



28 August 2001

Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

Comments of the Government of Romania on the Opinion of the Advisory Committee
on the Report on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection
of National Minorities in Romania

TRANSLATION

On 24 June 1999, the Romanian Government tabled with the Council of Europe Secretariat the State Report on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The Advisory Committee examined the report between 13 and 16 September.

The Romanian authorities further replied on 6 April 2000 to the Advisory Committee's questionnaire.

On receipt of the Opinion of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the Romanian authorities sent it to the ministries with responsibilities in the field of protection of persons belonging to national minorities, to Parliament (Chamber of Deputies and Senate) and to organisations of national minorities. The reply to the Advisory Committee's Opinion is therefore the result of dialogue and consultation between all the parties concerned.

This exercise is a good opportunity for deepening the ongoing dialogue that has existed between the Romanian authorities and the Council of Europe and its various bodies since Romania became a member. This dialogue enables the Romanian authorities to assess the progress made in building the rule of law and democratic institutions and in the protection of national minorities.

In recent years significant changes have taken place in Romania in the field of human rights in general and in the protection of persons belonging to national minorities.

The institution of the **People's Advocate (Ombudsman)** already plays an important part in defending the rights and freedoms of the people who apply to it and in the efforts being made to raise awareness of these issues in Romanian society.

The Romanian Government has introduced a new Education Act developing the education system for national minorities and a strategy for improving Roma standards. At the present time several central and east European countries have already developed or are in the process of developing national strategies for Roma; we must nonetheless stress the fact, which is recognised abroad too, that Romania is the only country where a programme on such a scale is being drawn up with the direct participation of Roma representatives from the outset.

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL ASPECTS

A. Political representation and institutional framework

Following the general election of November 2000, some 18 different minority groups have separate representation in the Romanian Parliament. For example, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania won 39 seats in the Parliament (27 in the Chamber of Deputies and 12 in the Senate). The other organisations each have one seat, as provided for in Article 59 of the Romanian Constitution. Czechs and Slovaks are represented by the same organisation. The Democratic Union of Italians won one seat by virtue of the number of votes cast.

Following the local elections of June 2000, a large number of people belonging to national minorities were elected mayors and local councillors in communes (villages), towns, municipalities and counties. Those elected stood either as candidates on the various political party lists or as independent candidates. For its part, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (DAHR) has 148 elected mayors and 2 586 local councillors. Apart from the DAHR, other ethnic Hungarian organisations won 33 seats on local councils.

Posts of mayor (communes, towns and municipalities):

Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania	5 seats
Union of Ukrainians in Romania	3 seats
Democratic Union of Slovaks and Czechs in Romania	2 seats
Union of Croatians in Romania	1 seat
Community of Lipovan Russians in Romania	1 seat

Councillors (communes, towns, municipalities, counties):

Roma/Gypsies	220
Germans	82
Slovaks and Czechs	28
Ukrainians	26
Lipovan Russians	18
Serbs and Carasoveni	14
Bulgarians	11
Croatians	8
Tatars	2
Pole	1
Greek	1

Changes have taken place in the composition of the Council of National Minorities (CNM), which is now as follows:

- Union of Armenians in Romania;
- Union of Bulgarians in Banat;
- Union of Croatians in Romania;
- Hellenic Union of Romania;
- Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania;
- Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania;
- Italian Community in Romania;
- Democratic Alliance of Hungarians of Romania;
- Union of Poles in Romania “Dom Polski”;
- Roma Party;
- Community of Lipovan Russians in Romania;
- Union of Serbs in Romania;
- Democratic Union of Slovaks and Czechs in Romania;
- Democratic Union Turkish-Moslem Tatars in Romania;
- Turkish Democratic Union of Romania;
- Union of Ukrainians in Romania.

In January 2001 the former Department for the Protection of National Minorities became the Department for Inter-ethnic Relations in the Ministry of Public Information.

B. Legislative framework

1. International conventions

Romania has ratified the **Revised European Social Charter** (Act No. 74/1999).

The Department for Inter-ethnic Relations in the Ministry of Public Information has prepared a Bill to ratify the **European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages**. This Bill has been sent to the ministries for opinion and comment.

On 4 November 2000, Romania signed **Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights** on the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

2. Domestic law

In the spirit of the constitutional provisions relating to non-discrimination, the Government adopted **Order No. 137 on the prevention and punishment of all forms of discrimination** in September 2000. This order largely corresponds to Directive 2000/43/EC of the Council of the European Union of 29 June, implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origins.

Incorporation of these regulations in domestic law brings Romania into line with advanced standards, such as Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights. At the same time it affords a guarantee that enforcement of laws and implementation of policies concerning the rights of persons belonging to national minorities will be more effective. We consider this to be so because the Order is a generally applicable rule whose scope is wider than questions relating to national minorities; indeed, it contains precise technical regulations and begins with definitions of the principle of equality between citizens and discrimination and ends with specific sanctions.

The new **Local Government and Local Self-Government Regulation Act** in force since 25 May 2001 includes all the rules governing the rights of persons belonging to national minorities as laid down in the Government Order amending Act No. 69/1991:

- In territorial administrative units where a national minority accounts for more than 20% of the population, a copy of the agenda for sittings is sent – on request – to people belonging to such minority in their own language.
- In local councils in which councillors from minorities constitute at least one-third of the council's membership, the language of the respective minority can – on request – be used at council sittings and, if the minority accounts for more than 20% of the population, decisions are also published in the language of the minority.
- If a minority accounts for more than 20% of the population, persons who also speak the language of the minority in question will be encouraged to join the public relations department to give oral or written answers.
- If a minority accounts for more than 20% of the population, citizens belonging to the particular minority may, in their relations with the local government authorities and staff, use their mother tongue – both orally and in correspondence – and will receive a reply in the same language.
- Furthermore, local authorities must see to it that the names of these localities, institutions and its own offices, as well as public announcements, appear in the language of the minority. Official documents are written in Romanian. If the representative of the authorities or the local government official does not speak the language of the minority, an approved interpreter is provided by the Town Hall.

The new **Act on the Legal Status of Property misappropriated in the period between 6 March 1945 and 22 December 1989** (Act No. 10 of 8 February 2001) provides, in Section 8 paragraph 2, that “the legal status of property which formerly belonged to religious faiths and national minorities and which was appropriated by the State or another legal person shall be determined by special regulatory measures. Until such time as these measures are adopted, the disposal of such property and changes in its use are prohibited”.

The Romanian authorities are determined to continue to work for solutions to the difficult problems raised by the restitution, 50 years after its confiscation, of property that formerly belonged to religious faiths and national minorities. To this end, special regulatory measures have been taken in recent years concerning the restitution of property that formerly belonged to religious faiths and national minorities:

- the Government's Emergency Order No. 94/2000 restoring to the religious faiths which formerly owned them such properties – other than places of worship – as had been misappropriated, with or without title, by the Romanian state;
- the Government's Emergency Order No. 101/2000 amending and supplementing earlier texts on the subject;
- Government Decision No. 1334/2000 supplementing the appendix to Emergency Order No. 83/1999.

Among the properties restored to their former owners, 80 belong to the Greek Catholic Church. Under the latest Government order, 10 properties have been restored in each diocese and centre of worship (some 550 properties in all).

C. Governmental programmes

- ***The Romanian Government's strategy to improve the situation of Roma*** was adopted by Government Decision 430 of 25 October 2001 (see Appendix). The Strategy covers a period of 10 years (2001-2010), with a 4-year plan of measures (2001-2004). It is the outcome of *joint work by the Government and representative organisations of Roma* and its objectives are to prevent discrimination and to encourage Roma to participate in economic, social, political and cultural life on the basis of equal treatment with other Romanian citizens, train an intellectual and economic Roma élite, eliminate stereotypes and prejudices and create a positive image of Roma in public opinion. The Strategy is applied in the following fields: administration and community development, housing, health, economic affairs, justice, social security, public order, protection of children, education, culture, religious freedom, media and participation in civic life. It provides for *implementing bodies at central and local levels*. The Joint Implementing and Monitoring Committee, made up of representatives of each ministry and of Roma representatives, will be the main body responsible for giving effect to the strategy. A *Ministerial Commission for Roma* made up of governmental experts and Roma representatives is currently being set up in each ministry. At local authority level, implementation of the strategy is the responsibility of the *county offices for Roma (in each county)*, and of *Roma experts who will be employed in town halls*.
- ***The campaign against racism and xenophobia (RAXI)*** is part of the European campaign against racism and xenophobia. The Romanian authorities, encouraged by the proposal of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in Resolution 1123 (1997), have led a sustained information and awareness-raising campaign to educate the population to prevent an upsurge in racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance, which are seen as a threat to human rights and democratic values in Romania. The campaign began in Romania in 1994. In 2001 it had an 800 million lei (approximately EUR 32 000)

appropriation from the state budget. The 2001 funds are earmarked exclusively for Roma activities (see, at appendix, the events financed by the campaign in 2000). To date, the campaign has organised:

