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**AD HOC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ROMA AND TRAVELLER ISSUES<sup>1</sup> (CAHROM)**

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**THEMATIC REPORT BY THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ROMA**

**(following the CAHROM thematic visit to Cracow, Poland, on 26-28 November 2015)**

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<sup>1</sup> The terms “Roma and Travellers” are used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies.

<sup>2</sup> Turkey did not take part in the thematic visit. However, Turkish experts that had been initially appointed for the thematic visit contributed to the report, and also transmitted information provided by Mr Hasan Emin ÇELİK.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 *Background and context of the thematic group and visit*

The thematic group on vocational education and training for Roma was set up at the request of the Polish member of the CAHROM in 2013. Representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, and Turkey later confirmed their interest to join this thematic group as partner countries.

The proposal from Polish authorities to be a requesting country and host a CAHROM thematic visit of partner countries’ experts was much welcome by the CAHROM since a thematic report on vocational education would bridge the already adopted thematic reports related to Roma education (namely on inclusive education as opposed to special schools<sup>3</sup>, school drop-outs and absenteeism of Roma children<sup>4</sup>, school enrolment of Roma children with a focus on Roma girls<sup>5</sup>, inclusive pre-school education for Roma children<sup>6</sup> and the schooling of Roma migrants’ and Travellers’ children<sup>7</sup>) and the planned thematic visit to Turkey on access of Roma to employment in 2017<sup>8</sup>.

An official invitation was received from the Roma Minority Division of the Department Of Denominations and National and Ethnic Minorities of the Ministry of Administration and Digitization<sup>9</sup> inviting the CAHROM’s group of experts to visit Cracow, Poland, on 13 October 2015 (see Appendix 1).

### 1.2 *Composition of the thematic group*

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Poland and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” were represented by their respective CAHROM members who are working for the ministry in charge of co-ordinating the national Roma integration strategy and its implementation. The Finnish CAHROM member appointed two experts from grass-root level from the city of Kajaani, including a representative of the Finnish Roma (Kaale) community, who works in the local Roma Working Group. The participation of the two Turkish experts, respectively from the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and the Department of Social Inclusion of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, was cancelled shortly before the thematic visit; however, the Turkish experts contributed to the present thematic report. The list of the experts participating in the thematic group, as well as the list of local Polish participants, can be found in Appendix 2.

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<sup>3</sup> See CAHROM (2012)18 Thematic report on inclusive education of Roma children as opposed to special schools (covering the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and the United Kingdom) at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>.

<sup>4</sup> See CAHROM (2012)6 Thematic report on school drop-out and absenteeism of Roma children (covering the Netherlands Hungary, Spain and Sweden) at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>.

<sup>5</sup> See CAHROM (2013)5 Thematic report on school attendance of Roma children, in particular Roma girls (covering Finland, Latvia, Norway and Sweden) at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>.

<sup>6</sup> See CAHROM (2015)6 Thematic report on inclusive pre-school for Roma children (covering the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”) at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>.

<sup>7</sup> This thematic report, covering France, Belgium, Switzerland and Romania, will be presented to the CAHROM for endorsement at its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 26-29 April 2016.

<sup>8</sup> This thematic visit to Turkey has been postponed to 2017. Partner countries shall include Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Poland, Spain and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”.

<sup>9</sup> Shortly before the CAHROM thematic visit, this Ministry was dismantled following the presidential elections. The Roma Division was incorporated into the Ministry of Interior of Poland.

### **1.3 Programme of the thematic visit**

The agenda included a two-day round table, opened by Mr Jerzy Miler, Malopolski Voivode, and attended by 30 local participants, including state officials, representatives of various regional and local institutions, Roma civil society representatives, including Roma NGO representatives, an entrepreneur (horse business), an ethnic Roma career adviser and an ethnic Roma social worker of Limanowa municipality. The morning of the third day was devoted to a debriefing meeting between the experts of the thematic group with a view to defining the main conclusions and lessons learnt, identifying good practices and proposing follow-up actions summarized in the last chapter of this report. The detailed programme of the thematic visit is reproduced in Appendix 3 to this report.

The agenda followed the guidelines developed by the CAHROM<sup>10</sup> and allowed the possibility for partner countries to introduce their experience and exchange views with local interlocutors. Partner countries' experts made full use of the opportunity to raise questions to their Polish interlocutors.

### **1.4 Introduction to the topic**

The setting-up of such a thematic group was a response to the still unsolved situation of insufficient presence of Roma on the labour market all over Europe which is mainly caused by a lower level of education of that community compared to the rest of the population. This lower level of education results from various factors, some of them being internal to the community (e.g. early school drop outs before completing compulsory education that may find its roots in early marriages) and some being linked to external reasons and discriminatory practices (including poverty, school segregation, misplacement in schools for light mentally disabled, lower quality education, lack of reference of Romani culture, history, language in school curricula, etc.). Some of these factors are interlinked: illiteracy of many Roma parents and their mistrust towards educational institutions often result from educational barriers they faced and lower education they had during their young age; and in turn they play a role in the fear to have their children discriminated or bullied at school, and sometimes in being unable assist their children with homework, etc. The above remarks should however not be generalised to the entire Roma community in Europe. Situations differ very much from country to country, community to community, family to family.

Since many years the education of Roma has been a priority at both national and international levels, examples of which being the inclusion of education as one of the core priorities of the Decade for Roma Inclusion (2005-2015)<sup>11</sup> and of the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020<sup>12</sup>. It is therefore not surprising that the first Roma-specific related Recommendation adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2000 focuses on education of Roma children<sup>13</sup> and the same applies to the choice of the topic of the first CAHROM thematic reports. In most member States that have adopted a national Roma Integration Strategy the education chapter has often been given political and financial priority (e.g. Finland, Poland). The first Roma Decade Action Plans to be adopted in Western Balkan countries was usually the one on education (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina).

<sup>10</sup> See document CAHROM (2013)26 Guidelines for the CAHROM thematic visits and reports.

<sup>11</sup> [www.romadecade.org](http://www.romadecade.org)

<sup>12</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1444910104414&uri=CELEX:52011DC0173>.

<sup>13</sup> Roma and Travellers' education was the focus of another CM recommendation adopted in 2009. To access the text of these recommendations click on <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/roma-related-texts>.

For obvious reasons, **education** stays the main domain of international and national interest in the framework of activities on improving the situation of Roma and Travellers in Europe. Data deriving from national censuses show clearly that the Roma minority has the lowest education level among all ethnic groups in Europe. The issue of education stays also the best recognized topic with many national and cross-Europe surveys. According to data of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) from its survey conducted in 11 EU member states in 2011<sup>14</sup>, 56 % of Roma left school before the age of 16 and 17 % have never been in the education system. This determines the situation of Roma in general, most of all on the labour market. The shortage of Roma educated skilled craftsmen on the labour market is an issue in many countries. Whilst, from the international organisations and national authorities' point of view, education is often considered as the first priority, many Roma, men in particular, might put employment as their first priority, before education or housing, though again no generalisation should be drawn. On paper, **employment** is also a core priority of the EU framework strategy, of (Roma Decade) action plans and of quasi all national Roma inclusion strategies. Employment was also the topic of the 2<sup>nd</sup> specific Roma-related Council of Europe Recommendation adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2001. However, political and financial priority given to the employment chapter is often scarce when non-existent. Main employment-related activities, when they exist, are often limited to provide training and new skills. Still, only 4% of Roma respondents described their job situation in 2011 as "being in training" according to the above-mentioned FRA survey, which reveals that training concerns relatively few Roma and when they are provided, they often fail to ensure employment at the end.

Relatively little focus is put on vocational education and training. Some international texts or national Roma inclusion strategies sometimes address it in relation to education or to employment or sometimes to both. Vocational education and training are still insufficiently recognised as a priority<sup>15</sup> and a solution that offers possibilities to activate and empower the Roma community and ensure their economic self-sufficiency. Vocational education and training seem also interesting in terms of Roma community development because they respond to some patterns existing in Roma traditional communities, such as child/early marriages (unions) and relatively early parenthood. Vocational education is a kind of "transmission belt" into the labour market for those who take responsibility for the family at an early age. Another important factor is also the legal obligation for compulsory education which in most countries is for children until 16 years of age (France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, Sweden), 17 years of age (United Kingdom) or 18 years of age (Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation and Turkey) – which, generally, also covers completing primary and vocational education<sup>16</sup>.

Up-to-now, international and national emphasis was put mostly on the access to education, the right to quality education, pre-school, inclusive education, which is reflected in texts, studies and reports, including in the choice of CAHROM thematic priorities<sup>17</sup>. The rise of interest for vocational education was however accelerated in the context of the European Structural Funds programming period 2007-2013, since ESF could be used for professional activation of vulnerable groups, including Roma. The link between the opening of the labour market for Roma and vocational training became more obvious. Nonetheless the outcomes, lessons learned or good practices were not widely disseminated.

<sup>14</sup> FRA survey and report from 2001: Education: the situation of Roma in 11 EU Member States: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/education-situation-roma-11-eu-member-states>.

<sup>15</sup> As examples, the 2015 Roma Decade Inclusion Index does not refer to vocational education or training and the Council of Europe Thematic Action Plan for the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019), adopted on 3 March 2016 by the Committee of Ministers, does not list vocational education or training among its priorities or envisaged actions.

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix 5.

<sup>17</sup> See Introduction chapter 1.1. above.

### 1.5 *European and international standards and reference texts*

At the level of the Council of Europe, three texts adopted by the Committee of Ministers addressing specifically Roma issues touch upon the topic of vocational education and training:

- **Recommendation No R (2000) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the education of Roma/Gypsy children in Europe**, in its Preamble, recalls that educational policies in favour of Roma/Gypsy children should be backed up by an active adult education and vocational education policy.
- **Recommendation Rec(2001)17 on improving the economic and employment situation of Roma/Gypsies and Travellers in Europe**<sup>18</sup>: Part V. of that Recommendation is devoted to the training and education needs of Roma. Paragraph 36 states that: *“Vocational training programmes for Roma/Gypsies should respond to local or regional needs, for instance the improvement of Romani neighbourhoods, and to employment opportunities. Preference should be given to on-the-job training and product development. Market research should be part of the training”*.

In the paragraph 35 Committee of Ministries put attention on the cultural background and traditional experiences: *“Roma/Gypsy culture and identity should be introduced as an integral part of the design and delivery of vocational education. For example, a system of accreditation should be developed for skills in traditional crafts and trades and regarded as equivalent to official qualification standards”*.

Member states should also ensure that *“Employment programmes (also referred to as public support programmes), including adult literacy training, should include the enhancement of skills and training as an integral part of their design to help improve the long-term employment prospects of participants”* (par. 37).

- **Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the education of Roma and Travellers in Europe**: In paragraph 12 Council of Ministries states: *“Access of Roma and Travellers to vocational training should be adapted and supported through targeted measures and culturally sensitive adult education programmes should be implemented. Furthermore, in absence of diplomas, the validation of knowledge acquired by experience should be encouraged”*.
- **The Strasbourg Declaration on Roma adopted at the High Level meeting on Roma on 20 October 2010**, states that the member States of the Council of Europe agree on a non-exhaustive list of priorities, which should serve as guidance for more focused and more consistent efforts at all levels, including through active participation of Roma. Education and employment are among these priorities, including vocational training: *“Ensure equal access of Roma to employment and vocational training in accordance with international and domestic law, including, when appropriate, by using mediators in employment offices. Provide Roma, as appropriate, with possibilities to validate their skills and competences acquired in informal settings”* (par. 34).

<sup>18</sup><https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=241681&Site=CM&BackColorInternet=C3C3C3&BackColorIntranet=EDB021&BackColorLogo=F5D383> (the term “Gypsies” was used in the Council of Europe terminology of that time).

In an effort to support the education of the Roma, the Council of Europe has organised European workshops and seminars on the following themes: teacher training on Roma history and culture, training of Roma school mediators/assistants, on the relationship between families and schools, access to quality education, pre-school education, and vocational training.

For recommendations from the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)** regarding (vocational) education and employment to participating countries in this thematic group, see chapter 2.

**At the European Union level**, relevant texts include the EU Council conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 in Brussels on 19 May 2011 and the European Parliament Resolution on the EU Strategy on Roma Inclusion (March 2011) and European Commission 2014. Report on the implementation of the EU framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. The European Union also prepared a wide series of programmes and initiatives for the promotion of vocational training cooperation to promote a collaborative approach to the development of vocational training systems in Europe, within **Socrates and Grundtvig, Leonardo da Vinci, Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Europe** programmes<sup>19</sup>. As an example, in the framework of the project “*Migrant Roma youth in Brussels: education and vocational training*” the Integration Centre “Foyer” presented in Brussels on 6-7 January 2014 a **Life Long Learning EU Programme** supported project called “*A mentoring system for Roma women on their vocational and educational path*” which was implemented in Hungary, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey, with a focus on Roma teenage girls as a multi-discriminated group<sup>20</sup>.

**At the level of the OSCE**, the 2003 Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area<sup>21</sup> recommended OSCE participating states to “*develop policies and programmes, including vocational training, to improve the marketable skills and employability of Roma and Sinti people, particularly young people and women*” (Article 51). The 2013 ODIHR Status Report on the Implementation of the Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area<sup>22</sup> draws the following conclusion: “*In countries aiming at EU accession that have had to begin harmonizing their legislation and policy with EU standards, financing tools such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance have been essential. Such programmes commonly feature several stages of intervention, including provision of information, mediation with potential employers, and free-of-charge vocational training courses. The actual employment of the beneficiaries is not necessarily an objective of such programmes, raising questions about their effectiveness*” (pp. 39-40).

