

Access to Justice for Women Confronted with Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination

The Case of Legal Aid Centers and Roma Communities in Bulgaria and Romania

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strengthening judicial capacity to improve women's access to justice

Regional Conference organized by the Council of Europe in partnership with the National Institute of Justice of the Republic of Moldova

24-25 October 2016, National Institute of Justice

Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova



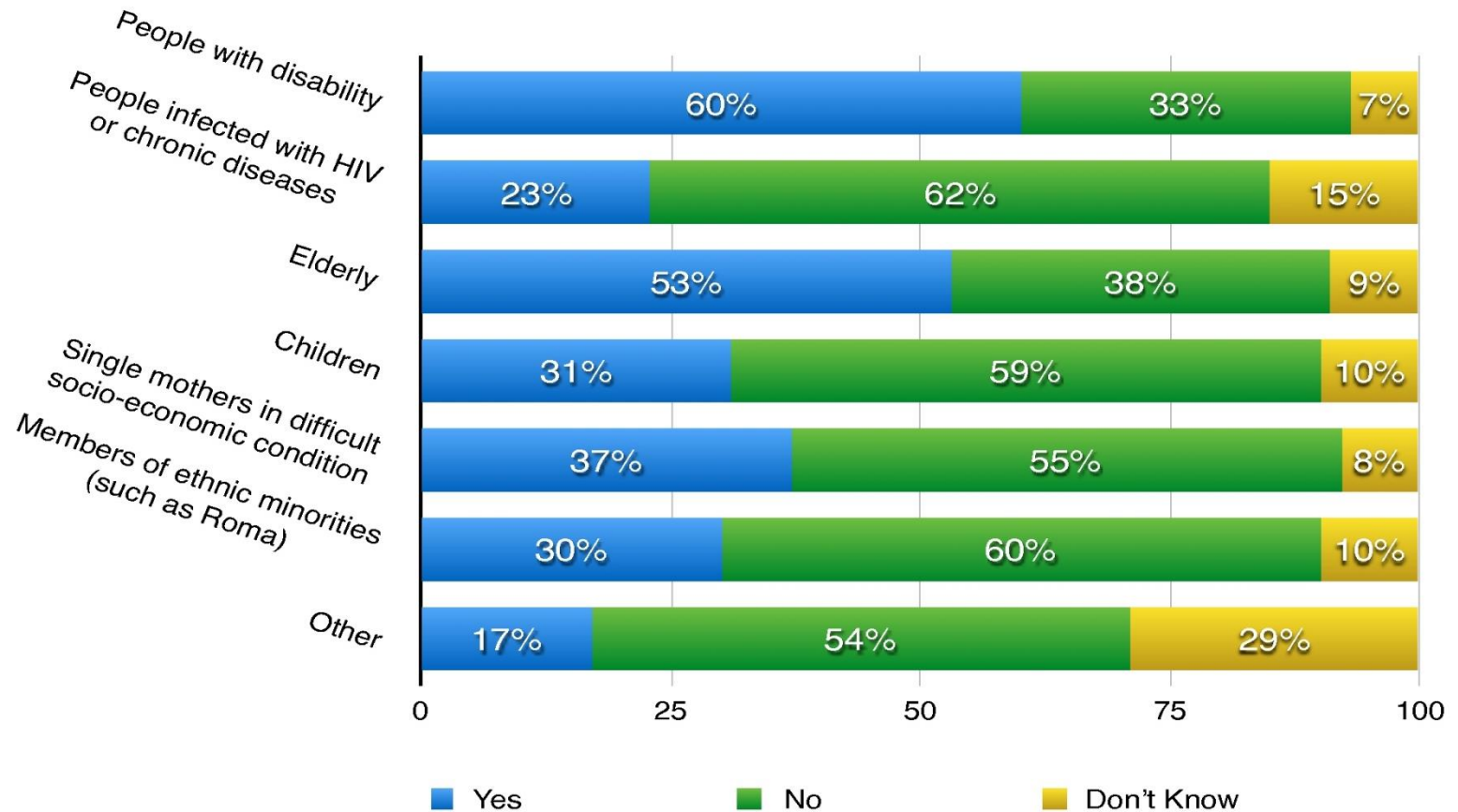
Vulnerable groups. Access to justice. Free legal aid

- Who is vulnerable in reality – experience from EEA Grants cooperation projects in Bulgaria and Romania
- Trust in the Judiciary and the issue of bridging the gap
- How is legal aid made accessible – the case of the National Telephone for Primary Legal Aid in Bulgaria and the regional centers in both BG and RO + project JUSTROM