1. *the publication in Romanian and free dissemination of international and regional human rights instruments and conventions*, thereby informing a large proportion of the population of the relevant provisions concerning the fight against all forms of racism and intolerance. Material is disseminated among the population by means of “human rights caravans” organised by NGOs, among students, senior officials of the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Justice and other central and local government officials, among parliamentarians and representatives of university lecturers, and among researchers in the human rights sphere;
 2. *radio broadcasts in co-operation with Radio Romania’s “Culture” channel*. These broadcasts have had two focuses:
 - a) weekly competitions for children (presentation of an article from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and excerpts from classical and contemporary drama, the children being required to identify which human rights had been violated in the respective texts)
 - b) the broadcast “Integration Issues” (once a fortnight) presenting certain aspects of racism and intolerance and measures aimed at combating them
 - c) articles in daily and weekly newspapers on equal opportunities, the elimination of discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds, and combating racism, xenophobia and intolerance.
- *The Department for Inter-ethnic Relations* has a budget appropriation in 2001 of EUR 160 000 for inter-ethnic projects and programmes, including: promoting anti-discriminatory policies, participation in the activities of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, participation in the “European Year of Languages” programme, raising awareness of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, and promoting mutual understanding between national minorities themselves and between them and the majority. Most of the activities are organised in close co-operation with non-governmental organisations, including organisations of national minorities.
 - The Ministry of the Interior has redoubled its efforts to improve **police training**. Courses, seminars and workshops have been organised on conflict and risk situation prevention and management. Many programmes have been implemented through international co-operation projects and/or with the help of civil society. Specialist studies and investigations have been conducted to identify which types of situation develop into crises/offences. Within the Inspectorate General of Police a Crime Research and Prevention Institute has been created which not only runs crime prevention programmes but also works on the *prevention of discriminatory attitudes among police officers*. The programmes run by the Institute include “Policing in a multi-faith, multi-ethnic community” and “Conflict prevention and management in multicultural communities”. Special attention has been paid to police-Roma relations, the objectives of the programmes implemented being:

- i. *understanding the specific problems of the Roma ethnic group* to achieve equal, non-discriminatory treatment;
- ii. partnership activities to eliminate tensions and conflict in certain local communities whose populations include Roma;
- iii. facilitating communication between the police and Roma.

SPECIFIC ASPECTS

As to the comments concerning Article 3

13. The results of the 1992 census also included data concerning persons belonging to national minorities other than those mentioned under this point. These persons were grouped together under the heading “Other nationalities”. At the last census, the individual’s declaration, freely made according to the dictates of his conscience, was recorded, as in the following examples: Slovenians, Italians, Csangos, Albanians, Gagauz. **It should be noted that the organisation representing ethnic Italians (the Democratic Union of Italians) has one seat in Parliament won by virtue of the votes cast, the candidate in question actually being on another party’s list but identified as being the representative of a minority.**

17. In the 1992 census, the “Other nationalities” rubric included 8 602 persons (data published in the Census of Population and Housing of 7 January 1992) who declared themselves to belong to a particular national (ethnic) group corresponding to a national minority of other countries in Europe or other continents.

18. The persons who declared themselves to be *Csangos* (2 062 persons in 1992) are also included among “Other nationalities” as an ethnic/national group. 73% of Csangos declared Romanian to be their mother tongue, whilst 18.8% declared Hungarian. 93.3% declared themselves to belong to the Catholic Church.

This shows that with regard to the freedom to identify, or not to identify, with the name used to designate a particular ethnic group, the provisions of Article 3 have been rigorously adhered to by the Romanian authorities.

21. During the next population census, to be carried out in March 2002, the intention is to ensure that all persons belonging to national minorities have the right freely to choose and declare their membership of an ethnic/national group or to state another name for a national group (eg German/Saxon/Swabian, or Magyar/Szekler, etc). In the March 2002 census, as in all previous censuses since 1912, a distinction will be made between Turks and Tatars.

To contribute usefully to raising the population's awareness of the possibility of freely declaring their membership of a national or ethnic minority, consideration is being given to mobilising the representatives of the organisations of national minorities which sit on the Council of National Minorities set up by Decision No. 589/2001 of the Romanian Government. These representatives are expected to play an active role as observers with the local census boards, whose task is to organise and carry out the registration work required for the census of population and housing. Special efforts will be made to ensure that persons belonging to the Roma/Gypsy minority are encouraged to assume their identity and freely declare their membership of this national minority.

As to the comments concerning Article 4

26. With regard to the accuracy of official statistics and the statistical discrepancies apparent between the census figures and the estimates made by representatives of national minorities about the number of persons belonging to their national group, the following points should be noted:

1. The Government is taking steps to ensure that all persons belonging to a national minority have the right freely to choose to be treated or not to be treated as such. Thus, the principles governing the population census provide for the freedom to declare membership of an ethnic/national or linguistic group or of a particular faith. This freedom is expressly mentioned on the census questionnaire. Romanian censuses do not use the hetero-identification technique for declarations as to membership of a national or ethnic group, because the technique does not respect the right of free declaration
2. As regards the data submitted by the organisations representing the various minorities – and particularly those representing the Roma/Gypsy minority – these are no more than the subjective views of their authors, as the respective estimates are based on statistical surveys or other sources of evidence. The measures taken for carrying out the 2002 census will help secure more accurate results, especially given the growth of awareness of their identity among the Roma/Gypsy minority, a process fostered by the measures the Romanian Government has taken since 1992 to preserve and promote this minority's ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity.

29. The following points should be noted:

1. Act No. 67/1995 on social aid is erroneously referred to as the social welfare act.
2. As the Advisory Committee found, Act No. 67/1995 on social aid contains nothing discriminatory; such problems as there are with it stem from its implementation and above all from local councils' lack of financial resources.
3. After reviewing the application of Act No.67/1995, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity prepared a Bill for its amendment. This Bill, which became Act No. 416/2001 on guaranteed minimum income, was promulgated in July 2001 and will enter into force on 1 January 2002, on which date Act No. 67/1995 on social aid will be repealed. With effect from 1 January 2002, the Ministry of Public Finance will supplement local budgets with the funds needed to implement the Guaranteed Minimum Income Act; as a result, families and single persons will have assured access to a minimum income. Romanian citizens who belong to the Roma/Gypsy minority will be covered by the new act, whose application will be facilitated by the appointment, in the County Offices for Roma, of inspectors who themselves belong to the minority.

As to the comments concerning Article 6

35- 36. The image of minorities conveyed by the media is changing as democracy proves its stability and the media flourish in Romania. The access of national minorities to the media is both permitted and encouraged, but, as everywhere, there are journalists who highlight the commercial or spectacular side of events, while neglecting real factual content. For instance, the stance taken by public institutions and NGOs against anti-Semitism have not always been given the expected coverage in newspapers or on television

Each organisation of citizens belonging to national minorities has at least one publication subsidised by the budget. Most of these publications are bilingual. However, information of general interest presented by the national minorities' press is insufficiently disseminated by the central press.

The point must further be made that the Romanian National Radio and Television Company has developed its technical capabilities to reach all regions of the country, especially remote villages. Romanian Radio, for example, paid particular attention in the year 2000 to regional stations, encouraging members of minorities to participate in the management of broadcasts. At Timisoara and Resita, new programmes have been created for the minorities. Another positive sign is the increased interest civil society is showing in relations with the media. A good illustration of this is the Centre for Independent Journalism in Bucharest, which is running several projects linked to the programme of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe.

In recent years the former Department for the Protection of National Minorities financed two series of programmes designed to make the traditions and cultures of other ethnic groups better known – “Connections”, broadcast every Sunday in Constanta, and “Living Together”, broadcast twice a month in Turnu Severin. National Television Channel 2 regularly transmits, live or pre-recorded, the programmes broadcast in Hungarian and German in Bucharest, Cluj and Timisoara by Channel 1.

The Romanian Government sets special store by the audio-visual field. It will be remembered that the Romanian Constitution and the Audio-visual Media Act No. 48/92 both stipulate that “the free expression of ideas and opinions and the freedom to communicate information by radio and television broadcasting in the spirit of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution shall be guaranteed”. Furthermore, Section 2, paragraph 2 of the Audio-visual Media Act No. 42/98 prohibits “defamation of the country and the nation, incitement to wars of aggression and national, racial, class or religious hatred, [and] incitement to discrimination, territorial separatism or public violence”. Lastly, Act No. 41/94 on the Organisation and Functioning of the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company and the Romanian Television Company stipulates, in Section 5, that “Programmes must in no way serve as a means of defaming the country or the nation or of inciting wars of aggression, national, racial, class or religious hatred, discrimination, territorial separatism or public violence or of propagating obscenities contrary to accepted standards of behaviour”.

This year, following Government Decision No. 28/2001, the Ministry of Culture and Denominations has been empowered to develop the Government’s policy in the audio-visual field.