“*In 2010, ODIHR also actively engaged in the establishment of the **International Task Force for the Education of Roma**, in co-operation with the Council of Europe, UNESCO, UNICEF, the European Commission, the Roma Education Fund and the International Step by Step Association. The Task Force fosters co-ordination of the promotion of early childhood care and education, of regular education, of out-of-school education, of vocational training and of adult education in Roma communities*” (page 63).

The **Roma Education Fund** has organised study visits for education and vocational training specialists and decision makers<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> <http://rome.angloinfo.com/information/working/eu-factsheets-working/vocational-training/>.

<sup>20</sup> See the PowerPoint [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/LLP/events/2014/documents/kickoff-ka/ka1/543327\\_ms4row\\_en.pdf](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/LLP/events/2014/documents/kickoff-ka/ka1/543327_ms4row_en.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.osce.org/odihr/17554>.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.osce.org/odihr/107406?download=true>. See also some country examples of measures under this chapter.

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/news/ref/news-and-events/study-visits-education-and-vocational-training-specialist-and-decision-make>.

## 1.6 Terminology

In his introduction, the Head of Roma Minority Division, Denomination and National and Ethnic Minority Department within the Ministry of Administration and Digitization, Mr Krzysztof Cwetsch, put emphasis on the terminology used in the Polish main statistical office to differentiate several categories, i.e.:

- **Unemployed person** - person over 15 years old who do not work but is ready to start a job and is registered in labour office (in Poland, registration is an obligatory condition to get a status of unemployed person);
- **Unemployment rate** – the relation of the number of (registered) unemployed persons to the number of persons economically active;
- **Economically inactive (or passive)** – person over 15 years old, who do not work and do not look for a job; this group encompasses also students, prisoners, pensioners, retired persons, etc.
- **Working or production age** – usually over 15 years old to 60 years old (women) or 65 years old (men); working age is divided into **mobile working age** (readiness to change the qualification, work place or job, usually people between 18 and 44 years) and **non-mobile working age** (lack of readiness to any change related to a job position, usually people between 45 to 64 years).

According to the 2011 Polish Census:	working	unemployed	economically inactive	no data
<b>12,776 Roma in working age</b> (over 15 years old)	<b>1,700</b>	<b>1,985</b>	<b>8,029</b>	<b>1,062</b>
%	<b>13.30%</b>	<b>15.53%</b>	<b>62.85%</b>	<b>8.32%</b>

## 1.7 Main issues addressed during the thematic visit

- 1) obstacles to achieve high education level among a majority of Roma;
- 2) cultural and economic reasons that could explain a lack of professional skills among Roma;
- 3) needs and challenges for developing vocational education and promoting this kind of education;
- 4) need for mentoring and monitoring support measures for Roma already professionally active;
- 5) needs for proper definitions (e.g. *persons unemployed versus economically inactive persons*);
- 6) Needs and challenges for collecting data which reflect the real situation of Roma professional activity on the labour market;
- 7) possible incentives for entrepreneurs to hire workers from marginalised groups, including Roma;
- 8) possibilities offered by re-emerging craft market or social economy entities, with (optional) reference to former traditional Roma occupations, if needed;
- 9) systemic problems encountered on the labour market: low level of education of potential workers, lack of professional skills, high costs of labour, often lack of territorial correspondence to the job resources or lack of correspondence between demand and supply, periodical demand for specific services or products, lack of professional flexibility, etc.;
- 10) the role and possible use of European Structural Funds in professional activation of Roma communities in EU member States,
- 11) the unwillingness of job seekers (not only Roma) to accept low-paid and low-esteem jobs;
- 12) the exact extent of the dependency of Roma communities on social welfare systems and inheritance effect of joblessness status from a generation to the next;
- 13) how to make us of the possible influence of role models within the Roma communities;
- 14) the need and role of carrier advisers, including those with an ethnic Roma background;
- 15) the patriarchal structure of some Roma groups which prevent higher education and professional activity of Roma women.

## II. SITUATION OF THE ROMA POPULATION AND CHALLENGES IN TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION, INCLUDING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### 2.1 Poland

#### *Size and composition of the Roma community*

Roma in Poland are recognized as an ethnic minority. According to the 2011 National Census of Population and Housing, 16,723 Polish citizens declared Roma ethnicity: 9,622 declared the Roma nationality alone. This was more than in the previous 2002 census figure (12,731 in total). More realistic estimations based on information provided by the voivodes and other implementing partners of the "Roma Programme" carried out in 2004-2013 put the total number of Roma between 20,000 and 25,000 (0.08% of the total population).

Roma are divided into five main groups who differ in cultural, social and economic terms: Polish Roma, Bergitka (Mountain, Carpathian) Roma, Lovara, and Kalderash (Kelderari), as well as two smaller groups of Sinti and Chaladytka (Russian Roma). Lovara, Kelderari, Polish Roma and Russian Roma used to be nomads until the half of the 1960s and were forced to sedentarize by the communist regime. The Bergitka Roma, on the contrary, had a sedentary way of life since ages.

Vast majority of Roma in Poland constitute urban population: 92 % live in cities and 8% in rural areas. They mainly live in major cities across the country. In the 2002 census, 15,657 Polish citizens declared using the Romani language at home.

According to the 2011 census, Roma is a young population: people aged 0-19 consist of 32.5 % of the total Roma population (compared with 21.5 % within the majority population); people aged 60 and more consist of 7.7 % of the total Roma population (19,7 % within the majority). The Polish Roma population consisted in 2011 of 8,604 women and 8,119 men, including 10,840 persons of working age.

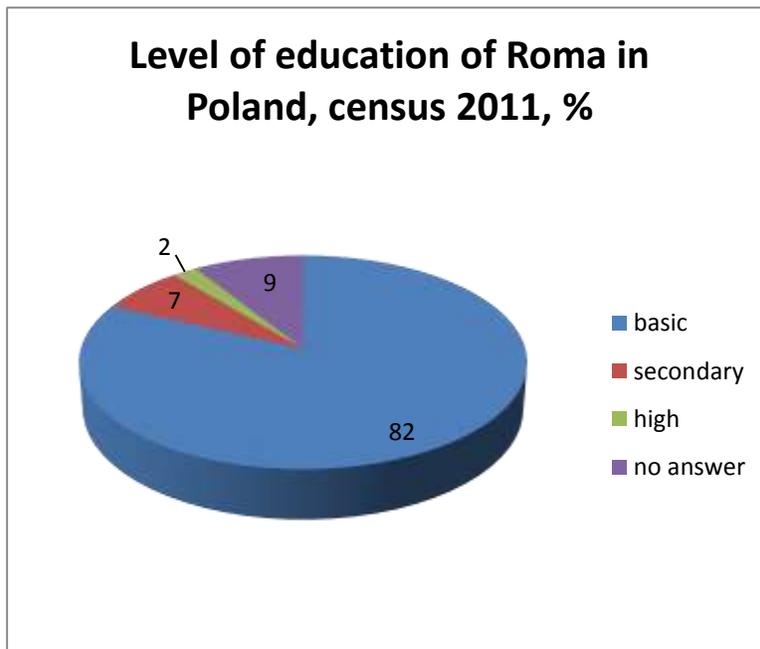
During the communist regime a number of Roma emigrated, mainly to Germany and Sweden but there is no reliable data on the scale of that migration. The next migration wave was connected with Poland joining the European Union in 2004. The search for a better life after the enlargement resulted in the migration of Polish Roma to Western Europe. The main destination countries were (and still are) the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Very few Roma from other European countries have recently arrived in Poland, mostly from Romania and fewer from Bulgaria.

#### *Situation of Roma in the field of education*

Despite a number of activities undertaken by Polish authorities in the field of education of the Roma community since the early 1990s, the level of education of most Polish Roma should still be identified as low. Significant disparities exist between the educational level of Roma and non-Roma.

Exact figures on the number of Roma children and youth covered with compulsory education are difficult to determine. However, data collected from annual reports submitted by voivodeship offices show that this figure is steadily increasing (in the school year 2004/2005 it amounted to 2,844 people, whilst in 2012/2013 it reached 3,259).

According to data from the 2002 National Census of Population and Housing, almost 51% of self-declared Roma over 13 years of age had not finish primary school. In the 2011 census data, a similar category was no longer available. However, it was pointed out that 82% of Roma declaring education chose the education category "lower than secondary education" (see the graphic below). During the two censuses respondents were asked for secondary education: in 2002, 247 Polish citizens of Roma origin declared having secondary education; in 2011 they were 934 (7%). As for the higher education, 13 declared to have it in 2002; they were 272 in 2011 (2%). These figures show at least some progress.



The number of Roma pupils for whom schools undertook additional educational activities in 2013 was 2,547 pupils according to information collected annually by voivodes, and based on reporting by educational institutions in Education Information System. Moreover, the Minister responsible for religious denominations and national and ethnic minorities collects annually information on the number of Roma pupils benefiting from support under the assistance programmes (monitoring the number of pupils receiving school starter kits, or insurance, participation in classes in community centres, etc.).

Analysis of the above data and reports on the implementation of the Roma Programme indicate that over 80% of Roma children in age of compulsory education actually pursue their studies. Turnout of Roma pupils is however still low, with an average of 70%. The grade average of Roma pupils: is also low: between poor and satisfactory (between 2-3 in 6-grade scale, where 6 is the highest). Over the last 3 years, the number of diagnoses on mild mental retardation varied between 6.5% and 7.4 % of the total number of Roma pupils. Although this figure is still a relatively high, it has decreased compared with previous years.

Despite the increase in the number of Roma children benefiting from early childhood education, sending children to kindergartens is still not widespread among Roma families. According to the Education Information System collected in 2013, 338 Roma children attended kindergartens and kindergarten units. Since 2013, one year of compulsory pre-school education has been introduced for all children aged 5, which should improve the situation.

### ***Situation of Roma on the labour market***

Provisions of the **1997 Act on data protection** limit data collection on ethnic grounds. The Polish administration uses estimated data based on the population census on households; however the census does not collect data on all areas and might have missed some Roma households. For the purpose of the thematic visit, data regarding the Roma community was collected through two main sources:

- Data collected by the chief statistical office, a governmental body which reports to the president of the Council of Ministers. This office is responsible for collecting and making available information related to public life and – for some areas – to private life.
- Data collected by the Centre for public opinion survey. This foundation reflects specific matters in the Polish society, primarily social and economic issues.

Data presented during the visit resulted from an analysis of three surveys: the 2011 population census survey, the 2014 examination of economic activities of the Polish population (done regularly since 1992) which gives an idea of the labour structure (people who are professionally active, employed and unemployed, and also those who are passive in terms of employment). The third one was a research on unemployment conducted in 2014 which identified the number of persons who are unemployed, how long they have been unemployed, whether they are registered or not, what is their main source of income, whether they are seeking job or are ready to take employment in nearest time and what kind of sacrifices the persons are ready to make to get a job).

Figures show that Roma are the least socially integrated minority in Poland. A large proportion of Roma remain excluded from the labour market. The unemployment rate for Roma is 30% as compared with 11% nationwide, indicating a pattern of discrimination not only in relation to the Polish majority, but also in relation to other national minorities. Low professional activity of the Roma in the labour market is one of the main barriers to the social integration of this minority. According to data from the 2011 National Census of Population and Housing, Roma professional activity rate was 22% (for the general population this rate was 55.5%). In 2011, 13.3% of the Roma (1,700 people) declared that they had a job, whilst the remaining 86.7% (11,076 people) were classified as unemployed, professionally inactive or people with no defined status on the labour market (see table under 1.6 Terminology).

Members of society aged 15 or more who are not working and are not looking for a job constitute what is called a *professionally passive group*. This group – which is not counted under the unemployment rate - includes people that are not willing to get employed at all, retired persons, production age people who are given benefits but do not want to come back on the labour market, disabled or sick persons, young people who have not yet finished their studies, people who withdrew from the labour market to start again their studies, prisoners and people who stay home to take care of children or other persons. For the entire Polish society, the number of active people is 44% and the number of passive is 44.2%. For Roma, the figures are 13% and 62.8% respectively. In 2014 given reasons for passivity were: sickness or disability (26.8%), students or starting again studies (26%), family obligations (25%), pensioners (12.5%), discouraged of seeking a job (9%). For Roma, proportions were the same but figures vary a lot.