Vulnerable groups in view of Courts

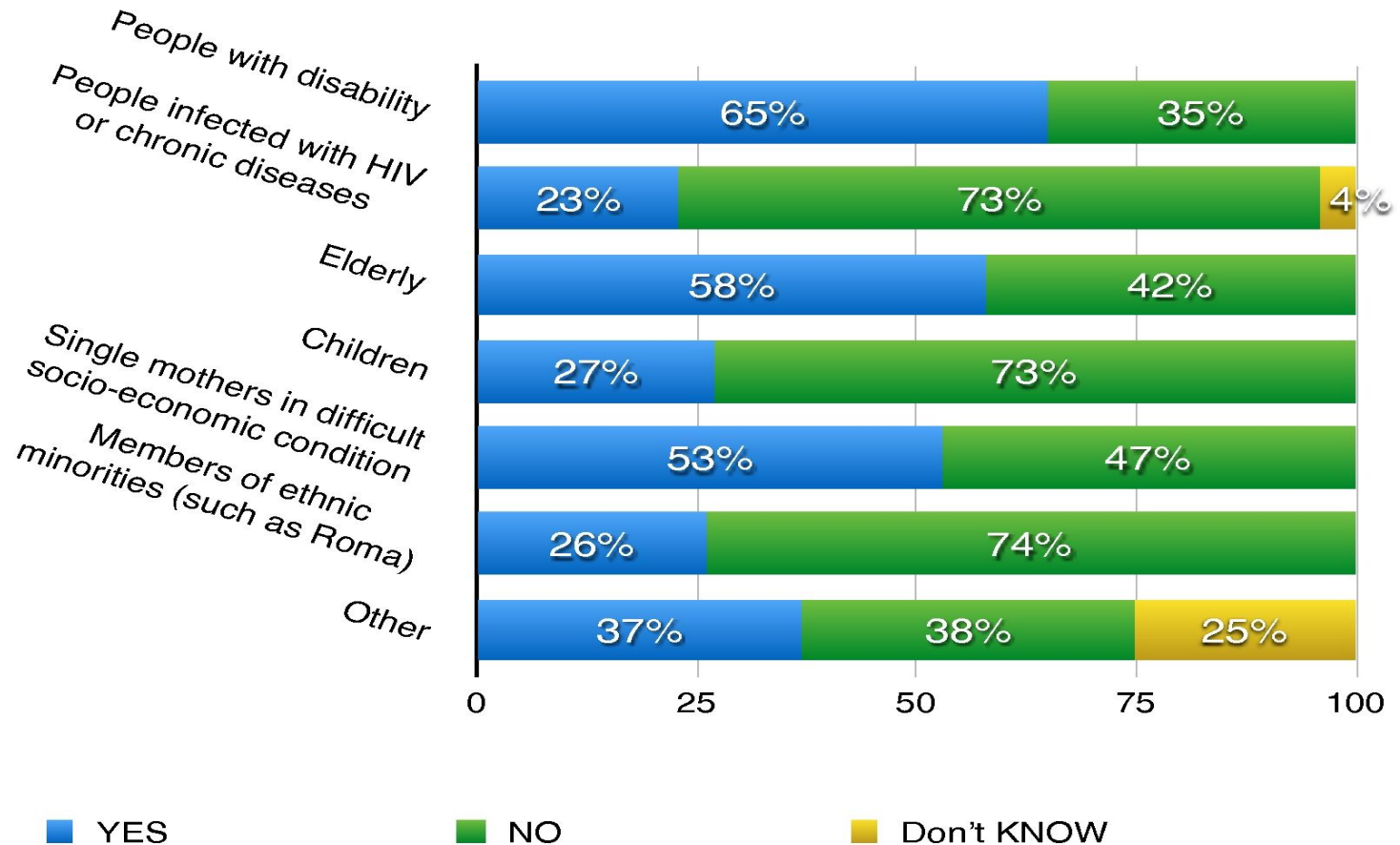
2. Which groups of citizens would you consider vulnerable regarding the access to justice?





