5.398 |
| Active job search | | | 682 | 299 |
| Training for active job-hunting | 297 | 134 | | |
| Employment fair | 778 | 281 | 750 | 286 |
| Further education and training | | | 93 | 31 |
| Trainees (interns) | | | | |
| Training | | | | |
| Training and vocational training | 88 | 17 | | |
| Entrepreneurship training | 120 | 47 | 436 | 120 |
| Information and counselling on entrepreneurship | 233 | 83 | 677 | 182 |
| Subsidised self-employment | 79 | 25 | 99 | 29 |
| Subsidised employment | 125 | 52 | 43 | 18 |
| Employment in public works | 590 | 125 | 487 | 115 |
| Professional orientation | | | 124 | 46 |
| Facilitating contacts with employers | | | 2.864 | 1.003 |
| Total | 13.188 | 5.306 | 21.970 | 8.840 |

*Romani participants 2009¹⁰⁹

**Romani participants first 10 months of 2010¹¹⁰

4.4.3. Health

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plans

In the introductory part, the Strategy refers several times to women, dedicated one chapter to "Health care of women in the reproductive period". The employment of female Roma health mediators in health centres was defined as one of the priorities.

The **Action Plan on Health** contains goals and measures that should mainstream women. However, only two measures refer directly to women ("improvement of reproductive health; engagement of Roma women as health mediators). The only indicator directly referring to Romani

¹⁰⁹ Montelatici, Mutual Learning (2010)

¹¹⁰ Data from an e-mail from Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of 16 February 2011

women is “number of Roma women engaged as health mediators by local self-government units”.

The issue of discrimination in relation to access to health care is neither explicitly addressed in the Action Plan on **“Health”** nor in the Action Plan on **“Status of Women”**.

The Action Plan on **“Status of Women”** contains one goal referring to health. It takes up the requests of the Action Plan on **“Health”** of employment of women as health mediators and addressing reproductive health through (i) organising informative public lectures for Roma women in the area of health care and (ii) familiarising health professionals with specific needs and culture of Roma women.

In 2010, the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with international organisations employed 60 Romani women as health mediators.¹¹¹

The Action Plan on **“Documents”** is also of importance for the right to health, since the possession of the relevant documents should facilitate the access to health care.¹¹² Though the Action Plan does not explicitly refer to improving access to health care, envisaged measures such as facilitation of registration of habitual residence could indirectly lead to better access to health care.

The 2010 Progress Report of the European Commission states that “problems with access to personal documents persist for Roma people living in illegal settlements without a registered address or who are homeless”.¹¹³

4.4.4. Housing

In the sector of housing, the central government and the municipalities share responsibilities. With regard to spatial and urban planning – that is important for the legalisation of settlements or the development of the infrastructure – the central government can only provide for the framework while the actual development and implementation of the spatial and urban planning is up to the municipalities.

With regard to social housing, the central government provides the framework with the Law on Social Housing; the actual construction of houses and allocation to beneficiaries requires the participation of the municipalities. In August 2009 the government adopted a Law on Social Housing, which entered into force in September, and by September 2010, had developed a National Strategy for Social Housing; a national Housing Agency is to be established in 2011.¹¹⁴

Activities of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP)

The 2009 and 2010 budgets of MESP envisaged technical and financial support to local self-governments for the development of spatial and urban planning documents and to facilitate the improvement of living conditions in Roma settlements.

111 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

112 In general on the problem of access to documents see Müller, Stephan, Civil Registration of Roma – Background Paper. Publication of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Warsaw 2005

113 Commission of the European Communities, Commission Staff Working Document, Serbia 2010, Progress Report Brussels, 09.11.2010 SEC (2010) 1330

114 Amnesty International, Briefing to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 78th Session February 2011. AI INDEX: EUR 70/016/2010

In both years, nine municipalities – Prokuplje, Opovo, Apatin, Sokobanja, Bela Palanka, Srbobran, Mladenovac, Knjaževac and Niš (Red Cross) – received financial assistance “for the development of urban plans covering Roma settlements”. In 2010, MESP intended in addition, to sign respective contracts with the four municipalities Negotin, Veliko Gradište, Kragujevac and Senta which have adopted formal municipal decisions to proceed with this process.¹¹⁵ In case the following local self-government units adopt the relevant municipal decisions, MESP would allocate financial resources for the preparation of urban plans to the municipalities of Beočin, Bačka Palanka, Kragujevac, Leskovac, Žabalj and Odžaci.¹¹⁶

In total, the MESP budget for Roma-related activities (“community development”) was RSD 26,639.312 (ca. € 261.000).¹¹⁷

Several municipalities worked on improving the housing situation of Roma. In addition to the municipalities/local self-governments, mentioned above, that prepared or are in the process of preparing urban and spatial plans that include Romani settlements, other municipalities undertook initiatives regarding the housing situation of Roma. It is not known, if any gender-sensitive activities were undertaken.

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plans

Housing constitutes one of the crucial parts of the Roma Strategy and one of the four priority areas of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. In addition to the Roma Strategy, the Government adopted general, a country-wide Action Plan on Housing and municipalities are encouraged to developing local action plans in close cooperation with the local institutions and the Roma community.