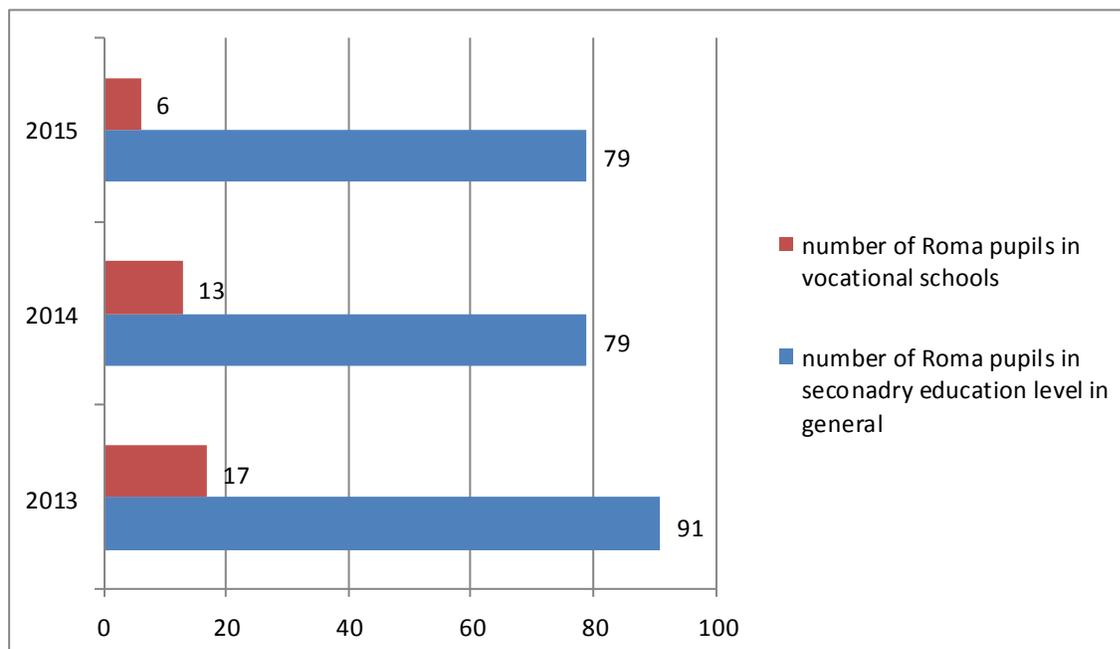
### ***Challenges regarding employment and education, including vocational education and training***

In Poland, challenges exist both within the Roma communities and from an institutional perspective. Poverty and cultural patterns, especially among traditional Roma groups, are obstacles to the enrolment of children in pre-school education and education at large: a number of Roma families face financial difficulties and education appears less a priority compared to daily economic survival although pre-

school education receives governmental support. This is particularly true for Roma children dropping out of school before finishing secondary education. For very young children, there is a certain over-protectiveness on the side of mothers which plays in favour of keeping their children at home with the family rather than sending them to pre-school. Another factor is the lack of trust in the school system which is often linked to stereotypes, prejudice and negative attitude towards Roma children.

Roma ethnic minority is the only minority at risk of social exclusion in Poland. This diagnosis is due to a number of social and cultural factors, of which the first one is the low educational level of this group, which directly affects the lack of qualifications desired in the labour market, and thus the health situation and living conditions of the Roma. Not without significance is the hermetic nature of some traditional Roma communities that defend their “independence” and “difference” leading to their self-exclusion of the rest of society. Mutual isolation has deepened the negative stereotypes. Many centuries of isolation of the group, caused by culturally motivated self-isolation and barriers on the part of the majority society, meant that Roma until these days are not a socially integrated group. The consequence of this isolation is insufficient knowledge about the Roma among the majority population, and thus, a high level of distrust towards this group (this is mirrored on the Roma side). Different lifestyle, system of values, aversion to institutionalized education, and the lack of employment cause high level of aversion towards the Roma (although the level of social aversion towards the Roma is steadily decreasing).

Among certain groups and categories of the Roma population, cultural factors are clear barriers for the overall improvement of their socio-economic and educational situation. During the thematic visit, numerous examples were given of professions that certain traditional Roma groups would disregard or categorically refuse if they would be proposed such occupations (see the conclusions chapter of this report for concrete examples). These cultural aspects are not always sufficiently taken into consideration in vocational education and training offers, which partly explains the relatively low (though slightly increasing) number of Roma involved in vocational education (the graphic below shows the number of scholarships for Roma pupils in general secondary education or in vocational schools:



Note: Some data and experiences show that the total number of Roma pupils attending secondary education is a little bit higher than the number of scholarships presented in this graphic but the difference is not too big.

The lack of acceptance of institutionalized education of children and youth in traditional circles results in a high degree of school drop-out in the early stages of education, especially among girls. The acceptance by a part of the Roma population of a low eligibility age to start a family and of a low educational level are causes explaining the fact they remain on the side-lines of modern contemporary societies. Because of the position of women in traditional Roma communities - determined primarily by the fact of motherhood - the equality between Roma men and women remains a big problem. Roma women often face double/multiple discrimination both from an inside and outside community perspective.

Roma are not always prepared for the smooth functioning in the increasingly complicated reality of the modern world. The low level of education among the Roma (also caused by past educational policies towards this minority), prevents their entry into the labour market, and the consequent lack of or minimal economic independence. The lack of schooling and jobs translates into bad housing situation of this group - the degradation of dwellings, and raising population density, deteriorating housing and sanitary conditions, and placement of Roma clusters in poor neighbourhoods. This situation is reflected in the health situation of Roma, being the cause of shorter life expectancy, chronic diseases and decreasing immunity, also playing a role is endogamy of this population. Simultaneously, there is an increase in substance abuse, which is a relatively new phenomenon in the Roma community, proving the disintegration of existing cultural norms.

The above play a major role in the social aversion towards this group from the part of the majority society and gives ground to manifestations of discrimination towards this minority, although specific cultural features should not overshadow and be an excuse for not addressing persistent discriminatory behaviours within parts of the Polish society. Cultural characteristics that are clearly different from the dominant culture cause reluctance towards this group from the part of the majority society. Roma are perceived as intentionally disregarding the law (e.g. parents not sending their children to school, early marriage, Roma avoiding employment, or having a demanding attitude, etc.). On the other hand, positive Roma cultural features (solidarity, importance of the family, etc.) are not sufficiently valued among the majority population.

Raising the level of education is considered to be the condition for changing the situation of Roma and improving their access to the labour market. Without raising the level of education and facilitating job opportunities, any other accompanying measures shall have low efficiency.

To summarize, among the key barriers affecting the persistent low level of education of the Roma community in Poland, the following should be indicated:

- Lack of preliminary preparation offered by pre-school education (kindergarten);
- Insufficient command of the Polish language, resulting, *inter alia*, in the misunderstanding of teachers' instructions;
- Absence in school activities (due both to the lack of enforcement of compulsory education by educational authorities and to the lack of family responsibilities to send children to school);
- Early school drop-out by Roma pupils, mainly girls (even just after finishing primary school);
- Lack of motivation of Roma pupils/students and parental support;
- Lack of preparation of teachers to work with culturally diverse pupils;
- Disapproval of Roma children's school attendance on the part of non-Roma parents;
- Poverty, poor social and financial conditions making it hard for pupils to prepare for classes;
- Migration of Roma families is causing frequent schooling interruptions and educational difficulties after returning from a foreign residence.

## 2.2 *Bosnia and Herzegovina*

### *Size and composition of the Roma community*

Roma are the biggest minority among the 17 national minorities officially recognized in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The last census was in 2014 but official results have not been announced. In the last census from 1991, only about 8,864 Roma declared Roma ethnicity. Information from the field reveals that there are more Roma living in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The lack of data was the reason that the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina had registration process of Roma population and their needs in 2010. Registration of Roma needs was useful for better planning of activities and funds allocation. Special attention was paid to data protection, according to the Law on data protection. During 2010 and 2011, data were registered and included in a unique data base. The registration process continued to be opened for each Roma returnee family or other Roma who missed the chance to be registered. Local social welfare centres have led the registration process and they were delivered technical equipment (computers) in order to establish their database. In total about 17,000 Roma were registered during that process.

Taking into consideration that not all Roma registered and that some were absent, authorities estimate the real number of Roma living in Bosnia and Herzegovina to be between 30,000 and 40,000 (close to 1% of the total population). Other sources estimate that the Roma population in Bosnia and Herzegovina could be around 76,000 persons (almost 2% of the total population)<sup>24</sup>.

### *Situation of Roma in the field of education*

**Primary education** is compulsory, whilst **pre-school education** is not. Collected data indicate an upward trend in the enrolment of Roma children in primary schools. Interestingly, there are no differences in the enrolment of boys and girls. In the school year 2013/14, a total of 2,078 Roma children were enrolled in primary schools. According to the annual report, 64 Roma children dropped out of school (3.07%), which is considered a significant improvement compared to previous years.

During the school year 2013/14<sup>25</sup>, 51 Roma children were enrolled in **secondary school**, and 29 Roma pupils completed this level of education in the same year. That same year, a total of 92 Roma pupils attended secondary education with no significant differences between Roma girls and boys. One Roma student dropped out of secondary school. There are Roma students at universities and many of them finish their **high level education**.

### *Situation of Roma on the labour market*

Data on the employment of Roma are largely missing. The Roma employment rate is 16% lower than for other groups, and estimated to be significantly lower (30%) for Romani women. The rate of Roma without any employment experience is also significantly higher (21%) than for others. The gap in the unemployment rate between Roma and the total population seems however to decrease<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> See PowerPoint presentation of *Hilswerk International Austria*, delivered at the CAHROM thematic visit on social housing for Roma held in Skopje, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", in April 2012.

<sup>25</sup> Statistics for the school year 2014/2015 are still not available.

<sup>26</sup> Pp 16, 33 and 34 of the 2015 Roma Decade Inclusion Index: [http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9810\\_file1\\_roma-inclusion-index-2015-s.pdf](http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9810_file1_roma-inclusion-index-2015-s.pdf).

### ***Challenges regarding employment and education, including vocational education and training***

Roma is not only the biggest but also the most vulnerable minority among the 17 national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The governmental Roma Strategy and Action Plan indicate that 19,500 Roma persons, or 4,500 Roma households, require some type of assistance.

Roma are disproportionately affected by the lack of access to employment, both in public and the private sector. One of the major obstacles in access to public services, among others the registration on unemployment offices, is the lack of documents. The lack of documents can be also a serious barrier in vocational training<sup>27</sup>. **Not many Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina are in fact interested to apply to vocational education and training** despite the adoption of a Strategy for Vocational Education and Training in 2007.

The main difficulties to employ Roma have been so far their lack of education. Other problems identified by employment agencies for the employment of Roma have been listed as follows:

- low qualification of registered unemployed Roma;
- lack of knowledge to manage self-employment projects;
- lack of interest of employers to employ Roma;
- lack of coordination with local authorities in order to help Roma to enter own business;
- lack of support regarding registration of business or issuance of permissions;
- lack of good communication and coordination in order to follow-up the realization of projects for those Roma that were employed (number of permanently employed Roma after a project expired, communication with employers, etc.).

Pre-school education has been recognized as extremely important for the subsequent development and progress of each individual. However, the conditions under which children of that age are educated are not equally stimulating and motivating for all children, particularly those who belong to marginalized groups, such as Roma children. Since authorities do not have general information on the total number of Roma children of pre-school age due to administrative and data collection barriers, information on the number of Roma children enrolled in pre-school programmes cannot be expressed in percentages, but only numerically collected.

Despite an increasing education budget for education within the Revised Action Plan (RAP) on Roma Educational Needs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are still not enough funds to meet the needs of all Roma children to achieve full equality in access to education. Despite significant progress, the goals set in the RAP for education are far to be fully achieved.

## **2.3 Finland**

### ***Size and composition of the Roma community***

According to official estimates, the Finnish Roma (called *Kaale*) living in Finland are 10,000 to 12,000<sup>28</sup>, i.e. about 0.20% of the total population. As highlighted in the *Finnish Roma History Book*, Finnish Roma settled on the territory of Finland 500 years ago.

<sup>27</sup> See ECRI Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina (fourth monitoring cycle), published in 2011.

<sup>28</sup> About 3,000 Finnish Roma (Kaale) live in Sweden.

The mother tongue of Roma is mainly Finnish but *Kaale* (Finnish Romani variant) and Swedish are also spoken. The Finnish Roma belong to the Lutheran religion or free sects.

Finnish Roma are spread in different regions but are predominantly present in the southern part of the country. Finnish Roma are more present in certain cities, including the capital Helsinki (with about 5,000 Roma, i.e. almost half of the total Roma population). In the municipality of Kajaani, located in north-east of Finland and from where the Finnish experts of the thematic group were coming from, live 120 Roma.

All Finnish Roma are Finnish citizens and their position is secured in the Constitution. Finnish Roma constitute a rather homogeneous community. However, this might change since during recent years an increasing number of Roma have arrived in Finland, particularly from Bulgaria, Romania and Estonia. The number of Roma migrants is unknown but 50 to 100 are estimated to stay permanently in Finland.

### ***Situation of Roma in the field of education***

While an increasing share of Roma pupils are doing well in basic education, one out of five of all Roma pupils (i.e. 20%) continue to have significant problems in their school attendance and do not complete compulsory school education. Starting independent life and a family at a young age, as well as a lack of information and support, discourage them from pursuing further studies and studying for a vocation. This has a direct negative impact on their position in the labour market.

Only 50% of those Finnish Roma pupils who complete compulsory basic education (80%) are seeking further education (46% are girls and 54% are boys). Almost all of them (95%) enter vocational secondary education, whilst 5 % choose general upper secondary schools<sup>29</sup>. Roma pupils thus need more support than others in moving on to secondary level studies. Young Finnish Roma people recognise the necessity of vocational studies which would improve their quality of life and well-being. Nevertheless, still today, girls' lives are aimed at finding the spouse of their dreams and starting a family of their own. Girls experience that further education prevents moving on and discover the world which is the only way to find a partner unless there are any suitable candidates in their hometown.<sup>30</sup>

### ***Situation of Roma on the labour market***

Another major obstacle preventing Roma from accessing the labour market is discrimination and negative attitudes. A study on Roma employment conducted in companies in 2008 showed that many employers are reluctant to recruit Roma even when they have the requisite qualifications for the job, which would also explain why unemployment in this community stands at 40%. Although local employment agencies are required by law to recruit someone to assist Roma with job seeking, only five persons are currently employed in this capacity, in the south of the country<sup>31</sup>. According to the above 2008 study, it was estimated that the educational background of 70% of the unemployed Roma job-seekers consisted of comprehensive school only, and 60% of the job-seekers lacked vocational qualifications of any kind. Employers highlighted the above as major obstacles for Roma employment.