Vulnerable groups in view of institutions

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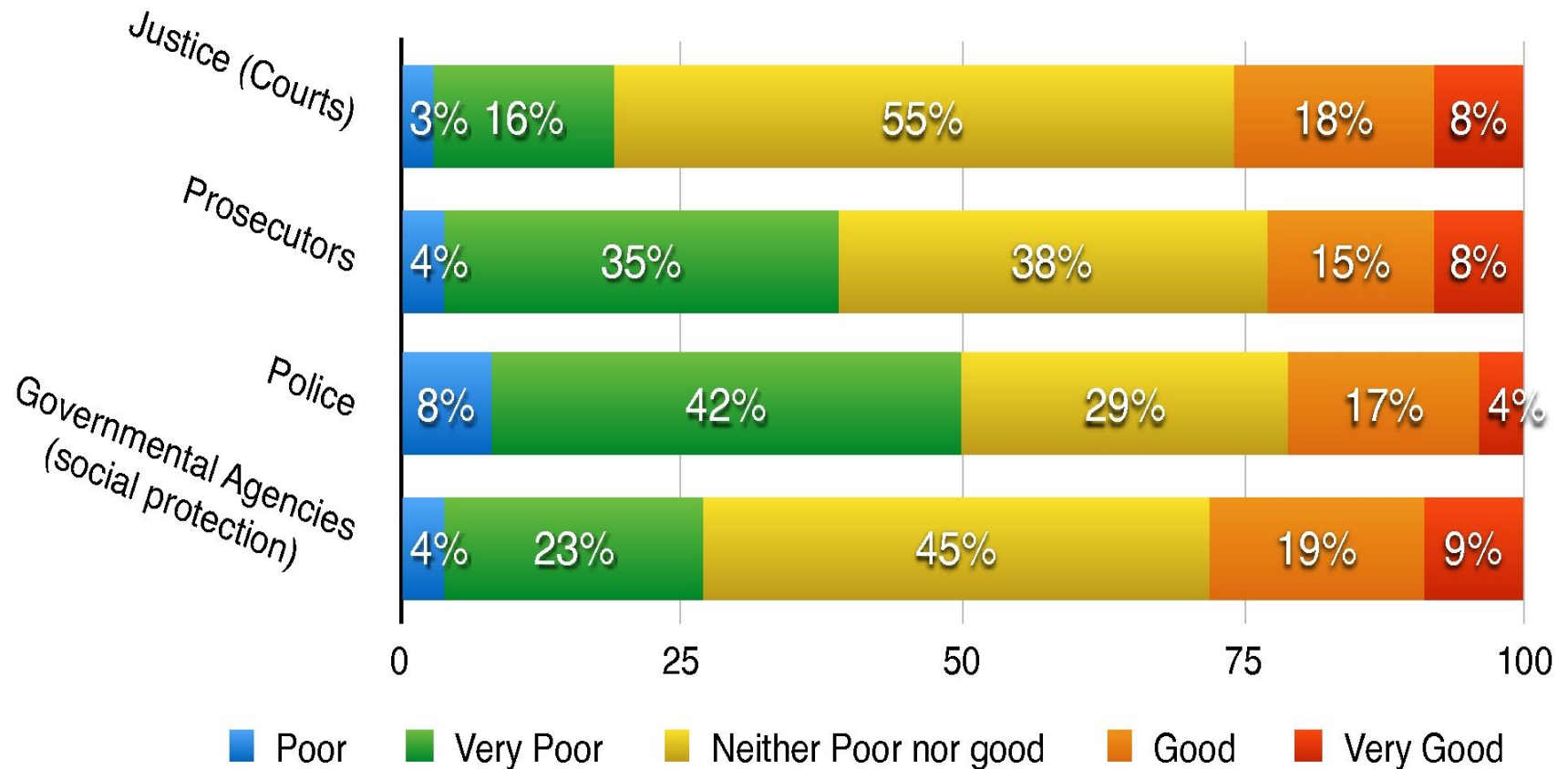


Access to justice obstacles for Roma women

- lack of awareness about their rights;
- lack of trust in public institutions;
- lack of confidence in reporting offences against them to the police;
- lack of knowledge of protective or enforcement agencies;
- lack of physical accessibility to court facilities;
- lack of knowledge and pre-requisites to access free legal aid or financial means to cover litigation costs;
- illiteracy or lack of fluency in the national language;
- legal problems clash with Romani traditions.