Decision No. 43/2001 of the National Audio-visual Council (a regulatory body set up under Act No. 48/92) concerning the granting of a right of reply in audio-visual programmes lays down the conditions and procedure for granting the right of rectification and the right of reply, the latter being afforded to “all physical or legal persons irrespective of their nationality, residence or headquarters location”.

As to the Advisory Committee’s recommendation concerning private television channels that minorities’ programmes be broadcast at times more accessible to the public, it must first be pointed out that the National Audio-visual Council cannot, in principle, interfere with television channels’ internal programming policy. This is in order to respect their independence and freedom of expression.

The National Audio-visual Council nonetheless has several means at its disposal for punishing violations of regulations in the audio-visual field: warning, fine, public reprimand, permit suspension, reducing by up to a half the total period of validity of the permit or licence, and even withdrawing the broadcasting permit or licence. Some illustrations of the use of the public reprimands or fines provided for in Act No. 48/1992 are given below:

- **the public reprimand** which the National Audio-visual Council addressed on 20 October 2000 to the commercial company SC PRO TV SA for the programme entitled “Issue of the Day” broadcast on 3 March 2000 on the ground that “a whole series of comments by the director are in breach of Article 6 paragraphs 1 and 2 and Article 30 paragraph 7 of the Constitution affording persons belonging to national minorities the right to express their identity in keeping with the principles of equality and non-discrimination compared with other citizens, and are also in breach of the Audio-visual Media Act No. 48/1992”;
- the decision of 5 November 1999 to **punish** the commercial station SC Dacia RTV SA Bucharest by imposing on it a fine amounting to 3% of its turnover on the ground that the translation of the cartoon series *South Park*, broadcast by the Atomic TV channel (which belongs to the above-mentioned company) “abounds in vulgar expressions of a crude or xenophobic nature”;
- **a final, unappealable conviction** under Article 317 of the Criminal Code concerning national and chauvinistic propaganda and incitement to racial or national hatred, the first such conviction in Romanian criminal case law. The Supreme Court of Justice passed a suspended sentence of two years’ imprisonment on Mihai Antonescu, a former journalist with the magazine “Attack the Person”, for publishing lists of personalities of Jewish origin. Following the statement of the Advisory Committee about the need for radio and television channels in Romania to give more space in their schedules to national minorities with a small number of members, as advocated in Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R(97)21 on the media and the promotion of a culture of tolerance, it is intended to organise a wider debate on the very topic of the media and promoting a culture of tolerance in which the management of the most important public and private radio and television channels will take part. In this context, and in the spirit of Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R(97)21, the issues relating to the media in the languages of national minorities can also be addressed.

39-40. As regards torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, the Romanian authorities have conducted official investigations into every complaint and have imposed penalties in accordance with the law. However, with a view to general prevention, and in order to change the attitude and conduct of police officers and promote better dialogue with members of minorities, the Romanian authorities have organised seminars, debates and courses.

One positive measure in this field has been the reservation of places for Roma candidates in the entrance examinations for the Police Academy.

As to the comments concerning Article 12

A detailed account of educational provision for national minorities as devised by the Directorate General for Education in Minority Languages is to be found in “The current structure of education for national minorities in Romania”, published by Stadium, Cluj-Napoca, 2000, with support from the former Department for the Protection of National Minorities.

The Department for Inter-ethnic Relations of the Ministry of Public Information (the former Department for the Protection of National Minorities) has just approved funding for a new booklet on education for national minorities in Romania. This booklet is currently in preparation.

The number of teachers per level and language of instruction in pre-university education in national minority languages is as follows:

Language of Instruction	Grand total	Educationalists	Primary school teachers	Secondary school teachers
Total whole country	266 979	34 023	57 717	175 239
Total minorities	12 698	2 033	2 706	7 959
Hungarian	11 948	1 940	2 608	7 959
German	491	60	53	378
Ukrainian	66	8	3	55
Serbian	48	8	3	55
Slovakian	131	14	29	88
Czech	4	2	2	-
Croatian	10	1	3	6

As far as the initial training of teachers is concerned, it should be noted that with effect from the current academic year (2000-2001), primary school teachers are trained in teacher training colleges and university colleges. Teachers in the upper and lower secondary and vocational sectors are trained in higher education institutions in Romania.

With the establishment of online study facilities in Hungarian, German, French and English, training of specialists with a good knowledge of the languages of minorities or of a major international language has been diversified.

The lack of qualified teachers for the above-mentioned mother tongues is due in large part to the fact that there are not enough young people who want to go into teaching among the members of the respective ethnic groups.

The unions or alliances of the minorities concerned and the teachers ought therefore to do more to publicise the need to recruit future primary and secondary teachers.

As regards the lack or shortage of textbooks, it should be noted that despite the remarkable efforts made by the Ministry of Education and Research (MER), the funds currently available have only allowed very small print runs.

One possible solution would be to vote a separate budget chapter for the smallest unions/alliances of national minorities, so that the requisite titles can be printed in turn in sufficient quantities.

54. As regards the slight coverage Romanian history textbooks give to the contribution of minorities to Romanian culture and civilisation, the Ministry of Education is examining the possibility of bringing about improvements in the curricula and new textbooks that will be produced in connection with the policy of making 9 years' schooling the norm. The Educational Research Institute is preparing a guide for history teachers that will refer to these aspects. In this context, particular attention must be drawn to the fact that the Romanian authorities have also taken measures in respect of *Holocaust education*. The topic has been in the various curricula since 1998. There are optional courses such as "The history of the Jewish community in Romania", "Dictatorships and Jewish communities in Romania" and "The history of anti-Semitism in Romania" in schools in Bucharest, Brasov, Constanta, Bistrita-Năsăud, Mangalia and Miercurea Ciuc. Centres for the study of Jewish history, culture and civilisation have been opened: the "Moshe Carmilly Institute for the study of Judaism and Jewish history" (Cluj) and the Study and Research Centre on the History, Culture and Civilisation of the Jews of South-eastern Europe (Craiova)'.

55. Faculties of Babes-Bolyai University use Romanian, Hungarian and German for teaching.

56. As far as equal opportunities for members of the Roma/Gypsy minority are concerned, it should be noted that in the past 4 years the MER has begun a programme to increase the number of Roma/Gypsy teachers. There are at present some 200 Roma/Gypsy teachers using mother-tongue Romani/Gypsy as the medium of instruction (3-4 hours per week). The number of pupils studying in their mother tongue (Romani) has risen from 780 to 11 000. Additional classes have been created, and the number of reserved places in higher education (150 each year) has risen. Since 1998 Bucharest University has had a Romani language and literature section. Travelling schools have been set up to provide initial education for the nomad population of Roma origin. Lastly, for the past two years each of the 42 county schools inspectorates has had an inspector for Roma/Gypsy education.

57. With regard to the special material needs of members of the Roma/Gypsy minority, the aim of the Ministry of Education and Research is to provide support for pupils in need with effect from the start of the academic year in 2001.

Roma/Gypsy teachers and school inspectors are working to promote the schooling of Roma children, including through partnerships between the school system and NGOs implementing schooling programmes for Roma.

58. Generally speaking, Roma/Gypsy children attend the same schools as Romanian-speaking or Hungarian-speaking children; implicitly there is therefore intercultural dialogue.

There are situations in which Roma/Gypsy children are grouped in separate classes. Where this is so, the decision of the head of the school simply reflects the fact that the children study in their mother tongue. Since the year 2000, the Directorate General for Mother-Tongue Teaching has had two inspectors for the Romani language and one specialist in the elaboration and implementation of programmes for disadvantaged groups. This reflects

the new approach of the MER, which is determined to take account of all the problems facing Roma/Gypsies.

The reasons why Roma/Gypsy children drop out of compulsory schooling are economic and not institutional. As part of the Romanian Government's strategy for improving the situation of the Roma/Gypsy minority, the MER has accordingly taken the following measures:

- preparing, in the framework of the Romanian Government's overall strategy for improving the situation of Roma as approved by Government Decision No. 430/2001, a sectoral MER strategy for moving from selective projects to systemic projects that might receive financial assistance from abroad and be run in co-operation with other interested national institutions or NGOs working in this field;
- including in these programmes, in the short and long terms, significant categories of pupils disadvantaged for various reasons and hence devising coherent educational policies consistent with the Programme of Government and Romania's pre-accession commitments to the European Union;
- developing the practice of drawing up curricula in accordance with the standards accepted in Europe and of working in multi-disciplinary teams;
- developing the framework needed to widen the MER partnership and, implicitly, the schools inspectorate to include various national or international bodies concerned with protection of the rights of the child: UNICEF, UNESCO National Commission of Romania (CNR-UNESCO), NGO-uri, European Commission, etc;
- promoting systemic projects or programmes in partnership with other interested social players;
- the "Start for Schools" project – a summer intercultural education programme and a possible instrument/means for promoting equal opportunities for the integration of Roma children in schools (MER, UNICEF, ISE, NGO-uri); the "Programme to develop the capacity of Roma communities to withdraw their children from dangerous forms of work and integrate them in the national education system" (MER, Department for Inter-ethnic Relations, ECOSOC, International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, UNICEF Representation in Romania, the Community Development Agency "Together", Save the Children, Programme for improving the situation of Roma in Romania); participation in the elaboration and implementation of the "Mutual Aid Project for young adults, including Roma, whose schooling is incomplete" (a project for 2001 with support from central government agencies in Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Denmark and Romania); the project "School attendance of Roma children – problems, players, solutions (MER, UNICEF Representation in Romania, Institute for the Quality of Life, Educational Science Institute).