<sup>29</sup> See pages 6 and 25 of CAHROM (2013)5 Thematic report on school attendance of Roma children, in particular Roma girls, available at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, page 14.

<sup>31</sup> See ECRI report on Finland (fourth monitoring cycle), published in 2013.

### ***Challenges regarding employment and education, including vocational education and training<sup>32</sup>***

Although significant progress has been achieved in some of the areas covered by the National Policy for Roma, in particular education, local-level implementation is still a challenge. **Particular challenges have been identified in the fields of employment and adult education for the Roma.** The general situation of young Roma still raises a number of concerns, including in relation to education and employment. Due to the life cycle of the Roma population – reaching adulthood and starting a family early on – they only seek access to vocational education and training and the labour market relatively late in life. Accordingly, vocational education and training aimed at the adult population and the development of its educational structure is essential for the Roma population.

No comprehensive data however exist on the participation in vocational education and training of Roma adults. The National Board of Education has conducted a **study on the Adult education of the Roma.** The results of this study will be published towards the end of 2015<sup>33</sup>. The lack of vocational education and training has been usually identified as one of the main obstacles preventing Roma from gaining access to the labour market. According to the up-dated information the Roma in Finland have achieved vocational diplomas but it has not opened doors into the labour market.

#### ***2.4 “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”***

##### ***Size and composition of the Roma community***

According to the 2002 population census, the number of self-declared Roma is 53,879, i.e. 2.6% of the total population<sup>34</sup>. Estimates of the Roma population provided by NGOs and researchers vary from 80,000 to 260,000. The estimated figure used by the authorities is 150,000 (Egyptians excluded), i.e. 7.5% of the total population. The country is also home to nearly 1,700 refugees, mostly Roma, who fled their homes as a result of the 1999 conflict in Kosovo\*<sup>35</sup>. Most of these persons are living in the municipality of Šuto Orizari in Skopje, Europe's first “Roma municipality” (i.e. led by a Roma mayor) and the only one in the world where the Romani language has been granted an official status. Roma do not concentrate in a particular region of the country, but are instead spread all over the territory. According to the 2002 population census, 27 municipalities have a share of Roma exceeding 1%; 10 of them have a share of Roma exceeding 4%. Ethnic differences are less relevant than the way of life, costume and appearance that the members of this group share. Most Roma speak Romani as their first language; others speak Albanian, Macedonian or Turkish pending on the surrounding population and regions where they are located. Most of them are Muslim, although some of them practise other religions too.

##### ***Situation of Roma in the field of education***

There is among Roma children a lower attendance rate, as well as higher drop-out rates than in the non-Roma population. The problem of low enrolment is particularly critical in pre-school education which is of utmost importance for the further education of children, especially regarding the learning of the national language used in school.

<sup>32</sup> See also under sub-chapter 3.3 of this report the conclusions and recommendations of the first monitoring report of the National Policy for Roma as regards vocational education and training.

<sup>33</sup> One of the Finnish experts presented some of these results during the thematic visit.

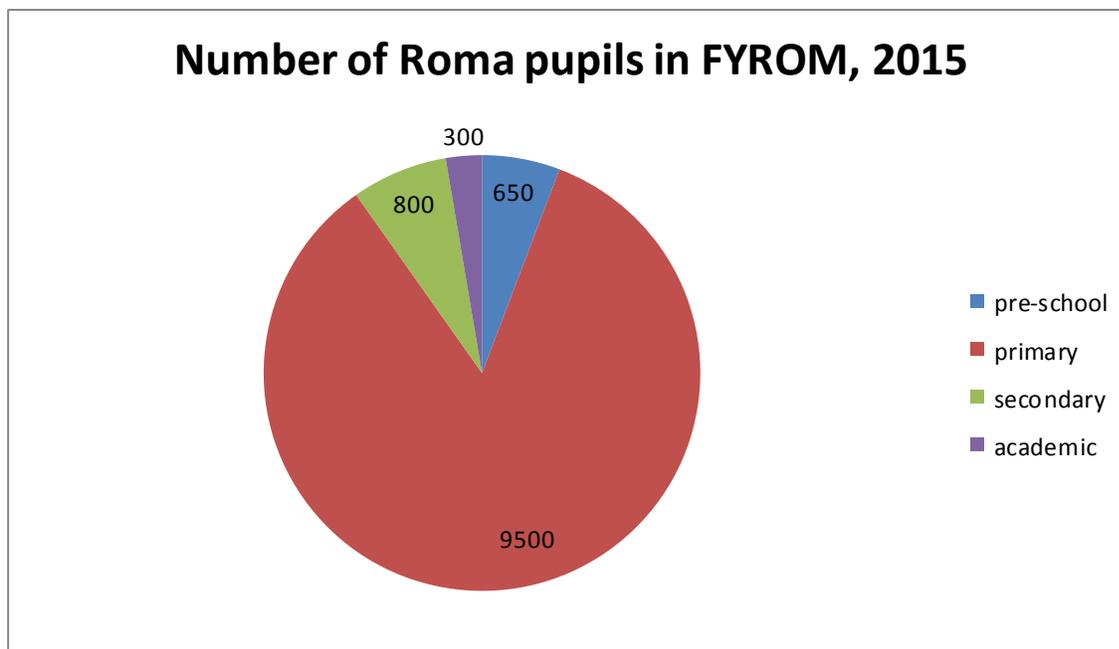
<sup>34</sup> In addition, 3,843 declared to be Egyptians.

<sup>35</sup> All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

There are several studies that indicate that the enrolment of Roma children in all levels of education is 20 to 30% lower than among non-Roma, and the drop-out rate of children is two times higher among Roma, in comparison to non-Roma children. Some of the positive measures aimed at promoting the inclusion of Roma in mainstream education have however brought results, such as a reduction of the drop-out rate between fifth and sixth grade among girls and the doubling of Roma enrolment in public universities in the past seven years (from 150 in 2005 to 300 in 2012).

The drop-out rate of Roma children is high. It is due to health problems because of bad weather conditions and outbreaks but also because of the lack of awareness among some Roma parents about the importance for their children to attend school. Poor socio-economic condition of the community also plays an important role: education is less a priority for parents and children are taken out from school to help their families. Child begging is a widespread problem which affects Roma pupils' attendance at school.

**Total number of Roma pupils attending schools and universities in 2015**



According to several conducted studies on the educational status/needs of the Roma, few reasons have been stated as factors for the low educational status of the Roma:

- Low socio-economic status of the Roma population;
- High percentage of Roma children which are not enrolled in pre-school education;
- Low level of knowledge of the Macedonian language when entering primary education, thus causing difficulties for Roma children to fully understanding the programme;
- Low awareness of Roma parents regarding the importance of education of their children.

The lack of personal identity document can also be an issue though birth certificates are no longer required to enrol children in public elementary schools<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> Source: CommDH(2013)4 Report by Nils Muižnieks, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, following his visit to "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", from 26 to 29 November 2012.

The 2011 UNDP/WB/EC regional Roma survey revealed disproportionate literacy levels between Romani communities and the general population, with around 17% of adult Roma being illiterate. The literacy gap among adult Roma and non-Roma is 13 percentage points, while this gap is even bigger among Romani and non-Romani women (20 percentage points).

### ***Situation of Roma on the labour market***

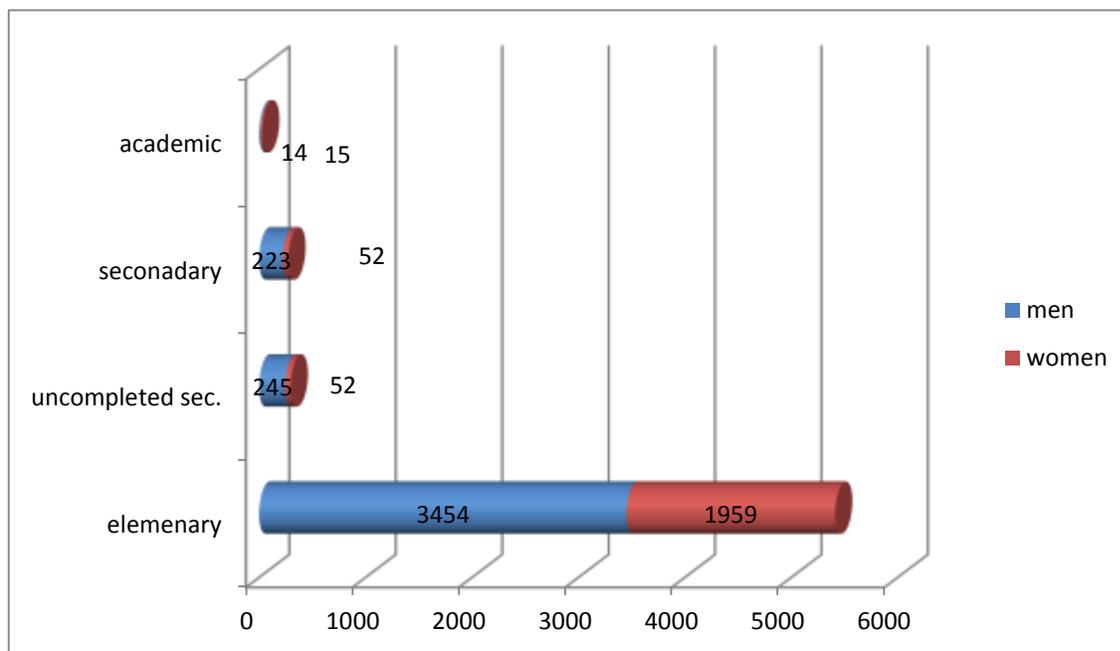
Official data from March 2014 indicate that 2% of all unemployed persons are Roma (based on official statistic of people actively searching for a job). Data from 2011 provided insight into the educational profile of the unemployed Roma: 88% had complete or incomplete primary education, 4.14% had complete or incomplete secondary education and only 0.2% had completed tertiary education<sup>37</sup>.

Based on information available, **the total number of Roma persons registered in the Agency for Employment is 6,110** (2,071 are Roma women). Those with elementary school count for 5,413 (including 1,959 Roma women); those with uncompleted secondary education are 297 (52 women); those with completed secondary education are 367 (including 144 women) and only 29 (15 of them being women) have a university degree. **The total number of employed Roma in public and national sector is 1,600.**

### ***Challenges regarding employment and education, including vocational education and training***

The educational and employment situation of the Roma minority – with a particularly high rate of unemployment, approx. 70 % according to several sources - is a cause for concern. Their low level of education (see graphic below) reduces not only their “employability” but also their capacity to participate in certain general employment schemes and projects<sup>38</sup>.

**Educational level of unemployed Roma in 2015**



<sup>37</sup> Source: Employment Service Agency and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy”.

<sup>38</sup> See ECRI Report on “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (fourth monitoring cycle), published in 2010.

One of the main problems identified in the field of education is the large percentage of Roma children who are not enrolled in pre-school education, partly due to the fact that **pre-school education is not compulsory**. Although there are activities that directly contribute to the inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education, the number of Roma children aged 0-6 years who are not covered by any form of pre-school education is still high. A project called «*Inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education*» is implemented in 18 municipalities by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and supported by the Roma Education Fund (REF). Main reasons for the low number of Roma children in kindergartens are:

- The fact that children speak Romani at home and have little knowledge of the Macedonian language. In 80% of the 18 municipalities targeted by the Roma Education Fund (REF)-supported project for Roma inclusion, Roma people mostly speak the Romani language. This contributes to a low level of knowledge of the Macedonian language among the Roma community. The curriculum according to which the educational process is carried out is mostly in Macedonian language, which is why the Roma students have problems with learning and understanding the educational programme.
- The low awareness of Roma families about the importance of enrolling their children in pre-school institutions. The parents still do not understand the importance and the need of inclusion of their children in pre-school education and up-bringing have some percentage of children who did not succeed in completing the pre-school educational process.
- Financial problem for the parents due to the fact that pre-school education being not compulsory, it is not free of charge (it costs 25 Euros per child per month).
- Low capacities and poor conditions in the kindergartens, etc.

In the academic year 2009/2010, 20,317 children (of all nationalities) aged 0-6 years were enrolled in 52 kindergartens; 454 or 2.23% of them were Roma children. In the academic year 2010/2011, there were 23,503 children (of all nationalities); 551 or 2.34% of them were Roma children. In the academic year 2011/2012, there were 25,200 children (of all nationalities); about 600 or 2.38 % of them were Roma children. The above suggests that the percentage of inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education has slowly increased thanks in particular to the project “Inclusion of Roma children in public pre-school institutions” jointly conducted by the Roma Education Fund (REF) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy between 2009 and 2012 and to the implementation of the project A Good Start (AGS)<sup>39</sup> in four Macedonian localities. Despite these efforts, the percentage of inclusion of Roma children in pre-school education remains particularly low.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the increase of enrolment, attendance rates of the Roma children in day-care programmes remain much lower than the rest of the population. The main reason is the high monthly fee for public kindergarten (€25 while most of the families live below the poverty line of €94 monthly income). Primary education and, since the 2008–2009 academic year, secondary education is compulsory in the country. Yet enforcement is weak, in large part because families living in poverty are not able to pay cash penalties from €400 to 700. Only one out of ten Roma children complete the primary school cycle, approximately half as high as among Macedonian citizens. Moreover, it appears that only a fifth of Roma children attend the secondary cycle.