The **Strategy** chapter on Housing formulates as one of the main goals “of improving housing conditions (...) making the life of woman and child easier”.¹¹⁸ The Strategy requests that “the needs of Roma women and children and especially single mothers and victims of domestic violence should be taken into account in housing programmes”.

Despite this (relative) emphasis on women in the Strategy, omits the Roma **Action Plan on Housing** gender-specific interventions.¹¹⁹ Neither the measures nor the indicators refer explicitly to Romani women.

Taking into account the specific situation of Romani women and that they are in general excluded from inheriting property, the Housing Action Plan could have had referred to the issue of “inheritance by women” in the framework of Goal 2.1) “introduction of the principles of affirmative action in housing legislation and related legislation and strategic documents”.

On the other hand, the **Roma Action Plan** on Women contains a goal that refers to property (“increasing the share of Roma women in ownership over immovable property and their knowledge about proprietary rights) which should be achieved with the measure “Raising Roma women’s awareness of proprietary rights through education”.

One goal of the Action Plan on “**Health**” also refers to the issues of housing (“Improvement of living environment in the Roma community”), however, does not explicitly refer to women.

115 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

116 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

117 MHMR, Roma Inclusion Policy (2010)

118 Roma Strategy (2010)

119 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotations see 2.4.) „Recommendations for further action“, 2.4.1.) „Basic Principles“

4.4.5. Gender-Based Violence

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plans

The **Strategy** for Improvement of the Position of Roma discusses the issue of gender-based violence only in a limited way, but includes two priorities within the chapter **“Status of Women”** that deal with gender-based violence:¹²⁰

(i) the government should adopt a policy and give legal guarantees in order to strengthen preventive measures, protect fundamental human rights of victims, conduct adequate investigations and prosecute perpetrators and provide social assistance to victims;

(ii) women should be protected from exposure to secondary victimisation in the proceedings conducted against perpetrators of violence and provided with professional psychosocial assistance during the court proceedings. Men and women police experts should be appointed who are additionally trained for issues in connection with violence against women and for the use of medical and other court evidence.

With regard to trafficking, the Roma Strategy concludes that “prevailing unwritten codes” within the Romani community violate human rights of women, however, does not propose any measures to address this attitude.¹²¹

The **Action Plan on Status of Women** contains one goal targeting the adoption of a policy for protection of women against violence with the measures “effective enforcement of law and measures of protection in Roma settlements” and “higher accessibility of services for protection of Roma women against violence”. The Action Plan does not focus on prevention of domestic violence and on working with male Roma in order to prevent domestic violence.

All the goals should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011. Responsible institutions are the Administration for Gender Equality, several ministries (Ministry of Labour and Social policy, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice) and the local self-government units.

In addition, the chapter **“Housing”** of the Strategy mentions as one of the basic principles “the needs of Roma women and children and especially single mothers and victims of domestic violence should be taken into account in housing programmes”.¹²² The relevant Action Plan on **“Housing”**, however, does not include any respective measure.¹²³

Within the chapter of the Strategy it is recommended that Romani women “should work on the issues of domestic violence (this should also be taken into account when planning measures relating to the prevention of violence and provision of assistance to the victims of violence)”.¹²⁴ The Strategy calls upon the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) to develop “special preventive programmes of support to Roma families, primarily women and children”.¹²⁵

The relevant Action Plan **“Social Insurance and Social Care”** does not refer explicitly to prevention of domestic violence; it only states as a measure that special prevention programmes to

120 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotations see 9.5.) „Priorities“

121 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotation see 9.4.1) „General Recommendations“

122 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotation see 2.4.1) „Basic Principles“

123 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotation see 2.4.1) „Basic Principles“

124 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotation see 7.4) „Recommendations for further action“

125 Roma Strategy (2010)

support Roma families, particularly women and children should be developed. The time-frame for its implementation is 2009 – 2011 and the responsibility lies with the MLSP and the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights. RSD 7 million (ca. € 68.000) were envisaged for the implementation of Roma-related activities of MLSP (RSD 5 million to be transferred to other government levels and RSD 2 million as grants to non-governmental organisations).¹²⁶

The Strategy (Status of Women) also addresses the issue of trafficking and recommends that “mechanisms (legal and functional) for the protection of women and children from human trafficking and exploitation should be established at all levels”.¹²⁷

The Strategy concludes that with regard to trafficking of Romani women and children, prejudices and stereotypes “turn into open discrimination” and that on the other “prevailing unwritten codes” within the Romani community violate human rights of women.¹²⁸

The Action Plan “**Status of Women**” takes the issue up and introduces a goal referring to anti-trafficking. The institutions in charge for the implementation are Ministry of Interior, IOM and local self-government units. The measures should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011.

National Strategy For Improving The Position Of Women And Promoting Gender Equality

The chapter “prevent and eliminate the violence against women and promote the victim’s rights” of the National Gender Strategy identified Romani women amongst more than a dozen other groups as one of the “marginalized and/or multiply discriminated groups (that) are particularly exposed to violence”. The National Gender Strategy recommends the introduction of several measures in particular targeting “multiply discriminated groups” without specifying for which groups exactly the proposed measures are envisaged.¹²⁹ The proposed measures include issues such as capacity-building, access to shelters, research and public awareness.