As to the comments concerning Article 14

62. Where a minority requests that instruction be provided in the mother tongue and teachers are available, MER approves and supports such a step, for which the law provides.

63. Some associations of members of the Roma/Gypsy minority have requested that instruction be given in the Romani language. After consulting in local communities with the parents whose children would have been given instruction in Romani, the MER concluded that there was no real desire for Roma children to have all their instruction given in the Romani/Gypsy language. The parents' attitude may be based on the fact that they consider that instruction in Romanian or Hungarian, as appropriate, provides a better foundation for the satisfactory economic and social integration of their children.

64. Certain minorities once taught in their mother tongue are now only part-taught in it or simply taught it as a study subject because of the shortage of teachers explained earlier. In some cases, even the parents prefer the third approach – teaching of the mother tongue simply as a study subject. It should, however, be noted that major efforts have been made – despite the very difficult economic situation – to develop the *education system for national minorities*. Through its ongoing dialogue with the national minorities' NGOs, the Ministry of Education and Research has managed to develop and diversify the network of units where teaching is in the mother tongue. New classes were opened for Turkish, Ukrainian and German children in various regions in 2000. In accordance with the new Education Act, a section using Turkish as the language of teaching has been opened at Medgidia University, and three new sections using Hungarian for teaching purposes were opened at Oradea Private University in 2000. Some documents are already being drafted in Hungarian or German at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, where Romanian, Hungarian and German sections coexist. In the academic year 2001/2002 a new private university is expected to be operating in Miercurea Ciuc, with financial support from the Republic of Hungary.

As to the recommendation that minorities be consulted to ascertain whether the existing situation meets their needs, we believe that the representatives of minorities' organisations who sit on the Education Board are aware of the legislative framework and are at liberty to voice their opinions and notify the authorities of their needs. Often, however, they are reluctant to take any action under the statutorily established rules.

Chapter XII of Act No. 84/1995, as amended, deals exclusively with teaching for persons belonging to national minorities: "Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to study and be educated in their mother tongue at all levels and in all types of educational establishment, as well as in all subjects for which there is a sufficient demand, as provided for in law".

Ministerial Order No. 3113/2000 facilitates access to the study of the mother tongue for pupils belonging to national minorities who, with their parents or legal guardians, choose instruction in Romanian, while keeping the mother tongue as an additional study subject.

In higher education the appropriate regulatory framework is already in place (see Section 123 of Act No. 84/1995).

As to the comments concerning Article 15

65 – 70. The Directorate General of Employment helped draft the Strategy for improving the situation of Roma in the working group for PHARE project RO 9803.01 “Improving the Roma situation” with the programme “Support for the preparation of the White Paper through training and advice”. The project was approved by Government Order 430 of 25 April 2001.

In the field of employment for members of the Roma/Gypsy minority, the plan for giving effect to the Strategy for improving the situation of Roma/Gypsies will be implemented after consultation with the representatives of this minority. The aims of this plan, which is the result of co-operation between the Government and Roma/Gypsy representatives, are to:

- i) devise and implement specific training and vocational retraining programmes for Roma;
- ii) provide guidance for the staff of the employment and vocational training services about employment for persons belonging to the Roma minority;
- iii) provide support, in accordance with the law in force, for recruitment and vocational development opportunities for young Roma with university qualifications;
- iv) provide facilities for the practice and promotion of traditional crafts that meet market needs;
- v) devise and implement specific programmes for financing income-generating activities and small businesses for Roma families and communities, including Roma women.

The Directorate General for Employment and the National Employment Agency have drawn up guidelines for implementing the Strategy for improving the situation of Roma in the Programme of Action, the aim being, through specific measures, to improve the employment rate for 2001. A representative of the Directorate General for Employment sits on the Special Commission for Roma set up at the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity to implement the Strategy for improving the situation of Roma.

APPENDIX I

Events financed by the Campaign against Racism, Anti-Semitism, Xenophobia and Intolerance

Date	Action	Organiser
18-20.02.2000	Improving the situation of Roma and strategies for sustainable community development	Aven Amentza
5-7.03.2000	Seminar: Implementation of policies for Roma in local government services	Romani CRISS
20-22.03.2000	Consolidation of the strategic democratic framework for Romania's ethnic minorities	Romani CRISS, the Working Group of Roma associations
23-26.03.2000	Information and training programme for non-governmental organisations	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
19-22.04.2000	Meeting of the Sub-Committee for Roma	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
8-10.05.2000	Seminar: "The suffering of European Jews in the ... half of the 20 th century	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
May 2000	Publication of the booklet <i>Impreuna, miteneinder, egyutessen</i>	Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania and the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania
25-28.05.2000	Project: "Contemporary Art and Remembrance of the Holocaust"	DESIRE Foundation
June 2000	Translation of <i>The image of the Jew in Romanian culture</i>	Group for Social Dialogue
15-24.07.2000	Summer school for national minorities	Julianus Foundation
17-23.07.2000	Summer school for young Hungarian lawyers	Department for the Protection of National Minorities and the <i>Pro Iuventus Iuratis</i> association
6-16.08.2000	Introduction to specific psycho-paedagogical methods for educating socio-economically disadvantaged children	Collegium Transsylvanicum and Department for the Protection of National Minorities
22-24.09.2000	Meeting of the Sub-Committee for Roma	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
September 2000	Publication of the book <i>The history of a nomadic people: the Roma of Transylvania</i>	Universalia Foundation
6-8.10.2000	European congress, Cluj	French Cultural Centre in Cluj
26-27.10.2000	Seminar on <i>Improving the living standards and social situation of the Roma/Gypsy population to reduce migration from central and east European countries</i>	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
November 2000	Translation (from Hungarian into Romanian) of the book entitled <i>From brickworks to goods train</i>	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
30.10-5.11.2000	Camp for Roma: <i>Communities living together</i>	ANTREC
December 2000	Publication of the booklet <i>Order for the prevention and punishment of all forms of discrimination</i>	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
5.12.2000	Meeting of the Sub-Committee for Roma	Department for the Protection of National Minorities
6-10.12.2000	Seminar: <i>An open, democratic society and human rights in the European context</i>	Resource Centre for Roma Communities and Department for the Protection of National Minorities

APPENDIX II

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GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA



Ministry of Public Information

STRATEGY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA FOR IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE ROMA

I. General Considerations

The Government of Romania,

Taking into consideration the Romanian government's will to improve the national minorities' condition, proved by the voluntary adhesion to the international instruments of the Council of Europe, such as the Framework Convention for National Minorities' Care, Resolution ECRI no.3, Recommendation 1203 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the UN Convention regarding the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as other international documents;

Considering the provisions of the 2001-2004 governmental program, regarding the prevention of discrimination and the elaboration of a strategy for considerably improving the condition of the Roma;

Reaffirming the right of any minority, implicitly the Roma, to actively participate in the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of public policies on this minority, and the fact that the minorities' problem has to be taken into consideration as a national problem;

Considering the fact that, in the course of history, Roma were an object of slavery and discrimination, phenomena that have left deep marks on the collective memory and which have led to the social limitation of the Roma;

Considering the difficulties which the Romanian citizens that are Roma ethnics have to cope with, as well as the wish to identify optimal solutions for their resolution,

Adopts this **Strategy for improving the condition of the Roma.**

II. Guiding Principles

The Romanian Government,

Adopts the following guiding principles to apply the Strategy for improving the condition of the Roma.

1. **The consensus principle** - The Strategy for improving the condition of Roma is the result of a joint effort of the Government and the representative organizations of the Roma community. The application of the programs and projects laid down in the plan for the implementation of the strategy will be achieved in consultation with the Roma organizations' representatives.
2. **The social utility principle** - The strategy corresponds to the specific needs, which the Roma ethnic group is confronted with and achieves the social framework in which the Roma can functionally integrate in the community and society.
3. **The principle of sectorial distribution** - The strategy is conceived and applicable by areas of sectorial responsibility.
4. **The decentralization principle** - The application of the strategy will be achieved based on specific responsibilities of the institutions and public authorities through the involvement of the NGOs in the implementation of local programs deriving from the Plan of measures to apply the strategy.
5. **The legal compatibility principle** - The stipulations of the strategy are in consonance with the Constitution and the Romanian laws and also with relevant international law and practice.
6. **The identity differentiation principle** - the strategy is aimed to help create an institutional system of community development, fight against discriminations towards the Roma, promote intercultural education, raise elite from among the Roma, achieve social solidarity and reconstruct the identity of the Roma community.
7. **The equality principle** - The protection of Romanian citizen that are Roma ethnics should not affect the rights and freedom of the other Romanian citizens.