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<sup>39</sup> A Good Start was funded by the European Union. Explicit but non-exclusive in its targeting, the project currently helps more than 4,000 Roma and non-Roma children from ages zero to six to access early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. With a mandate until June 2012, it operated in a total of 16 locations in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and in the «the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia». Coordinated by the Roma Education Fund (REF), its three international partners were the International Step By Step Association (ISSA), Fundación Secretariado Gitano, the Slovak Governance Institute, and 12 local implementing partners.

<sup>40</sup> Source: “Inclusion of Roma Children in Public Pre-school Institutions” project, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

## 2.5 Turkey

### ***Size and composition of the Roma community***

Although Turkey's population consists of a lot of ethnic majorities and minorities, there is no official record of the number of any ethnic group since the Republic of Turkey citizenship is not based on ethnicity. Turkish authorities estimate the total number of Roma in Turkey to be between 500,000 and 2.5 million<sup>41</sup>. Several NGOs, including Istanbul-based Zero Discrimination association and the European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF), indicate 3 to 5 million<sup>42</sup>. Researchers working in the ERRC/HYD/EDROM Research covering cities in seven regions of Turkey, mention 4.5 to 5 million<sup>43</sup>.

In Turkey, there are four main Roma groups: Roma, Lom, Dom and Abdal. Roma live mostly in Aegean Region, Lom live in the Black Sea Region, Dom live in Eastern and South-Eastern Anatolia, while Abdal live in Central and South-Eastern Anatolia. Most of these groups have similar living standards.

### ***Situation of Roma in the field of education***

Despite the lack of any actual data, it is estimated - according to studies conducted by some public institutions and NGOs - that the educational level of Roma people is lower than the national average in Turkey. The education level of Lom people seems to be higher compared with the other Roma groups. Besides, school abandonment and non-attendance ratios of Roma children and youth are significant. Their attitude towards education at early ages results with lower educational level which leads to difficulties in their adulthood, such as social exclusion and unemployment. The schooling rate for Roma is also reportedly low, due to problems of accessibility, financial difficulties, intensified by the forced eviction cases<sup>44</sup>.

### ***Situation of Roma on the labour market***

Roma people usually work at unskilled and/or temporary jobs due to their low level of education. They also accept to work for lower salaries and without social protection. Some Roma people in Turkey are traditionally inclined to make their living on handcrafts. However, the market for these goods is limited and they provide income just enough to cover daily needs.

### ***Challenges regarding employment and education, including vocational education and training***

According to studies conducted by some Roma NGOs which exist in Turkey since early 2000s, Roma people in Turkey live in conditions less than ideal. Considering observations of some public institutions and assumptions of NGOs, Roma people live in poverty, work at temporary jobs, have limited access to education and live in unfit dwelling compared to the general population. They also have a perception of discrimination, according to those studies. However, there is no statistical data concerning the depth and width of the social exclusion towards Roma.

<sup>41</sup> Estimate d figure provided by the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policy at the 6<sup>th</sup> CAHROM meeting (Rome, Italy, 28-31 October 2013).

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix 5 of CAHROM (2011)25 Meeting report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> CAHROM meeting, Istanbul, Turkey, 22-25 November 2011, available at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>, as well as ERTF factsheet on Turkey available at [https://www.ertf.org/images/Reports/The\\_situation\\_of\\_Roma\\_in\\_Turkey\\_17062015.pdf](https://www.ertf.org/images/Reports/The_situation_of_Roma_in_Turkey_17062015.pdf).

<sup>43</sup> [http://www.hyd.org.tr/staticfiles/files/biz\\_buraday%C4%B1z\\_turkiye'de\\_romanlar-1.pdf](http://www.hyd.org.tr/staticfiles/files/biz_buraday%C4%B1z_turkiye'de_romanlar-1.pdf).

<sup>44</sup> See ECRI Report on Turkey (fourth monitoring cycle), published in 2011.

There are difficulties to implement special employment policies for the Roma people due to lack of valid and reliable data. Nevertheless there are incentives for employers encouraging them to employ more people based on the categories of age, gender, vocational educational background, disabilities etc. Jobseekers among Roma people can benefit from these incentives individually if he/she matches with any of the corresponding categories.

Challenges faced by Roma have been recognized by the Government for the first time in 2009, and a dialogue with Roma has been initiated and embraced by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State at the time.

### III. LEGISLATION, POLICY MEASURES AND PROJECTS, INCLUDING VOCATIONAL TRAINING, AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS

#### 3.1 Poland

##### *Roma policy framework*

Poland has gained experience on professional activation during three successive governmental programmes aimed at the integration of the Roma community in Poland:

- The Pilot government programme for the Roma community in the Małopolska Province for the years 2001-2003;
- The Programme for the Roma community in Poland in the period 2004-2013;
- The Programme for the integration of the Roma community in Poland in the years 2014-2020;

All these programmes have a comprehensive character with several intervention areas, including education, housing and social situation, health, labour market, anti-discrimination and security, culture, promotion of Roma culture and civic education of Roma (education with cultural, historical and civic component). Some lessons have been drawn from the implementation of these programmes (see General conclusions).

##### *Coordination, monitoring and participation of Roma*

There are approximately 120 Roma non-governmental organisations registered in Poland, declaring themselves as Roma minority organisations, 50 of them are active in the implementation of the national programme for the integration of Roma.

Two representatives of the Roma community are present in the **Joint Commission between the Government and National and Ethnic Minorities**, established by the **Act of 6 January 2005 on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Languages**.

Making use of the institutional opportunity to establish a permanent panel of this Commission, a **Roma Team**, consisting of 20 representatives of Roma origin, was established in 2008. It acts as a forum of exchange of information on matters relating to the Roma ethnic minority, and serves an advisory body whose aim should be to develop proposals for actions aiming at improving the situation of Roma in Poland.

##### *Educational policy and measures*

The Act on the Education System provides the general framework for education in Poland. It was amended in 2011 so as to reactivate vocational education (see below).

Legislation changes which facilitate gaining a professional education, supplementing skills and training in a new occupation define the following types of secondary schools:

- a three-year vocational school, which enable pupils to obtain a vocational qualifications diploma after passing the examinations of qualification in the profession and further education starting from the second class of secondary school for adults;
- three years of high school, which enable pupils to obtain leaving certificate after passing the matriculation examination;

- four-year secondary technical schools, which enable pupils to obtain a diploma of vocational qualifications after passing the examinations of qualifications in a given profession, as well as obtaining the certificate of maturity after passing the matriculation examination;
- post-secondary schools for the period teaching no more than 2.5 years to obtain a higher vocational qualifications diploma after passing the examinations of qualifications in a given profession;
- a three-year special school preparing for employment for students with disabilities (mild, moderate, severe or conjugate disabilities), which enable pupils to obtain a certificate of adoption for work.

### ***Vocational education and training***

In the 1990s vocational schools disappeared in favour of other types of schools but afterwards people realised that there was a lack on the labour market of skills which used to be provided by vocational schools. So vocational education was reintroduced and is of the responsibility of local governments (the Powiats, equivalent to French “departments”).

Following amendments the Act on the education system in 2011, vocational education has been reactivated in Poland since 2012<sup>45</sup>. The main objective of the changes introduced in 2012 in vocational education and training (VET) was to improve its quality. The results are expected to be:

- Better preparation of graduates of vocational schools to enter the labour market,
- Increasing interest in vocational education among high school students,
- Building public confidence in vocational training.

The new VET model is based on a flexible learning pathway with several options:

- Either a three-year *basic* vocational school (with a theoretical and practical examination to obtain a certificate);
- A four-year *technical* vocational school which combines a vocational diploma equivalent of an A level allowing the student to enter university or post-secondary technical vocational schools.

There are no entrance exams. The core curriculum is common for the basic and technical vocational schools (four common subjects plus a fifth one for technical vocational schools). A minimum of 50% of class hours must be practical oriented. Students in technical vocational education are doing a minimum of four weeks practical training in an enterprise and can enter school workshops, laboratories or centres for practical training. 60% of the students following basic vocational education also decide to be employed by an enterprise. Roma students in vocational education get support from Roma assistants.

The **classification of occupations for vocational education**<sup>46</sup> has been aligned with the International Standard Classification of Occupations to the names of professions and their digital symbols. It is the primary source of information when planning vocational training. The classification of vocational education is of paramount importance to vocational training because it specifies:

- a list of occupations that can be used in vocational education<sup>47</sup>;
- types of secondary schools, where learning can take place in a given profession;

<sup>45</sup> The main legislation describing the changes is the Act of 19 August 2011 amending the Act on the education system and some other acts (Dz. U. 2011 No. 205 item 1206).

<sup>46</sup> Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 23 December 2011 on the classification of vocational education occupations (Dz. U. of 2012 item. 7).

<sup>47</sup> For example gardener, pastry chef, cook, hairdresser, etc.)

- qualifications extracted in the competition;
- order in which qualifications should be carried out in the curricula for proficiencies;
- qualifications for which training can be carried out on qualification vocational courses.

The information contained in Classification of occupations for vocational education is the starting point for the development and all the programming work offered by the schools.

From 2013 students of schools providing vocational training courses, according to the new core curriculum of vocational education, proceed to the **qualification examination in the profession** under the new rules:

- source of examination requirements is a core curriculum for vocational education;
- during the examination students may acknowledge the achievement of learning outcomes specific to a single qualification separated in the profession;
- extramural exams are possible as a form of skills accreditation;
- professional exam consists of two parts: a written part (consists of 40 multiple-choice tasks, with the use of computer, it takes 60 minutes) and the practical part (practical exams, it takes 120-240 minutes - practical task with the use of appropriate tools);
- after passing both parts of the examination students receive a certificate for one qualification;
- after passing exams for all qualifications distinguished in the profession and obtaining adequate level of education examinee receives a diploma confirming vocational qualifications.

### ***Employment policy and measures***

Activities related to planned education and careers are designed to assist students in making educational and career decisions, using active methods of work. Classes can be led by teachers, educational group tutors and specialists, including **career counsellors**. A few career counsellors are of Roma ethnic origin (one of them was present at the round table). The Governmental Roma integration Programme also provides funding for Roma women (48 as teachers' assistants; 55 as community rooms and children clubs for extra-curricular activities).

The tasks guidance of a counsellor in a secondary school who provides vocational training is:

- Systematic diagnosis of students' needs on educational, vocational and career path;
- Collecting, updating and sharing educational and career-specific information for relevant level of education;
- Conducting activities related to the planning of education and career;
- Coordination of information and advisory activities conducted by the school;
- Cooperation with other teachers in ensuring sustainability of the advisory activity;
- Providing support for teachers, educators and educational group tutors.

**Social cooperatives**<sup>48</sup> are entities – based on voluntary association of unlimited number of people, with variable composition and variable share fund which, in the interest of its members - established to activate the people with a special situation on the labour market (unemployed, refugees, disabled, mentally ill, ex-prisoners, etc.). There is in Poland a comprehensive system of support for social cooperatives (subsidies, lower income taxation, reimbursement of some costs, exemption of fees for court registration, etc.).

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<sup>48</sup> Social cooperatives are regulated by 27 April 2006 Act on Social Cooperatives and 13 June 2003 Act on Social Employment.

Social cooperatives are an interesting concept of activation of Roma in Poland because it can serve also as of social activation through the possibilities of organising outdoor events together with the local community. It also attractive for refugees, light mentally-disabled persons, former prisoners, former addicted persons, etc. Other categories can be members of social cooperatives provided that they do not exceed 50% of the total number of cooperative founders. Social cooperatives can receive support from volunteers in accordance with the legislation for volunteers.

Social cooperatives are monitored every three years. Controls do not impose any fines but recommendations for better management of the cooperative. Four so-called *Roma social cooperatives* (essentially run by Roma) existed some years ago but they all stopped after three years because *inter alia* they could no longer be supported by European Structural Funds. The Governmental “Programme for integration the Roma community in Poland for the years 2014-2020” is an instrument supporting the initiatives focusing on professional activation of Roma – like, for example, the Roma social cooperatives. In Małopolska region there is still one Roma man working for a social cooperative run by others.

The scope of the social cooperative is to carry out a joint enterprise based on personal work of its members. Social cooperatives can lead social, educational and cultural activities to the benefit of its members and of the local community. A Social cooperative aims at:

- The social reintegration of its members involving the implementation of measures aimed at restoring and maintaining skills for participation in community and social roles in the workplace, residence or domicile;
- The professional reintegration of its members involving the implementation of measures aimed at restoring and maintaining the ability to independently perform work on the labour market.

**Employment component of ESF 2007-2013 in Poland:** The main project financed from ESF was to ensure the increase in employment, education, social inclusion and health of members of the Roma community. The number of Roma who have completed participation in the projects was 8,762 people (4,635 women and 4,127-men). The outcomes included *inter alia*:

- Training and vocational courses: 3,126 people (35.67% of the total number of participants);
- Course in formal and informal education: 4,277 people (48.81%);
- Internships/apprenticeships: 549 people (6.26%);
- Getting employed/setting up a business: 421 people (4.80%).