Views of Courts on the level of trust of Roma in justice

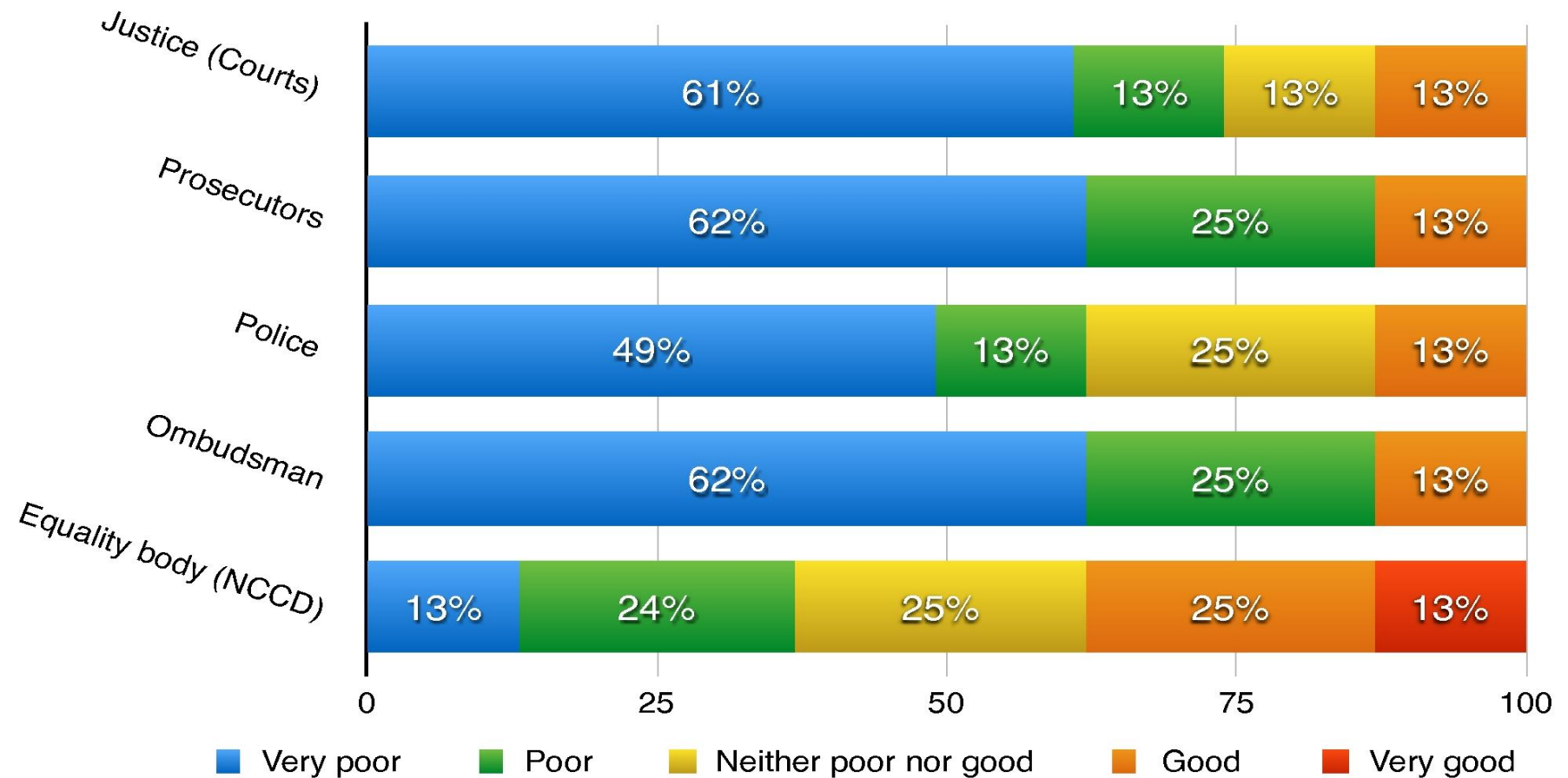
4. Based on your experience how would you evaluate the trust of members of Roma minority in:





Views of NGOs on the level of trust of Roma in justice

3. Based on your experience how would you evaluate the trust of vulnerable groups in:



National Legal Aid Bureau in Bulgaria

National Telephone for Primary Legal Aid



Indicator

Better legal protection of the vulnerable groups' rights and interests.

Base line **34** in 2012 /Target **250** in 2014



Legal Aid Information System

- 9701 consultations for 24 months;
- 60:40% female: male clients;
- average age 35-50 for legal aid hotline;
- 38% of clients from Sofia, the remaining almost equally spread among district towns and rural areas;



Superior Council of Magistracy of Romania

Regional Legal Aid Centres



Indicator

Better legal protection of the vulnerable groups' rights and interests.

Base line **0 centers** /Target **5 centers**

Current stage of implementation

- Information and awareness raising campaign
- Pilot run in Craiova, Buzau, Bucharest, Cluj Napoca, Oradea, Iasi and Targu Mures
- Non-discrimination trainings for magistrates, civil servants and NGOs





Project JUSTROM

CoE/EU Joint Programme on Roma and Traveller
Women's Access to Justice (JUSTROM)

Aim

to enhance Roma and Traveller women's access to justice in
Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Italy and Romania

Launch

1st October 2016

Planned Activities

- Information and awareness raising campaign
- Establish legal clinics for marginalized communities
- Non-discrimination trainings for lawyers, magistrates and police officers



Conclusions

Avoiding the reinvention of the wheel through cooperation projects and helping the transfer of know-how among stakeholders

NGOs and Roma community mediators bridge the trust gap and ensure access to free legal aid for those truly vulnerable

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