III. The goal and general objectives of the strategy

THE GOAL: Improving the condition of the Roma people in Romania

OBJECTIVES:

1. Institutionalizing the political objectives assumed by the government, concerning the Roma issue and the transfer of the responsibilities to the central and local public authorities in the application of concrete measures to improve the condition of the Romanian citizens who are Roma ethnics.
2. Supporting the formation and promotion of an intellectual and economic elite, within the Roma communities, that should facilitate application of the social integration and modernization policies.

3. Removing the stereotypes, prejudices and practices of certain civil servants of the central and local public institutions who are encouraging the discrimination of the Romanian citizens of Roma ethnic origin compared with other citizens.
4. Determining a positive change in public opinion concerning the Roma ethnics, on the basis of tolerance and social solidarity principles.
5. Stimulating Roma participation in the economic, social, educational, cultural and political life of the society, based on involvement in sectorial assistance and community development projects.
6. Preventing institutional and social discrimination of Romanian citizen of Roma ethnic origin in their access to the services provided by society.
7. Ensuring conditions for the Roma to have equal opportunities to attain a decent standard of life.

IV. Target groups

1. Romanian citizens of Roma ethnic origin
2. Political leaders
3. The managers of central and local public authorities
4. Civil servants
5. Mass media
6. Public opinion

V. Time: 10 years (2001- 2010), with a 4-year medium term plan of action (2001 - 2004)

VI. Sectorial Fields

- A. Community development and administration
- B. Housing
- C. Social security
- D. Health care
- E. Economic
- F. Justice and public order
- G. Child welfare
- H. Education
- I. Culture and denominations
- J. Communication and civic involvement

VII. Lines of action

A. Community development and administration

1. Organizing, at local/county levels, mixed working groups, made up of elected representatives of that community, of decentralized structures of the central administration, of NGOs of the Roma and the Roma minority, in order to evaluate the main needs of the Roma community and to apply the programs for their support.
2. Creating the legal frame by which the ministries and central/local agencies, their decentralized structures are able to finance projects and sectorial programs to improve the situation of the Roma.
3. Setting up the National Council Against Discrimination and including Roma representatives in this structure.
4. Setting up structures for implementing the strategy at the level of ministries, prefectures and town halls.
5. Initiating and developing some educational actions regarding the fight against discrimination targeted at civil servants in the central and local public administration.
6. Monitoring the application of Emergency Ordinance No. 137/2000 and punishing the civil servants who have committed discriminative actions against citizens.
7. Conditioning the civil servants recruitment and promotion of civil servants on the “non-discrimination” criterion in dealing with other people.
8. Developing collaboration between public administration structures and Roma NGOs on a partnership basis; including the Roma community leaders in the local administrative decision-making which affects the Roma.
9. Implementing positive discrimination programs for Roma regarding employment in the structures of central/local public administration.

B. Housing

1. Solving the issues relating to the right of ownership on the Roma dwellings and lands, the issues related to application of laws and regulations concerning the constitution and reconstitution of the land ownership right, including promotion of legislative initiative in this area.
2. Conceiving and implementing programs to rehabilitate housing and the environment in inhabited by Roma.
3. Developing certain financing programs, ensured by the government or in partnership, in order to ensure the minimum conditions of housing in the areas inhabited by Roma (power, drinking water, sewerage, gas and sanitation services).
4. Developing the welfare housing program for the families with many members and without any living support.
5. The direct involvement of the Roma in the government programs for building and restoration of dwellings.

C. Social security

1. Improving Roma access to public services.
2. Conceiving and implementing specific programs for the professional training and reorientation of the Roma.
3. Training the personnel of professional formation and occupation services regarding the employment in the labor market for the Roma minority.
4. Supporting the young Roma graduates in order to get jobs and monitoring the professional evolution of the university-educated young Roma, according to the legislation in force.
5. Providing subsidies to the non-governmental organizations of the Roma that function and manage certain units of social assistance.
6. Increasing the fiscal incentives for enterprises that hire persons from the families with many children and without any living support.
7. Increasing the welfare allowances for families with many members and without any living support.

D. Health care

1. Improving Roma access to the public medical services, preventive and curative, by creating a system of health visitors, conceiving and implementing specific prophylactic and treatment programs.
2. Training Roma health visitors, nurses and physicians, within the Roma communities.
Identifying solutions for including the Roma in the Health Insurance system, registering with the family doctor, compensation for prescription charges etc.
4. Conceiving and implementing health care information programs, medical consulting and family planning for Roma women, emphasizing the protection of mother and child.
5. Organizing vaccination campaigns in the communities of Roma through some joint commissions formed of the local and DSP (Epidemiological and Communicable Diseases Department) medical staff and the Roma representatives.
6. Organizing campaigns in order to trace the TB, HIV/AIDS, dermatological affections, sexually communicable diseases etc.
7. Accomplishing certain epidemiological studies regarding the general state of health.
8. Increasing the number of medical staff originating in the Roma community by setting aside special openings for the Roma students in the state medical universities.

E. Economic steps

1. Starting and carrying out projects of training and profesional reorientation for the Roma.
2. Ensuring incentives for the practice and revival of traditional handicrafts with demand in the market.
3. Devising and implementing specific financing programs for lucrative activities and small businesses for the Roma families and communities, including Roma women.

4. Curbing the unemployment rate of the Roma by creating certain incentives for the entrepreneurs that hire persons from the Roma minority and fighting against any forms of discrimination in hiring the Roma.
5. Drafting programs for getting land ownership and stimulating the agricultural activities for the Roma communities.
6. Supporting under the legislation in force the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) owned by persons from the Roma community through the soft credit system.
7. Including the disadvantaged Rom communities in the selection criteria for the disadvantaged regions; devising and implementing programs for their rehabilitation.
8. Encouraging projects for creating jobs for the women of Roma origin.

F. Justice and public order

1. Analyzing and estimating the discriminating effects of the regulations in force and improving the current legal system.
2. Observing the basic human rights, the political and social civil rights and also the ethnic minorities' rights according to the international norms and obligations assumed by Romania.
3. Solving the cases of the stateless Roma in Romania.
4. Developing local programs with the help of the Roma organizations in order to get identification cards for the Roma with no living support.
5. Developing information programs for the Roma leaders, the executive board of the public institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in order to trace and correctly solve the discrimination cases.
6. Identifying, preventing and operative solving of conflicts likely to generate family, community or interethnic violence.
7. Initiating programs of legal education and delinquency prevention together with the members of the Roma communities.
8. Hiring citizens of Roma origin in the public order services and the police force.

G. Child Welfare

1. Securing a non-discriminative participation of the Roma women in programs of child care and education.
2. Starting programs meant to prevent and fight discrimination of the institutionalized Roma children and the other groups of children in need.
3. Achieving a partnership between the Roma NGOs and the local public institutions for child care.
4. Hiring personnel of Roma origin at the institutions for minors' care where the majority of the institutionalized children are of Roma origin.
5. Raising the living standards of the children from families on low incomes and ensuring observance of their rights.
6. Devising and implementing programs for the training of young Roma as social mediators and trainers for the Roma communities.

7. Increasing the quality of child care in residential institutions, including in those for the children with deficiencies or disabilities, by imposing some minimal standards in organizing and running these institutions.
8. Promoting the alternatives of a family type for institutionalized children.
9. Preventing the abandon, abuse or negligence of the child as well as all phenomena that may put a child in difficult situations.
10. Analyzing the “homeless children” phenomenon and the national and local projects for social action.
11. Rendering public opinion sensitive about the child’s rights, the problem of the child and of the family being in a risky or difficult situation.

H. Education

1. Drafting a program for encouraging school attendance and cutting down dropping out, particularly with the poor segments of the Roma population.
2. Analyzing the possibility of organizing secondary and vocational school institution for the Roma (arts and trades, vocational education, formation and professional reorientation).
3. Drafting and implementing programs for school mediators’ training, as well as improvement programs for teachers within the intercultural educational system.
4. Introducing the themes for preventing and fighting discrimination within the general school programs.
5. Introducing teaching modules for the Roma social and economical problems into the training programs of the specialists in public administration, social assistance, health, police and education.
6. Drafting and implementing programs for encouraging Roma parents to participate in school and extra curricular educational process.
7. Adopting legislative measures for Roma support, in order to provide them with incentives as far as education is concerned and in order to promote the Roma for jobs within schools administration (principals and school inspectors).
8. Further granting incentives and subsidized places especially for young Roma who wish to attend universities or colleges.
9. Obligation of the school units and county school-inspectorates to organize permanent catch-up courses for Roma, throughout all the approved forms of education, upon individual or Roma organizations’ request.
10. Drawing the attention of the young Roma towards institutions that form civil servants and the staff for public institutions (faculties of social assistance, public administration, medicine, military academies and schools for officers and non-commissioned officers for Police Departments, Ministry of National Defense, RSS etc.).
11. Stimulating the access to education by offering a free lunch to all the pupils in primary and secondary schools.