### **3.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina**

#### ***Roma policy framework and funding***

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina leads and coordinates all activities related to the integration of Roma. The Human Rights Department of the Ministry is responsible for providing professional, administrative and operational support and for monitoring, promoting and protecting the rights of Roma. At the initiative of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the following Roma policy documents:

- In 2005, the Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Roma;
- In 2005, the Action Plan on Roma Education;
- On 3 July 2008, the Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina on Roma Issues in the Fields of Roma Employment, Housing and Health Care;
- In July 2010, the Revised Action Plan on Roma Educational Needs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The basis for the adoption of all these Roma-related documents is the Law on the Protection of Minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted in 2003.

Every year since 2009, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina have allocated funds at the state level amounting to 1.5 million Euros in order to fund the implementation of the Roma Action Plan. These funds are increased through a system of co-funding by other ministries and implementing partners, particularly in the field of Roma housing, which has been the main priority. The funds are also increased with donations from international organisations that co-fund activities. Most municipalities allocate funds at the local level to improve the living conditions of Roma and invest their funds in infrastructure projects.

The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina regularly applies for IPA funds from the European Commission. The European Commission approved the 5 million Euros IPA project and the implementation of the first stage amounting to 2.5 million Euros began in the second half of 2013. Most of these funds, i.e. 80%, are devoted to Roma housing and the improvement of living conditions. Funds planning will continue regularly on a yearly basis. All funds are used solely to improve the inclusion of Roma in society, by providing better living conditions. These funds are also used to award small grants for employment and for improving health care and education.

### ***Coordination, monitoring and participation of Roma***

The **Roma Board, an advisory body of the Council of Ministers**, is responsible for systematic monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan, the adoption of new action plans and proposing measures for improving the situation of Roma, as well as for initiating the provision of budgetary resources for Roma and the like. Monitoring is done on the ground in different directions by several actors. Independent monitoring is performed by Roma representatives and independent experts, experts in particular areas coming from local and national institutions and others. A **Roma Thematic Group (RTG)**, consisting of all relevant institutions, international organisations and Roma umbrella NGOs, deals with and shares information about Roma activities to provide a better planning and avoid overlapping of activities.

Roma are present in 64 municipalities in the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, at the moment, there are about 107 Roma associations officially registered, but only 10% of them are active. The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees has involved many Roma in fieldwork at local level, particularly in the selection of beneficiaries of housing. In this way, massive participation of Roma representatives in the decision-making process was ensured. Every year, the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees organises several referral meetings with Roma representatives and local authorities in order to better coordinate activities. Representatives of Roma and Roma NGOs take therefore an active part in the process

### ***Educational policy and measures***

Bosnia and Herzegovina has 12 ministries of education and one Department of Education in the Brčko District. All of them are involved in the implementation of the **Revised Action Plan (RAP) of Roma Educational Needs of Bosnia and Herzegovina** adopted by the Council of Ministers in July 2010. Responsibility for the implementation of educational policies is determined by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the constitutions of the entities and cantons and the Statute of the Brčko District, whilst development of educational policy is the responsibility of the lower levels of government, such as entities:

- a) The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, where education is a decentralized system in ten cantons. The Federation Ministry of Education and Science has a coordinating role in planning and implementation of activities related to education policy in the Federation. Cantonal ministries of education are responsible for designing educational policies, including the enactment of legislation on education and the provision of education in each canton individually;
- b) In the Republika Srpska, the educational system is centralized;
- c) The Brčko District has its own educational system.

Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by the framework of laws of Bosnia and Herzegovina, laws at the entity level in Republika Srpska, cantonal laws of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Law of Brčko District governing pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is **no segregation of Roma** in pre-school, primary and other education levels. The educational system is based on inclusive education. In the school year 2013/2014, 23 Roma students attended special educational institutions but these were really children with special educational needs<sup>49</sup>.

In 2011, the Minister of Human Rights and Refugees took the decision to appoint a **team of experts** who prepare for each school year a report on the implementation of the RAP and Roma educational needs and submit it to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Up to now, three such reports have been produced.

Education and upbringing of Roma children carry certain specificities and there is a need to train teachers, but also parents and students in this respect. There are regular training courses for teachers, parents and children in primary schools.

During the school year 2013/2014, an emphasis was placed on **education of Roma parents** for the compulsory primary education of their children, the importance of programmes related to early childhood growth and development, training of teachers, parents and students, to raise their awareness on human rights, the rights of the child, as well as on stereotypes and discrimination against Roma in the field of education and ways to overcome them. During that period,

- 194 meetings with parents of Roma children were held in order to inform them that primary education was compulsory. Developing awareness of the role and importance of education among the Roma population is of great importance given that education traditionally does not define one's social status within the Roma community;
- 37 meetings with Roma communities and activists were held in order to train them in the importance of programmes related to early child development;
- 24 thematic lectures were held for parents in Roma communities;
- 85 training courses of teachers, parents and children in primary schools were held in order to raise awareness of human rights and rights of the child, involving 400 teachers, 4,328 children and 1,123 parents;
- 39 training courses on stereotypes and discrimination against Roma in the field of education and ways to overcome them, involving 269 teachers, 1,817 students and 948 parents.

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<sup>49</sup> Before the adoption of the Revised Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the Educational Needs of Roma in 2010, there was an upward trend of enrolment of Roma children in special educational institutions, at the request of Roma parents, even when they were not children with disabilities in order to be provided with a full day care and food and "to be removed" from the street.

The inclusion of children, Roma children in particular, in formal pre-school education is also increasingly becoming a priority target. **Attending pre-school programme in the year before going to primary school has recently become obligatory**<sup>50</sup>.

**Incentive and supporting measures** are being taken by educational authorities and local communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, pending financial means available, to advance the regular attendance of Roma children in **primary school**. These incentives took different forms such as:

- Individual counselling work with Roma children and their parents;
- Parent-teacher meetings;
- The inclusion of an expert team consisting of educators and psychologists in addition to social and health workers;
- Assistance in providing school supplies and textbooks, clothing and footwear;
- Provision of free school meals, free textbooks, and free transport.
  - **Free textbooks for Roma children in primary school** were provided to 1,295 students, i.e. to 62.32% of the total number of Roma pupils enrolled during the school year 2013/14. Textbooks were provided mainly through the financial support from respective (entity, cantonal) ministry, municipality or city.
  - **Free transport** was provided to 147 Roma students in primary school (free transport is generally provided throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina to primary school children if their place of residence is more than 2km/4km far from the school they attend).
  - **Free snacks at school** were provided to 749 Roma students, i.e. to 36.04% of the total number of Roma students.

**Incentive and supportive measures in secondary school** include **scholarships**. In total, 99 Roma students enrolled in secondary schools, received scholarships, with equal gender distribution, from the institutions' budget, including eight Roma students during the school year 2013/14. The total budgetary funds allocated to Roma students in school year 2013/14 were BAM 117,959.15.

Relevant ministries and local municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina allocate **budgetary funds** to support enrolment, attendance and graduation of all Roma children, which have increased from a school-year to another, although there are still not enough funds to meet the needs of all Roma children to achieve full equality in access to education. Authorities reckon consider that there has been a significant progress, but the goals set in the RAP are far to be fully achieved.

A significant contribution in the education area was given by the **Increasing Early Learning Opportunities for Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina Project**, implemented by UNICEF in co-operation with Dubai Cares Foundation. The target groups are marginalized children, including Roma children. Examples of good practices of the mentioned project were noted in the municipalities of Bijeljina and Živinice where a large number of Roma resides.

### ***Vocational education and training***

In order to support the Roma population and other vulnerable groups, authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a **Strategy for vocational education and training in 2007**.

<sup>50</sup> See the Law on Pre-school Education, BiH Official Gazette 88/07.

The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina also adopted a **Framework Law on Secondary Education and Training in 2008**. There have been many vocational training organised by various Education Centres; some Roma have been included and got employment, but generally-speaking few Roma apply to vocational training.

In addition, as the result of good cooperation established by the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina with international organisations, a number of **sponsored vocational training programmes targeting Roma women** were concluded, such as:

- **Roma women's education** through two major Care International Balkans projects;
- **Roma women's political participation** covering up to 50 Balkan Roma women (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia) who were educated for political participation in following skills:
  - Political marketing and presentation;
  - Campaigning;
  - Participation in governmental bodies.
- **Women's economic empowerment** targeting 85 women from rural places, including 15 Roma women, who were education in the following business skills:
  - Business management, business plan, and marketing (for all);
  - Agriculture (for 40 women);
  - Trade (for 10 women);
  - Services, such as hairdresser, food production, tourism, consultancy (for 20 women);
  - Production such as traditional cloth, honey production, etc. (15 women).

**All Roma women were trained from 3-6 months and after that, they were allocated some funds to start their own business. They are still working and producing.**

**Education training programmes** were implemented by BOSPO Agency in Bosnia and Herzegovina in coordination with the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees.

The **network of Roma women** actively participates in programmes to improve the situation of Roma women and education of Roma children. 17 Roma women have undergone training proposed by the Council of Europe within the joint European Commission/Council of Europe **ROMED programme**.

### ***Employment policy and measures***

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina designed the Action Plan for Roma in Employment, Housing and Health Care for the period 2013-2016, which was adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina on 11 December 2013. The earlier Action Plan and the new Revised Action Plan make the basis for the implementation of planned activities in accordance with the funds provided from the budget of Bosnia and Herzegovina and budgets of the entities, cantons and municipalities as well as from donor funds and EU funds (IPA).

On the basis of signed Memoranda of Understanding, funds for Roma employment are transferred from the state budget to the Federation Employment Institute, the Employment Institute of Republika Srpska and the Employment Bureau of the Brčko District, which are obliged to spend them on employment or self-employment of Roma. Every year these Institutes issue a public call for the selection of beneficiaries of Roma employment and self-employment projects. The beneficiaries are selected by commissions appointed by the Institutes which also include representatives of the Roma community.

The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina allocates every year a certain amount for Roma employment (250,000-300,000 Euros) out of the total envelope for the implementation of the Action Plan for Roma in Employment, Housing and Health Care (1,422,000 Euros), i.e. about 19% for Roma employment and self-employment measures (in comparison, 80% of the budget goes for housing projects). **About 475 Roma beneficiaries have been included in projects for employment and self-employment.**

The Revised Action Plan takes into consideration the employment needs of Roma families who registered and set a realistic goal to give jobs to 4,700 Roma people. i.e. at least to one member of the Roma families that registered their needs. **Until today, 10.5% of persons have been employed in one way or another.**

### **3.3 Finland**

#### ***Roma policy framework***

The Finnish Constitution guarantees the Roma the right to maintain and develop the language and the culture of their own. The right of the Roma to their language and culture was included in the Constitution in 2000.

**The National Policy on Roma in Finland** was adopted in 2009. It has six Key Areas and ten Policy Guidelines. It contains 147 measures, responsibility for which has been delegated to several branches of the administration. In 2012, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health appointed a **working group** to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the National Policy on Roma.

The information contained in this first monitoring report is based on data obtained in 2013 from the ministries and other bodies responsible for implementing the policy, from municipalities in connection with a hearing for municipalities, and from the Roma, for example through a hearing for organisations. The report examines how the objectives of the National Policy on Roma have been achieved in the fields of employment, education, social and health care services, anti-discrimination measures and housing. It also explores how the programme has been implemented at the regional and the local level.

#### ***Coordination, monitoring and participation of Roma***

In Finland the administrative structures for handling Romani affairs have been developed since 1956. The participation of the Roma in these structures has been enhanced since the late 1960s.

The **National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs** is a co-operation body for Roma and the authorities. The Advisory Board on Romani Affairs is linked to the **Ministry of Social Affairs and Health**. The legal basis of the Board lies on the Decree stated by the Government. The Advisory Board is appointed by the Government for three years at a time. At least half of the members must be Roma. The Advisory Board on Romani affairs has influenced the development of Finnish legislation and administration in matters regarding the rights and the equality of the Roma. As its initiative, a **Roma Education Unit** was created within the **National Board of Education** in 1994. Through its experts' statements regarding the position and needs of the Roma addressed to authorities, parliamentary committees and other organisations, the Advisory Board on Romani Affairs has been able to influence the development of the equality and inclusion of the Finnish Roma. There has been a considerable increase in the development of co-operation structures between the Roma population and local authorities in recent years.

In addition to the National Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, there are four **Regional Advisory Boards on Romani Affairs** covering the entire country which work in conjunction with the Regional State Administrative Agencies. The Regional Advisory Boards were settled by a Government Decree in 2003 and started functioning in 2004. The Regional Advisory Boards have reinforced the link and co-operation at the local level. The Advisory Boards on Romani Affairs have taken initiatives, including by supporting the establishment of **Voluntary Local Roma Working Groups** in various municipalities or regions<sup>51</sup>. In 2010 there were Roma working groups, either in operation or in the process of being established, in more than 20 Finnish municipalities. The Advisory Boards on Romani Affairs also organise hearings for municipalities and national seminars. One of the seminars of the Advisory Boards on Romani Affairs paid particular attention to the need for supporting the employment and education of Roma youth.

### ***Educational policy and measures***

The main key objectives in the Finnish National Policy on Roma as regards education are:

- Enhancing the participation of Roma children in early childhood and pre-primary education;
- Enhancing the social inclusion of Roma children and youth in basic education and upper secondary education;
- **Enhancing the participation in vocational education and training of adult Roma;**
- Promoting the development of the Romani language and culture.

**The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE)** is a national agency subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Culture. The FNBE has a wide range of tasks related to the development of education all through pre-primary and basic education, general and **vocational upper secondary education and training**, liberal adult education and basic education in the arts. The FNBE is responsible for drawing up the national core curricula.