Draft National Strategy for Combating Gender-Based Violence and Family Violence

The Strategy refers to Romani women and two Romani women organisations were involved in the drafting process. However, neither an Action Plan nor a budget has been adopted yet.¹³⁰

4.4.6. Participation

The Strategy for Improvement of the Position of Roma contains a chapter on “Political Participation and Representation” and a relevant Action Plan was adopted. According to the Action Plan on Political Participation and Representation, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights as well as the Government of Serbia, the Executive Council of the Autonomous Province Vojvodina, the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, the Assembly of the Autonomous Province Vojvodina and local self-government units are the responsible institutions for its implementation.

Strategy for Improving the Position of the Roma and the relevant Action Plans

The **Strategy** dedicates a chapter to the issue of Political Participation and Representation. It stipulates *inter alia* that the “participation of Roma women in public and political life should

126 Roma Strategy (2010)

127 Roma Strategy (2010)

128 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotation see 9.4.1) „General Recommendations“

129 Gender Strategy (2009)

130 E-mail from Bibija of 31. August 2011

be promoted” and that “Roma women must have the opportunity of participating on an equal footing with men in consultative and other mechanisms established for the purpose of better access to all areas of public and political life”. The Strategy assigns great importance to promoting the participation of Roma women which is supported by the fact that the chapter “Political Participation and Representation” contains a single priority: “Increasing the participation of Roma women in public political life”.¹³¹

Further, the Strategy identified as recommendations to “secure equal voting rights of women, including prohibition of the so-called “family voting”” and to encourage “inclusion of Roma men and women in public services (...) even by introducing special measures if necessary.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia, the Executive Council of the AP of Vojvodina, the Parliament of the Republic of Serbia as well as the Parliament of the AP of Vojvodina should prepare internal strategies and set clear indicators and deadlines for increasing the number of the employed Roma men and women and for improving the traineeship programmes for Roma”.¹³² However, respective action hasn't been taken yet.

The Action Plan determines that for activities targeting political participation and representation, funds “are not separately planned within the budget of the Republic of Serbia”.¹³³

The Action Plan on Political Participation and Representation contains three goals and several measures and activities. One goal “Contribution to equal share of Roma men and women in public services” and its related activities and measures – (i) employment of Roma men and women in government institutions and improvement of internship programmes (ii) employment of Roma men and women in bodies of local self-government units and improvement of internship programmes – specifically refer to Roma women. The indicators, however, are not gender-sensitive. All the goals should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011.

In addition to the Action Plan on Political Participation and Representation, the **Action Plan on Women** contains goals regarding participation and representation. The goals should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011 within the responsibility of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights in cooperation with the Gender Equality Directorate within the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (Goal 9.1.) and Roma women's citizen associations in cooperation with the OSCE (Goal 9.2.).

131 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotations see 12.4.) „Recommendations for further action“

132 Roma Strategy (2010). For the quotations see 12.4.) „Recommendations for further action“

133 Roma Strategy (2010)

Goal 9.1: Improvement of the policy of equal opportunities and rights of Roma women through the work of Roma associations dealing with sex, gender, and Roma issues

9.1.1. Strengthening Roma women's network

9.1.2. Preparing bulletins on rights of Roma women and possibilities for their accomplishment, with CEDAW recommendations

Goal 9.2: More active role of Roma women in the democratisation process

9.2.1. Participation of Roma women in public and political life

a) Activities oriented toward the respect of quota systems within Roma political parties and bodies that represent them, including the National Council of Roma National Minority, work groups, etc

b) Provision of affirmative action measures to increase the involvement of Roma women in representative bodies by 30% of the obtained number of mandates for representatives of national minorities

c) Providing the quota for women representatives of national minorities in working bodies and agencies founded by the Republic of Serbia

d) Education of Roma women in human rights, particularly in women's human rights, EU and international standards in this area, and in possibilities of civil involvement and activism

e) Ongoing support of the government to Roma women's organizations on all levels

Further, the **Action Plan on Housing** is of importance. It contains Goal 2.5) "Action training of inhabitants of Roma settlements for inclusion in the work of local decision-making bodies and forming local self-government bodies in the territories where Roma settlements with 1000 to 5000 Roma citizens are located". The goal envisages activities such as "training and motivating individuals from ghettos" and the forming of "Council of Inhabitants" in settlements with 200 to 1000 inhabitants and of "local offices" in settlements with 1000 to 5000 inhabitants.¹³⁴ However, neither these activities nor the respective indicators refer explicitly to the inclusion of Romani women.

The activities should be implemented in the period 2009 – 2011 and the responsibility for the implementation of this goal lies with local self-government units while the Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self-Government is in charge of monitoring the implementation.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ It is not clear, if the term „local office“ as mentioned in activity 2.5.3. is used as a synonym of „local decision-making bodies and forming local self-government bodies“ as mentioned in Goal 2.5.

¹³⁵ Roma Strategy (2010)

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