I. Culture and denominations

1. Organizing and developing networks for capitalization of the Roma cultural heritage, by readapting the traditional jobs to the modern market and developing retail networks markets.
2. Devising cultural programs for Roma identity assertion and for increasing their self-respect.
3. Drafting and implementing support programs for the political, cultural and artistic Roma elite, in order to strengthen and assert the Roma ethnic identity.
4. Supporting cultural events inspired from the Roma folklore and traditional culture.
5. Supporting the development of cultural and information channels for Roma at a national level (TV shows, broadcasts, publications).
6. Founding a musical artistic assembly and a theatre for Roma with performances of translated plays from the world culture, as well as performances of the Roma plays.
7. Establishing a museum for Roma culture and civilization.
8. Financing the projects for multicultural research.
9. Drafting and implementing intercultural educational programs for children and young people.
10. Financing annual awards for artistic creation within the Roma culture.

J. Communication and civic involvement

1. Drawing up a national program for public information and fighting interethnic prejudices in public institutions.
2. Starting a program for fighting discrimination in mass media.
3. Drafting informative programs regarding the fight against discrimination in affording jobs.
4. Starting national programs for informing and educating the Roma, in point of health, education, family, child care, access to the labor market, civil rights, social care etc.
5. Developing programs for civic education and information of the Roma.
6. Bringing into the public attention through mass media of the Roma discrimination cases made by juristic or natural persons, of public or private right.
7. Encouraging mass media to present the situation and the needs of the Roma in the following fields: education, medical-health care, legal status, culture, dwelling in a realistic and unprejudiced manner.
8. Developing and implementing programs for supporting the Roma civic society development, in order to prevent and fight discrimination of the Roma.
9. Organizing and developing programs for inter-cultural education and information of the majority, with the participation of the Roma.
10. Participation of the Roma leaders in the political decision-making process, with impact on the economic and social life of the Roma communities.
11. Popularizing the successful examples in solving the problems within the Roma communities.
12. Periodical evaluation and media presentation of the social status of the Roma communities in Romania.

VIII. Structures:

The following structures are established for the purpose of a proper organization and coordination of the Master Plan of measures for the application of the Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition:

1. The Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring
2. Inter-ministerial commissions on Roma
3. County offices on Roma
4. Local experts on Roma affairs

1. The Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring

The Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring is in charge of the organization, planning, coordination and control of the carrying through of the activities stipulated in the master plan of measures for the application of the strategy of improvement of the Roma condition and it will include the state secretaries in the ministries responsible for the application of the strategy, as well as leaders of Roma organizations.

The Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring will meet once a month to analyze the progress of the activities envisaged in montly meetings.

The Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring will be made up of:

- President, the State Secretary for Inter-ethnic Relations
- Members: state secretaries, Roma leaders
- Executive Secretary, the State Undersecretary for Roma

The executive body of the Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring is the National Office on Roma under the Inter-Ethnic Relations Department of the Ministry of Public Information.

2. The Ministerial Commissions on Roma

The Ministerial Commissions on Roma are subordinated to the Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring and are in charge of the organisation, coordination, planning and control of implementation of the activities in the Plan for the application of the Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition related to the relevant ministry's field of responsibility.

The President of the Ministerial Commission will be represented by the secretary of state in the ministry, who is also a member of the Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring.

The Commission will also include 4-5 members (who will be heads of departments and experts), whose responsibility is the fulfilment of the tasks devolving upon them from the implementation of the Plan for the application of the Strategy in the ministry's field of activity.

3. County Offices on Roma

The county offices on Roma are structures organized at a county level, within the prefect's offices and they are subordinated to the Ministerial Commission on Roma under the Ministry of Local Public Administration.

The offices' main responsibilities are the organization, planning and coordination of the activities conducted at a county level for the implementation of the targets and tasks in the Master Plan of measures for the implementation of the Strategy.

The county offices on Roma are subordinated to the Joint Committee of Implementation and Monitoring of the Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition. The county offices on Roma will include 3-4 experts, one of whom must be a member of the Roma community.

4. Local experts on Roma affairs

The local experts on Roma affairs operate under the mayoralties and are responsible for the unfolding at a local level of the actions for the improvement of the Roma condition. They are subordinated both to the county offices on Roma and to the mayor. The local experts are the chief mediators between the public authorities and the Roma communities.

At the communes' level, the office of expert on Roma affairs is performed by a mayoralty official, as a cumulated function.

To the end of concerting the efforts toward the implementation of the targets of the Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition, under the partnership between the public administration and the civil society, a foundation of public interest on Roma affairs will be established.

Its purpose will be to attract and administrate extra-budgetary funds from the country and abroad, in view of financing programs and projects seeking the implementation of the targets of the Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition.

With a view to evaluating and selecting the projects of implementation of the Strategy, a Commission of Project Evaluation will be set up, consisting of representatives of the public administration, leaders of the Roma community and representatives of the foundation of public interest on Roma affairs.

The setting up of the structures for the implementation and monitoring of the strategy of improvement of the Roma condition will proceed consistent with the schedule of activities included in the Master Plan of measures for the application of the Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition.

MASTER PLAN OF MEASURES for applying the Strategy of improving the Roma condition