The 2010-2011 Review of the Basic Education of Roma Pupils in Finland included these proposals<sup>52</sup>:

- Educational guidance should stress the importance of upper secondary school for further education and encourage Roma pupils who have done well at comprehensive school to go on to upper secondary level. Information should also be provided on the alternatives to daytime upper secondary school, such as upper secondary school for adults and taking upper secondary courses alongside vocational education;
- Preparatory education for general upper secondary school should also be aimed at Roma youth. Supplementary teaching should be utilised more in order to equip better the Roma youth for further education.

The first monitoring report of the National Policy for Roma came up with the following general conclusion: “the National Policy on Roma has raised awareness and improved the coordination of Roma issues nationally. The highest success rates have been seen in measures assigned to various ministries, and significant progress has been achieved, in particular in the educational sector”.

<sup>51</sup> The Finnish Roma expert of the thematic group was a member of the Voluntary Local Roma Working Group of Kajaani.

<sup>52</sup> See Proposal 9/11 of the 2010-2011 Review of the Basic Education of Roma Pupils in Finland entitled “Completion of basic education and seeking further education”.

### ***Vocational education and training***

As stated above, the National Policy on Roma includes, among others, a measure concerning **consolidation the vocational training received by adult Roma and integrating them into employment**. For the results of the first monitoring report of the National Policy for Roma concerning these specific measures, see the conclusions of this report.

Various education models that take into account the Roma population have been developed in projects partially funded by the European Social Fund. These models were developed to provide support for transitional stages in education in various projects, such as the **Romako and Roti Projects**, and to support the education and training of adult Roma, as in the **EQUAL Community Initiative Programme** funded by the European Society Fund. Educational projects aimed at the adult Roma population in particular have produced useful data on educational structures and teaching methods that take into account the needs of the Roma. These projects have also yielded viable educational models.

In the **Roti Project**, a support person was appointed for each group of students in vocational education and training aimed at Roma. This led to fewer drop-outs and helped the students in solving many problems in their personal lives, which often tend to have a negative effect on motivation or prevent the student from participating in education altogether.

The **ROM-EQUAL Project (2004–2007) focused on the development of an education model for qualification-oriented vocational education and training for adult Roma**. The essential components of the model were an extensive orientation phase preparing the students for vocational studies, competence-based vocational studies according to an individual study plan, and the alternation of theoretical studies and practical training. While studying, students were supported by a person familiar with Romani culture, whereas in practical training they were appointed a mentor in the workplace.

**Helsinki Deaconess Institute and the Church Training College**, which participated in the implementation of the ROM-EQUAL Project, established in 2009 the Tsétanes Training Centre, which focuses on the education and training of Roma. The Centre utilises an education model that takes into account the special needs of the Roma population in social welfare and health education and training.

Some projects were developed at municipal level, among them a **Development project in Oulu municipality supporting Roma girl students in basic education**<sup>53</sup>. This project includes a large variety of measures supporting Roma girls' education, including visits to vocational institutions since *in situ* discussions and visits give a more realistic image and view of the content of different professions which help students to find suitable training for themselves.

In many Finnish municipalities, a lot of attention has been focused on **guidance**: Roma pupils have been supported in all transition phases of education, and in particular when moving on to vocational studies or general upper secondary schools. Roma households and schools nowadays work together particularly well, and over the long term, the outcome will hopefully be a higher standard of education for the Roma. Previous experience shows that various forms of co-operation are necessary and are vital in providing Roma families with more information about education and in developing studies guidance, mentoring and career guidance.

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<sup>53</sup> See page 14 of CAHROM (2013)5 Thematic report on school attendance of Roma children, in particular Roma girls, available at <http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/cahrom>.

### ***Employment policy and measures***

In 2011, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy launched a research project to develop the system for monitoring discrimination in the employment sector and to measure this phenomenon in recruitment.

In 2012, a guide designed to promote Roma participation in the labour market was published.

Employment agencies are required by law to recruit someone to assist Roma with job seeking; only five persons are currently employed in this capacity, in the south of Finland.

### **3.4 “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”**

#### ***Roma policy framework***

The Preamble of the Constitution explicitly recognizes Roma as an ethnic community. The same applies for the Ohrid Framework Agreement signed in 2001.

The **National Strategy for Roma Inclusion (NRIS)** is a policy document that was first adopted in 2005 and then reviewed in 2014 for a decade. A National Action Plan for Education was developed as part of this strategy.

#### ***Coordination, monitoring and participation of Roma***

Approximately 1,600 Roma are employed in the public and national sectors.

Roma NGOs are very active and contribute to the implementation and monitoring of numerous projects. Roma, especially women, are also active as Roma school assistants and as Roma school and health mediators.

#### ***Educational policy and measures***

According to the **Law on Secondary Education** (article 43, Official Gazette, No. 52/2002) there are four types of secondary schools in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”: general schools (gymnasiums), vocational schools, secondary arts schools and secondary schools for pupils with special needs. In 2011, a majority of young people (about 60%) attended vocational education and training schools, although the share of pupils attending such schools has declined (it was 70% in 2001).

Besides the main legislation, education is also covered in several strategic documents and action plans from other areas of social life, such as the 2007 National Action Plan for Gender Equality, the Child Protection Programme, the 2009 Social Protection Programme, the National Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010-2020, the National Action Plan for Education for the Decade of Roma Inclusion (which emphasizes access of Roma population to scholarships and tutoring, and also calls for the legal obligation of supplementary instruction to be delivered), etc. However, most of these programmes do not make specific reference to vocational education as a potentially powerful tool for increasing social inclusion and cohesion (for instance, the Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion).

In 2010, the Government adopted a **Strategy for Integrated Education** which aims at reducing the distance between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds on the grounds that limited interaction between pupils from diverse ethnic minorities, limited knowledge about each other's culture and language barriers might lead to the disintegration of society. The Strategy was prepared jointly by the Ministry of Education and Science and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (OSCE HCNM). **Specific inclusive measures were developed for the Roma population.**

The **Directorate for Development and improvement of education in minority languages** which is an independent body under the auspices of the MES has a special role in the implementation of the concept of integrated education. The Directorate implements several measures/activities directed towards promoting the inclusion of all ethnic communities in the education. It cooperates with several international donors, such as the Roma Education Fund-Budapest and UNICEF. One of the most significant activities of the Directorate is the project providing scholarships, mentoring and tutoring for Roma pupils in their 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th years of secondary education. The project has been in operation since 2009 (and was due to run until 2014) and is supported by the Roma Education Fund (REF). The project aims at increasing the progress and attainment of Roma pupils from all state and private secondary schools in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". So far, 600 pupils have been involved with the project, from 28 municipalities. The project was implemented in 3 phases:

- *scholarships* – financial support of 2,200 MKD for 9 months, for 400 secondary school pupils with an average grade of above 3.5, and 1,500 MKD for 200 pupils with average grade of 3.0-3.49. So far, 591 pupils have used the scholarships, 395 of whom fall into the first category of scholarship. This support comes on top of the CCT payment;
- *mentoring* – in the school year 2011/2012, a total of 133 teachers were involved in mentoring Roma pupils (not beneficiaries of the scholarships) from secondary schools. Each mentor can organize a minimum of 10 additional classes (on top of the regular ones) with a group of at least 10 pupils. The mentor monitors pupils' progress, school attendance, oversees their involvement of pupils in extracurricular activities within schools and has regular contacts with the parents;
- *tutoring* – tutors are assigned to the pupils that have scholarships to support their preparation for the Matura (secondary school-leaving examination). To date this phase of the project has not been implemented.

In July 2012, a **Twinning project "Support of integration of ethnic communities in the educational system"** started within the Directorate for Development and improvement of education in minority languages, worth about 1 million Euros. The project aims at ensuring equal access to quality education for pupils from all ethnic communities. Specifically, the project objectives are to: ensure equal access to education; support equal opportunities through education; and support equal respect among different ethnic and cultural communities

"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" has implemented educational reforms at all levels of education. It introduced mandatory secondary education, along with supporting measures such as free textbooks and transportation. Quality improvements were achieved through revisions to the curricula which promoted outcome-oriented and interactive teaching and learning, early learning of English language and information technology skills, training for teachers, etc. Within the VET system, 4-year study programmes and curricula were reformed and streamlined to better reflect new economic reality (the 3-year programme curricula are mostly the same).

Apart from the reforms specific to the vocational education (see below), one of the major reforms in the education system was the introduction of mandatory secondary education from the school year 2008/2009. **The Law on Secondary Education imposes a penalty of €1,000 for parents whose children are not enrolled or do not regularly attend classes** (Official Gazette, No. 49/2007).

As a support to the policy for establishing a compulsory secondary education the Government in recent years, has implemented several programmes and measures for increasing enrolment into primary and secondary education, some of which are general whereas some are targeted towards vulnerable groups. These programmes include:

- Free books and transportation from the place of residence to the school for children enrolled in secondary education;
- Establishing a system of mentoring and tutoring;
- Scholarships for the students from poor families, especially for Roma students;
- Introduction of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) for children from poor families who regularly attend secondary schools. The transfer is given when a child from a family that receives social financial assistance is enrolled and regularly attends a school with the joint aims of strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the social safety net, as well as of enhancing the human capital of children from socially disadvantaged families. The total amount that children receive is MKD.12,000 (about €200) per school year.

Starting in 2009/2010 the Ministry of Education and Science **has reduced the criteria (points) for enrolment of Roma pupils in secondary school by 10% from the prescribed minimum points**. The intention of this measure is to increase the access of Roma population to preferred schools and to mitigate their self-selection into certain, lower-quality or low-attainment schools.

### ***Vocational education and training***

The main laws governing the vocational education and training system are the following:

- The Law on Secondary Education (Official Gazette, No. 52/2002) with several subsequent amendments;
- The Law on Vocational Education and Training (Official Gazette, No. 71/2006, and recent amendments 17/2011);
- The Law on the Bureau for Development of Education (Official Gazette, No. 37/2006, with most recent amendments in Official Gazette No. 148/2009);
- The Law on Adult Education (Official Gazette, No. 7/2008);
- The Law on the State Examination Centre (Official Gazette, No. 142/2008);
- The Law on Education Inspectorate (Official Gazette, No. 52/2005).

These laws are accompanied by numerous bylaws (rulebooks, norms, regulations, guidelines, etc.) which regulate the curricula, personnel, technological, organisational and financial areas.

Vocational education and training (VET) starts after completion of primary education (after grade 8 of basic school), and may last 2, 3 or 4 years. There are 93 public secondary schools out of which 11 provide only gymnasium education while the remainder are either vocational (56) or a mixture of both in the same building (25).

Two-year VET programmes train for immediate employment. Curricula cover general and vocational education with practical sessions. The range of practical sessions depends on the educational profile. In some profiles 75% of the time is devoted to vocational training with emphasis on practical work, and 25% to study of mother tongue, public affairs and protection. Practical sessions take 40% of vocational training time. Graduates cannot go on directly to higher level education; they can enrol in the first year of a 3-year VET school. 3-year programmes cover general and vocational education and training, and practical work. In some profiles vocational education and training covers 45% and general education up to 55% of the time. Graduates can continue their education for another year in order to acquire a 4-year vocational education. VET takes 3 years for most educational profiles for the labour market. The 4-year VET programmes are the most attractive for students. This type of education has two goals: preparation for university or preparation for employment in industry, trade, tourism, or any other cluster chosen by the students. Curricula cover general education, vocational-theoretical subjects and practice sessions (35-40% of the teaching time is for general education and 60-65% for VET). Four year VET ends with a final exam. The diploma gives students the right to take the entrance exam to a university faculty.

A special type of VET takes place at art schools. There are three types: music, ballet and applied arts. Assessment of students takes place during the school year both in school and at the practical work location. Each school sets a final exam at the end of 3-4 years.

The **Vocational Education and Training (VET) Centre**, established in 2006, occupies a central place in the institutional setting of the VET system. The Centre's primary role is to integrate the public interests and interests of the social partners in VET. Besides the VET Centre, several other institutions are involved in vocational education. These include: the **Bureau for Development of Education (BDE)**, the Adult Education Centre (AEC), the State Education Inspectorate (SEI) and the State Examination Centre (SEC). The BDE is in charge of monitoring, research, improvement and development of the educational processes in the pre-primary education, primary, secondary general education, secondary vocational education, education of children with special needs, adult education, etc. The BDE sets the educational curricula for all levels of education (except the tertiary education), organises training for the professional development of teachers, makes proposals to the minister for enhancing the quality of the educational processes, prepares educational standards and standards for the assessment of pupils' achievements, prepares concepts for textbooks and approves textbooks. The work and institutional setting of the BDE is laid down in the Law for Bureau for Development of Education, Official Gazette No. 37/2006 with most recent changes in Official Gazette No. 148/2009. The personnel of the BDE is specialized in a certain area, such as biology, geography, etc.

The institutional setting and responsibilities of the SEI are set in the Law on Educational Inspection (Official Gazette No. 52/2005, and most recent changes in the Official Gazette No. 51/2011). SEI monitors the implementation of educational standards and assures quality in pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, special educational institutions and adult education institutions. The main tool of the SEI for quality assurance is the integral evaluation of the educational process. The integral evaluation includes: evaluation of the organization and fulfilment of the educational program, the environment and culture in the educational institutions, management, professional development of the teachers and managers, communication and the public relations, cooperation with the parents and the other stakeholders. This integral evaluation is considered as a key tool for early recognition of potential discrimination, and in overcoming discrimination through recommendations from the inspection.