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
	Organization measures			
1.	Adopting the Government Decision regarding The Romanian Government strategy of improvement of the Roma condition , emphasizing the obligation of ministries to respect the deadlines and assume the specific responsibilities	10.05.2001	MPI	
2.	Setting up the Joint Committee for monitoring and implementing (JointC) the Plan for applying the strategy, formed of the representatives of the ministries, government agencies and Master Roma Convention	29.06.2001	MPI	
3.	Adopting the Government Decision of setting up the National Council for Preventing the Discrimination (NCPD) under the Emergency Ordinance No. 137/2000	24.05.2001	MPI	
4.	Setting up, at the level of ministries, under the Minister's Ordinance, of the Ministerial Commissions for Roma (MCR) , formed of experts of the specialty Departments, delegated experts from The Master Roma Convention, independent experts etc., in order to apply this strategy in every field of activity	31.05.2001	MPI	
5.	Setting up, at the level of prefectures, the County Offices on Roma (COR) in order to implement the Strategy for improving the Roma condition. The offices will elaborate the County Action Plan "The Roma 2001-2004" and coordinate the councilors' activity for Roma at the mayoralties' level	28.09.2001	MAAF	
6.	Appointing the local councilors for Roma (LCR) , at the mayoralties' level, where the Roma organizations ask for it, in order to apply the Government Strategy for improving the Roma condition at a local level. The councilors will elaborate the Local action Plan "The Roma 2001-2004"	28.09.2001	MAAF	
7.	Setting up the Projects Evaluation Commission (PEC) for fulfilling the Strategy	28.09.2001	MPI	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
8.	Establishing the Foundation of public interest on Roma affairs	01.09.2001	MPI	
9.	Starting the course for the staff training (10 days) within the ministerial committees, county bureaus and the local councilors for Roma in order to be able to administrate the section and local projects for implementing the strategy and standardize the procedures of evaluation of the Roma communities status, elaborating, financing, planning, coordinating, implementing and evaluating the projects.	30.10.2001	MPI	
10.	Organizing at local/county level the joint work groups , formed of the representatives of the County Bureaus for Roma or Roma councilors, NGOs and the elected Roma representatives, in order to evaluate the main needs of the Roma communities and apply the supporting programs	15.10.2001	MAAF	
11.	Presenting by the Ministerial Commissions on Roma, of the Section Fulfillment Plan for the Government Strategy of improving the Roma condition	15.10.2001	JointC	
12.	Presenting by the mayoralties' councilors the Local Action Plan "The Roma 2001-2004" , after evaluating the local needs of the Roma communities	30.11.2001	LCR	
13.	Presenting by the County offices on Roma, of the County Action Plan "The Roma 2001-2004" , after consolidating the local plans	14.12.2001	CBR	
14.	Presenting the projects corresponding to the action fields in the Government Strategy for improving the Roma condition by the non-governmental organizations	21.01.02- annual	NGO	
15.	Selecting the projects and giving the financial and technical assistance for their implementation	15.03- annual	PEC	
16.	Evaluating the progress of implementation of the Government Strategy of improving the Roma condition Publishing the annual report of evaluation	15.03-annual	JointC	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
	Public administration and community development			
17.	Organizing monthly meetings of the mayors with the Roma leaders, in order to pinpoint and solve out the Roma problems, under the regulations of the Government Strategy of improving the Roma condition	Monthly	Mayors	
18.	Drawing up a biannual report by prefects upon the progress of the objectives fulfillment from the Government Strategy of improving the Roma condition	December/ June	Prefects /MAAF	
19.	Organizing biannual meetings of the national leaders of Roma with the Prime Minister in order to analyze the general situation of Roma and the progress of fulfillment of the Government Strategy of improvement of the Roma condition	January / July	MPI/ Master Convention.	
20.	Participating in the “ National Plan for Local Development of the Roma Communities ” Program of the Ministry of Public Administration and Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing together with the Department of Interethnic Relations within the Ministry of Public Information	Permanent	MAAF, MPWTH	
21.	Drawing up, by the National Agency of Civil Servants, of a 4-year program for civil servants formation with the theme “Preventing and fighting discrimination within contacts between the citizen and public authorities”. Including in the program for civil servants’ formation of a segment that regards the history of minorities and correlating the public authorities with the ethnic minorities, including the Roma	16.07.2001	NACS	
22.	Monitoring the application of the regulations of the Ordinance No. 137/2000 in the public institutions. Annual evaluation report of the citizens’ discrimination within the contacts with central and local public administration	Permanent 15.02-annual	NCPD	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
23.	Specifying the norms regarding the conditions for recruitment and promotion of the civil servants under the criterion " non-discrimination " in relations with other persons	03.09.2001	NACS	
	Housing			
24.	Presenting a national plan that solves, in maximum 4 years, the problems raised by the ownership right over the lands and dwellings owned by Roma and reconstitute the landed property right	01.04. 2002	JointC	
25.	Presenting by the mayoralties and prefectures of the local needs for rehabilitation of the dwellings and environment. Consolidating the data at the Ministry of Public Administration, which have to present together with the Ministry of Public Works, Transport, and Housing a national program of rehabilitation of the dwellings and environment , including the Roma inhabited areas. The program will be developed for 10 years, with urgent measures in the first 4 years for rehabilitating the Roma inhabited houses and areas	01.03.2002	MAAF, MPWTH; MWEP	
26.	Drawing up a program, financed by the government and/or in partnership , for the private or state enterprises and non-governmental organizations regarding local projects that concern the insurance of normal living conditions in the Roma communities (power, drinking water, sewerage, gas, sanitation services)	20.04. 2002	MAAF, MPWTH	
27.	Conceiving the financing criteria for local projects to stimulate the interest of the Roma communities in rehabilitating their dwellings and environment or in building new dwellings	10.03. 2002	MPWTH	
28.	Presenting a National Plan set up for 10 years, of welfare building for the families with many children and low incomes, with the Roma families having a non-discriminatory access thereto	10.06. 2002	MPWTH, MLSS	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
29.	Partial financing of the projects that regard the rehabilitation plans of the dwellings or construction of new buildings in the Roma communities	Feb 2001-2004	PEC	
	Social security			
30.	Presenting by the mayoralties' social services together with the Roma organizations and Ministry of Internal Affairs of a plan of issuing, in maximum 6 months, the identity cards and marital status documents for all the Roma who have this right	15.11. 2001	Mayoralties, MIA	
31.	Drawing up by the mayoralties' social services together with the Roma organizations of a graph of gradual allowance for the Roma who have the right to receive the child benefit, pensions, welfare, maternity allowances, invalidity pensions, unemployment benefit etc. in maximum 6 months from getting the identity cards	30.05. 2002	Mayoralties, MLSS	
32.	Annual monitoring and evaluation of the Roma access to the public services. Annual report to the Prime Minister regarding the Roma access to the public services	Permanent 15.02-annual	JointC, MPI	
33.	Drawing up a study on the labor market that should define the most favorable professional niches for the Roma under the perspective of professional formation and reorientation	20.09. 2001	MLSS	
34.	Conceiving together with the non-governmental and Roma organizations an annual program of professional training and reorientation towards the most asked for jobs in the labor market that fit the educational level of Roma	15.01. 2002	MLSS, NACS	
35.	Conceiving a personnel training and monitoring program within the county and local agencies for professional occupation and formation to facilitate Roma access to the labor market, especially those who graduated qualification and professional training courses	15.02.2002	MLSS, NACS	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
36.	Conceiving an annual program for supporting the young Roma graduates in getting a job and monitoring the professional evolution of the highly educated young Roma	10.04. 2002	MLSS, NACS. MER	
37.	Elaborating the necessary regulations for granting subsidies to non-governmental organizations that establish and administrate social security units	10.10. 2001	MLSS, MPF	
38.	Elaborating proposals regarding the possibility of increasing the fiscal incentives for the juristic persons that hire people from the families with many children and low incomes	20.10. 2001	MLSS; MPF	
39.	Increasing the amount of income support for families with many children and low incomes	10.01.2002	MLSS	
40.	Presenting and supporting, together with the non-governmental organizations, of a professional formation program for the Roma attendants to invalid persons within the Roma communities	25.06. 2002	MLSS, MHF	
41.	Presenting a plan for supporting the integration of the social assistants that come from Roma communities into the central and local governmental structures, responsible for implementing the Government Strategy for improvement of the Roma condition	20.06. 2001	MPI, MER, MLSS	
42.	Conceiving measures for stimulating the partnership between the government, local authorities and non-governmental institutions in order to implement the projects of social assistance and action of disadvantaged groups, including the Roma communities	15.08. 2001	MLSS, MPA	
	Health care			
43.	Elaborating, together with the non-governmental organizations, a national plan for improvement of the Roma access to the public medical services , preventive and curative	10.02. 2002	MHF	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
44.	Conceiving a national plan together with the non-governmental organizations and county agencies for public health, for the training and coordination of health visitors with prophylactic and treatment role within the Roma communities	10.04. 2002	MHF, MLSS	
45.	Finding the solutions for including in maximum one year, of all Roma in the social insurance system, registration with the family doctor, compensated prescription charges, etc.	30.09. 2001	MHF, MLSS	
46.	The plan of development in partnership with the non-governmental organizations of some projects of health care information, medical control and family planning for women within the Roma communities, emphasizing the mother and child care	25.03. 2002	MHF	
47.	The plan of the project "Mobile medical units" in the Roma communities	10.06.2002	MHF	
48.	Vaccination campaigns within the Roma communities by joint commissions formed of medical staff from local and Public Health Directorate level (Department for Epidemiological Communicable Diseases)	Permanent	MHF	
49.	Diagnosis campaigns for TB, HIV/AIDS infections, dermatological diseases, sexually communicable diseases etc.	Permanent	MHF	
50.	Presenting an annual report regarding the health condition within the Roma communities	Annual-15 .02	MHF	
51.	Proposals regarding establishment of a system for financial stimulation of the medical staff that perform activities in the very poor regions dwelled by Roma	30.08.2001	MHF, MPF	
52.	Presenting a set of measures in order to support lone-parent families , especially those on low incomes	15.09.2001	MHF; MLSS	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
53.	Establishing an annual program for recruitment and training of health visitors, nurses, medical attendants and doctors within the Roma communities, through affirmative action measures	25.03.2002	MHF; MLSS	
	Economic steps			
54.	Proposal presentation regarding fiscal incentives given to the entrepreneurs that hire Roma in proportion of at least 10% of the total personnel	15 .09.2001	MSMEC, MPF; MIR	
55.	Presenting, together with the Roma leaders and non-governmental organizations, of a set of measures for partial financing of the projects concerning profitable activities and small businesses for Roma families and communities.	10.03. 2002	MSMEC,MPF, JointC	
56.	Presenting, by the leaders of the Roma communities of a partial financing project for some handicraft workshops within the Roma communities, that can assure production and trade of household and handicraft products, as well as revival of other traditional crafts	30.01. 2002	MSMEC; MPF, JointC	
57.	Presenting a set of measures to appropriate land to Roma and encourage them to do farming	30.06.2002	MAAF, MPA	
58.	Supporting, under the legislation in force, of SMEs that belong to persons that come from the Roma communities, through the soft credits system. Giving micro-credits, under the Emergency Ordinance no. 118/1999	Permanent	MSMEC; JointC	
59.	Presenting a set of measures for integrating the disadvantaged Roma communities into the program for disadvantaged regions	14.12. 2001	MPA, JointC	
60.	Encouraging projects for jobs creation for the Roma women	Permanent	JointC; MLSS	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
	Justice and public order			
61.	Presenting a report regarding the analysis and evaluation of the discriminatory effects of the regulations in force and improving the current juridical system	15 .08.2001	MJ, MIA, MEI	
62.	Presentation by the Romanian Government of an annual report that concerns the fundamental human rights, civic, political and social, as well as the rights of persons belonging to ethnic minorities according to the international norms and obligations assumed by Romania	Annual- 15.03	MJ; MFA; MPI; MIA	
63.	Presentation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of a plan for solving, by the end of 2001 , the cases of stateless Roma from Romania	15.06.2001	MIA, MJ, MFA	
64.	Presentation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the Roma organizations and the social services of the City Halls, of a plan to obtain, in maximum 6 months from finishing the plan, identity cards and marital status documents for all the Roma entitled to this	15.11.2001	MIA, Mayoralties	
65.	Presentation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of a set of measures to prevent and fight against discrimination in relations between citizens and the Ministry of Internal Affairs	15.08.2001	MIA	
66.	Penalizing policemen who commit discriminatory acts and also presenting those facts in the internal information bulletins and in the Internal Affairs Ministry's annual balance	Permanent	MIA	
67.	Identification and operative solving of the conflicts or tensional situations likely to generate family/community/inter-ethnic violence	Permanent	MIA	
68.	Presenting a national program for preventing delinquency and for the legal education of the Roma population under the law. Spreading educative publications among Roma communities (prevention bulletins, booklets, folders, etc)	20.01.2001	MIA	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
69.	Presentation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of an annual plan for promoting the profession of policeman, and for recruiting police officers and police non-commissioned officers from the Roma ethnic citizens	15.06.2001	MIA	
70.	Monitoring the integration and professional development of the Ministry of Internal Affairs' staff that are of Roma origin	Permanent	MDA	
71.	Presentation of a plan of adjustment of the programs of probation, social recovery and rehabilitation to the peculiarities of the Roma convicts	15.02.2002	MI, MJ	
72.	Developing a partnership relation and organizing monthly meetings with the chiefs of the local police and the Roma community leaders, in order to prevent and fight delinquency among the Roma	Permanent	MIA	
	<u>Child welfare</u>			
73.	Presenting an annual report regarding the Roma women participation in child education and care programs	Annual – 15.02	NACCA	
74.	Drafting a set of measures to prevent and fight discrimination of the institutionalized Roma children and other groups of children in need	15.07.2001	NACCA	
75.	Establishing a partnership plan between the Roma NGOs and local public structures of child care	Permanent	NACCA; MPA; Mayoralties	
76.	Presenting an annual report regarding the evaluation of the children of the Roma families and of the care centers	Annual - 15.02	NACCA	
77.	Presenting an annual report for hiring social workers and assistant staff from the Roma communities for the care centers for underage persons where the number of institutionalized children from the Roma families exceeds 30 %	15.12.2001	NACCA, MLSS	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
78.	Developing in collaboration with NGOs and the church of projects for the emergency support (food, clothes, and school materials) of low incomes families	Permanent	MLSS, MPI, MPA, NACCA	
79.	Presenting in collaboration with the NGOs and Ministry of Labor and Social Solidarity (MLSS) programs to train social mediators and future trainers from the Roma youth to work with the Roma community	20.03.2001	NACCA, MLSS	
80.	Evaluating the resources needed at national level in order to improve the children living and care conditions in residential units, included for disabled and defficient children	20.05.2002	NACCA	
81.	Putting forth proposals to foster programs promoting projects of family alternatives type for institutionalized children	15.06.2001	NACCA	
82.	Promoting annual campaigns to provent child dereliction, abuse, negligence and all phenomena that put children in difficulty	Annual – 15.06	NACCA, MPI, MIA	
83.	Evaluating the “ homeless children ” phenomenon in collaboration with the NGOs, and presenting local and national projects for social action	15.02.2002	NACCA, MIA	
84.	Holding, in collaboration with MPI, annual information campaigns to sensitise public opinion as to the children’s rights, and problems as well as the families at risk or in difficulty	Annual – 15.03	NACCA	
	Education			
85.	Drawing up an annual report regarding school registration with pupils from Roma families	Annual – 15.02	MER	
86.	Presenting a plan to foster school involvement and cut down school drop-out with the Roma population	30.01.2002	MER	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
87.	Mapping out a study regarding the opportunity of setting up educational institutions of secondary level as well as vocational for the Roma population (arts and professions, vocational education, training and professional reconversion)	15.06.2002	MER	
88.	Supporting NGOs to a project of correspondence, extra-mural education Romany language for Roma teachers	Permanent	MER	
89.	Presenting, together with the NGOs and the Roma communities, programs to train and improve school mediators perfecting and train teaching staff in the inter-cultural educational field	30.03.2002	MER	
90.	Taking measures to introduce topics preventing and fighting discrimination , into the general school curriculum	15.05.2002	MER	
91.	Presenting measures by which MER, the educational institutions will promote Roma teachers to the administration positions (school masters and school inspectors).	20.11.2001	MER	
92.	Organizing twice a month meetings with the Roma community leaders, Roma pupil's parents and the teaching staff in the educational institutions in order to encourage school attendance by the young Roma	Permanent	MER	
93.	Presenting measures to expand the project facilitating Roma access to the universities, colleges and faculties , by granting special subsidized openings for the Roma youth	15.02.2002	MER	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
94.	Presenting, in collaboration with the Roma leaders, a national plan for organizing school rehabilitation programmes for the Roma population , at county school-inspectorates level, through all the educational forms approved. This would be done in accordance with individual requests and the requirements of the Roma organizations in the area in point	20.05.2002	MER	
95.	Presentation of measures to introduce, at choice, Romany language and history classes in the educational institutions	15.06.2002	MER	
96.	Presentation by MER of an annual plan of additional training of Roma high school pupils for admission to higher schools	15.03.2002	MER	
97.	Presentation by the MER, MIA, MID, RJS of the annual plan for drawing and recruiting Roma candidates for public office and public institutions staff (faculties of social assistance, public administration, medical schools, Police Academy, military academies and military schools for the police non-commissioned officers, MND, RSS, etc.)	Annual – 15.07	MER, MIA, MND, RJS	
98.	Adopting measures needed to provide a lunch/day for all primary and secondary school pupils	15.08.2001	MER, MPF	
99.	Developing an opportunity study regarding the setting up of the Arts and Professions School as a public institution of cultural and professional forming	Annual – 15.11	MER, MCD	
	Culture and denominations			
100.	Starting cultural programs to reconstruct the Roma identity and to boost their self-esteem	20.01.2002	MCD, MPI	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
101.	Presenting, together with the Roma organizations, a plan of cultural events inspired from the Roma folklore and culture	01.03.2002	MCD	
102.	Drawing up a weekly plan of Radio and TV shows to present the Roma history and culture	15.01.2002	MCD	
103.	Drawing up a study on the opportunity of establishing a Roma Theatre	15.04.2002	MCD	
104.	Presenting, together with the Roma organizations, the financing and foundation project of the Roma civilization and culture Museum and the Roma artistic and cultural assembly	30.08.2002	MCD, MPF	
105.	Presenting an annual plan of action for inter-cultural education in schools, facilitating communication between different ethnics and fostering tolerance	30.05.2002	MCD, MPI	
106	Presenting a part-financing plan for producing and distributing documentary material regarding the Roma from Romania (publications, short documentaries, books)	15.09.2002	MCD, MLSS, MPF	
107.	Mapping out, together with Roma organizations, of a project to set up the Roma Cultural Center as an institution presenting the values and traditions of the Roma in Romania	10.09.2001	MCD	
108.	Supporting inter-cultural research and education projects	2001-2004	MCD	
Communication and civic involvement				
109.	Mapping out a public inform and education national program to prevent and fight discrimination	15.10.2001	MPI	
110.	Initiating a program fighting discrimination in the media	20.11.2001	MPI	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
111.	Presenting together with the Ministry of Labor and Social Solidarity and the NGOs, of an Information and Education Program regarding the disadvantages of the “black labor market” for the Roma ethnics	10.05.2002	MPI, MLSS	
112.	Drawing up a National Program of Roma information and education, together with the MHF and the NGOs on “The Family Planning and Contraceptives”	15.06.2002	MPI, MHF	
113.	Presenting together with the Ministry of Education and Research, MLSS, NGOs, a program for education of a program entitled “The Vocational school-a first step toward a working place’	30.07.2002	MPI, MLSS	
114.	Drawing up in collaboration with NACCA and NGOs, of an informing and educating program “The Child Abuse and his Fundamental Rights” .	30.08.2002	MPI, NACCA	
115.	Presenting together with the MER, MHF and NGOs, of an education and information program of “The Impact of Premature Marriages upon the Roma parents’ educational/professional future, as well as upon the child’s health”	15.09.2002	MPI, MER, MHF	
116.	Elaborating together with the MIA, MJ and NGOs of an information and education program “Your Rights in the Justice”, for the Roma	20.10.2002	MPI, MIA, MJ	
117.	Presenting together with the NGOs, a program for information and education of the Roma “The election and the civic participation”	01.03.2003	MPI	
118.	Initiating a program of collaboration with the media, in order to make known Roma discrimination cases	01.03.2002	MPI	

No.	Project / Activity	Deadline	Responsible	Observations
119.	Organizing biannual meetings with the ministers and the Roma civil society's representatives , with the purpose of preventing and fighting discrimination of the Roma ethnics and evaluating the relevant application of the Government Strategy for improving the condition of Roma	December/June	MPI	
120.	Supporting those NGOs projects that refer to the inter-cultural information and education of the majority, with the participation of the Roma ethnics	Permanent	MPI, MCD	
121.	Participation by the Roma leaders in the decision taking process, which directly affects the Roma communities, at all the levels of public administration	Permanent	MPI, MPA	
122.	Presenting, by the Roma organizations' leaders, of an annual evaluation report of the application of the Government Strategy for improving the condition of the Roma	Annual – 15.08	MPI	
123.	Presenting a media project that includes the success stories in solving the problems of the Roma communities	15.11.2001	MPI	