As part of the overall effort to decentralize the delivery of public services, the competencies and responsibilities for the delivery of the VET were to some extent transferred to local self-governments.

The **Law on Vocational and Education Training** states that the local self-government should analyse the local labour market and inform the VET Centre about the latest developments on the labour market, make suggestions for the development of new curricula and programmes, for enrolment quotas in the VET, etc.

A **Strategy for vocational education and training in a lifelong learning context (2013-2020)**<sup>54</sup> and an **action plan** were elaborated and adopted in April 2013 by the Ministry of Education and Science<sup>55</sup>. The Strategy, financed by the European Training Foundation (ETF), was prepared by the National Council, including representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Vocational Education and Training Centre, the Association of Local Self-Governments, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Employment Service Agency, the Bureau for Development of Education, the Centre for Adult Education and the Chamber of Commerce.

This Strategy recognises that education should allow for personal and professional training of youth and adults according to the changing demands of the labour market and life in general. One of the main goals of this Strategy is to translate into practical action the concept of **lifelong learning and adult education**. The Strategy also aims at addressing the main dilemmas in the future development of the VET system, such as the policy design (aim, mission and vision), the systematic organisation of the VET (occupational areas, profiles, network of schools, curricula), the challenge of meeting the needs of the multiple clients (pupils, parents, business sector, the society), and in the delivery of the programmes.

### ***Employment policy and measures***

The **Law on Employment and Insurance in Case of Unemployment** (Article 98-a) regulates the possibility for an employer of the private sector that will employ an unemployed person who is a social financial assistance beneficiary to receive a subsidy for the employed person amounting to 80% of the amount of the social financial assistance paid to the person/household for the month preceding the month in which the person has been employed, provided that there is no reduction in the number of employees employed for an indefinite period of time during the period of three months prior to the date of hiring the new employees, except in cases of death or retirement.

Vulnerable categories of unemployed persons are the following: young persons aged up to 29 years with low qualifications, victims of domestic violence, children without parents and parental care, homeless persons, former drug users, parents of children on streets, single parents, the Roma, convicted persons following their release from a penitentiary institution, unemployed persons registered in the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia for at least one year, unemployed young persons registered in the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia for a period of at least six months, parents of children with disabilities, as well as parents of three or more children.

Full information about active measures of employment and training programmes for unemployed young people, including Roma, are available in the Addendum to this report and are summarized below:

<sup>54</sup> A previous Vocational Education and Training Strategy was adopted for the period 2001-2010.

<sup>55</sup> [http://www.seecel.hr/UserDocImages/Documents/VET%20STRATEGY%20AND%20ACTION%20PLAN\\_EN.pdf](http://www.seecel.hr/UserDocImages/Documents/VET%20STRATEGY%20AND%20ACTION%20PLAN_EN.pdf).

<b>Training at a Known Employer – YOUNG PERSONS AGED UP TO 29 YEARS</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	The goal of this Programme is to provide the unemployed young persons with skills to perform work tasks required by the employer, and to stimulate the demand for work
<b>Scope of beneficiaries</b>	300 unemployed young persons from the register of active jobseekers of the Employment Service Agency
<b>Required funds</b>	6,785,100.00 MKD

<b>On-the-job Training with Subsidized Employment – YOUNG PERSONS AGED UP TO 29 YEARS</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	Acquisition of professional knowledge and skills necessary for performing work tasks and stimulation of the employment of registered unemployed young persons that face difficulties to enter in the labour market
<b>Scope of beneficiaries</b>	142 unemployed young persons from the register of active jobseekers of the Employment Service Agency
<b>Required funds</b>	18,935,280.00 MKD

<b>Training to meet the need for occupations that are in demand in the labour market – YOUNG PERSONS AGED UP TO 29 YEARS</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	The aim of this measure is to increase the employability of unemployed young persons through acquisition of knowledge for occupations that are in demand in the labour market
<b>Scope of beneficiaries</b>	66 unemployed young persons from the register of active jobseekers of the Employment Service Agency
<b>Required funds</b>	3,616,800.00 MKD

<b>Training with private training providers to meet the need for occupations that are in demand in the labor market – YOUNG PERSONS AGED UP TO 29 YEARS</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	The aim of this measure is to increase the employability of unemployed young persons through acquisition of knowledge for occupations that are in demand in the labour market
<b>Scope of beneficiaries</b>	54 unemployed young persons from the register of active jobseekers of the Employment Service Agency
<b>Required funds</b>	2,975,640.00 MKD

<b>Advanced IT Skills Training – YOUNG PERSONS AGED UP TO 29 YEARS</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	This measure aims to upgrade the skills of registered young active jobseekers in the field of information technology in order to increase the competitiveness and opportunities thereof in the labour market
<b>Scope of beneficiaries</b>	81 unemployed young persons from the register of active jobseekers of the Employment Service Agency
<b>Required funds</b>	6,727,698.00 MKD

Other measures include an **internship/traineeship programme** which aims to provide unemployed young persons with opportunities for practical learning and gaining work experience with an employer from the private sector, thus preparing them to enter the labour market. **A needs assessment of unemployed young people** will also be conducted.

### **3.5 Turkey**

#### ***Roma policy framework***

A National Strategy Document for Social Inclusion of Roma People 2015-2020 has been prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy in co-operation with other public institutions, such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Health, as well as with Roma NGOs. The process of drafting this Strategy Document started in 2013. The Strategy Document was finalized and should be soon published.

#### ***Coordination, monitoring and participation of Roma***

There are approximately 320 registered Roma NGOs in Turkey. However, most of them do not have the capacity to advocate for their rights. Since 2009 and the dialogue with Roma initiated and embraced by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State at the time, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Health have worked in co-operation with Roma NGOs to find permanent solutions for the problems of Roma.

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy has taken a leading role in ensuring this co-ordination since it has been established in 2011. A number of activities on social inclusion of Roma are also directly carried out by the Social Inclusion Department of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. The Department is also the national contact point of Turkey on Roma in the context of EU accession negotiations.

#### ***Education policy and measures***

In 2008, the Education Board approved a catch-up education programme, directed at children 10-14 years of age who have never been enrolled at school or who have dropped out. The measure target mainly Roma children and is considered as a positive initiative since equal opportunities in access to education condition equal opportunities in employment<sup>56</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> See para. 68 of ECRI Report on Turkey (fourth monitoring cycle), published in 2011.

### ***Inclusion policy and measures***

A Project “Promoting Social Inclusion in Densely Roma Populated Areas”, funded by the IPA Mechanism of the European Union, has started in November 2015. The Project will be lasting 24 months and will be implemented in 12 provinces where most of Roma people live. The Project addresses objectives of the National Strategy Document for Social Inclusion of Roma People 2015-2020.

### ***Vocational education and training***

Turkey is one of the implementing countries of the pilot **MS4ROW project**, which consists in a mentoring system for Roma women on their vocational and educational path. This project is supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission. The main idea of the project is to develop an alternative mode of teaching – mentoring system for Roma teenage girls and women. The aim of the mentoring system is to design and realize a personal educational and vocational path for each Roma teenage girl, facilitate their inclusion in education and overcome the discrimination in education and access to employment. The project is tested with all five partners from four implementing countries (Slovenia, Spain, Hungary, and Turkey) over a period of ten months. Düzce Provincial Directorate of National Education is one of the five partners.

MAS4ROW Project consists of individual meetings, group meetings, educational courses, vocational courses, and monthly workshops. The following activities were carried out in Düzce:

- five individual meetings were done with each girl and in the scope of group meetings, meetings were done once a month for describing the mentoring system, how to create an e-mail account, using of web-application, creating account in social media;
- beyond monthly workshops, some activities were done such as information about Distance Education System in Turkey, using of İŞKUR (Turkish Employment Agency) web page to find job, Conflict Management and Parental Education, effective communication, women rights and describing e-state processes;
- Düzce has advanced textile industry and 351 factories, so wearing and textile courses were given to Roma women to teach how to use sewing machine within the context of courses, training and educational programmes to find job in this industry. After signing a protocol with Düzce Employment Agency and Lifelong Learning Centre, they started two vocational courses and all participants are officially certificated.

20 Roma women were included in Düzce where pilot implementation is and all activities were carried out in Düzce Research and Guidance. As a result of the Project, 10 Roma women found a job thanks to vocational courses, 6 Roma girls re-register to school through the Distance (open) Education System. In addition to these activities, Roma girls have gained self-confidence, and they are eager to take part in social life and community and business life. They trust themselves about their vocational skills. They can communicate with people in an effective way, and express themselves in a good way. Also institutions (*especially individual members of them*) which are directly or indirectly involved in the mentoring system and Ms4ROW project have changed their attitudes *vis-à-vis* the Roma community.

**Social Solidarity Centres (SSC)** were established within the fund of Social Assistance and Solidarity in 2012. SSCs target Roma women in densely Roma populated areas. SSC is a project that was started for Roma women who are socially and economically disadvantaged.

The aim of SSC is to promote social integration of Roma women who live in highly bad standards. There are 15 SSCs across Turkey in the following regions: Çanakkale (Centre, Ezine, Gelibolu municipalities), Edirne (Merkez and Uzunköprü municipalities), Kırklareli (Babaeski, Merkez, Lüleburgaz municipalities), Sakarya (Asapazri, Ferizli, Sapanca municipalities), and Tekirdağ (Çorlu, Malkara and Süleymanpaşa municipalities).

Services of SSC are divided into two parts: training and social activities. Training sessions are also divided into three parts: Sports, Cultural, and Vocational training. On the other hand, SSCs serve as kindergarten. Every SSC has a kindergarten, free of charge, in the same building.

Social activities include kermesses, exhibitions, fairs, trips, picnics, seminars, panels, theatre, cinema, medical screening, visiting houses, etc.

Vocational training is provided by trainers who are certificated from the Ministry of National Education. Contents of vocational training are varying from province to province. Generally, vocational training for jewelry design, hairdressing, cooking, pastry cooking, skin care are the most popular among Roma women.

SSCs have four workers which are coordinator, trainer, janitor and security. The coordinator is the main responsible for the centre's work routine and organises social activities and training. The coordinator also fixes the training calendar. Trainers are part-time workers and are responsible for the training.

SSCs are not just training centres or kindergarten. They adapt according to needs of region and can provide more integrated services. For example, if writing-reading rate is low among Roma women, SSCs develop training and give them classes about reading-writing. Moreover, SSCs generally have their own fitness centre. Roma women also benefit from this opportunity.

After trainings, SSCs help Roma women to get a job and monitor them. As a part of their training, Roma women can find a chance to exhibit their works and creations. They can also find a chance to sell their works in local bazaar<sup>57</sup>.

On the other hand, SSCs implement some awareness activities such as seminars. These seminars aim to change perception of society, to facilitate Roma people's labour market and to inform disadvantaged persons about their fundamental rights.

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<sup>57</sup> <http://beyazgazete.com/haber/2014/8/12/ezine-sodam-kursiyerlerinin-urettikleri-urunler-satisa-cikarildi-2331482.html>.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES IDENTIFIED AND POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP

### 4.1. Conclusions of the thematic group of experts and lessons learnt

#### 4.1.1 Conclusions concerning the organisation of the thematic visit

At the debriefing meeting experts of the thematic group expressed their entire satisfaction for the organisation of the thematic visit. CAHROM Guidelines for the organisation of such visits were taken into consideration. The group of experts regretted the absence of the Turkish experts but appreciated their readiness to contribute to the thematic report. Other remarks are summarized below:

- An official invitation letter and a draft agenda were circulated before the thematic visit;
- The possibility was given to the CAHROM Secretariat to provide comments on the draft agenda;
- The agenda of the round table and presentations focused on the topic;
- The Polish authorities made an effort to collect and analyse census data and surveys concerning education of Roma and employment/unemployment and were therefore well-prepared;
- Excellent interpretation was provided by the hosting authorities;
- The programme of the thematic visit was opened by a high local official, namely Mr Jerzy Miler, Małopolski Voivode;
- Although the programme used a round-table format and did not include any field visit to vocational schools, Polish organisers brought participants from different municipalities and regions, as well as civil society representatives and even entrepreneurs. The two-day round table was attended by approximately 30 local participants, including state officials from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Administration and Digitization, representatives of various regional and local institutions including Plenipotentiaries of Małopolski and Silesian Voivodes on National and Ethnic Minorities, public servants and Roma social workers or career counsellors from Wrocław, Cracow, Limanowa, Radom and Wadowice municipalities, Roma associations including the Educational Association Harangos, a Cracow-based Roma association, the Radom-based Roma Association “Romani Waść”, a horse business entrepreneur from northern Poland, etc.;
- Most of the Polish participants stayed during the two days;
- Experts were presented a large panel of projects and initiatives, including social cooperatives, work placement and professional training for Roma, etc. and could get acquainted with specific local situations providing a more concrete picture of local challenges<sup>58</sup>;
- Partner countries’ experts had the possibility to present their experience in the presence a large panel of local participants and presentations were followed by a number of questions-answers;
- Partner countries’ experts made full use of the thematic visit to ask questions, not only to Polish interlocutors but also between themselves;
- Most of the experts were in a position to provide gender and age disaggregated data.

<sup>58</sup> As an example, 1,500 to 1,800 Roma are living in Wrocław (out of 600,000 inhabitants) from all main four Roma groups (Bergitka Roma, Polish Roma, Kalderash and Lovari). It is a poorly educated community (30% have not finished compulsory education; 5% have basic vocational education and only 1% has higher education). From a group of 200 Roma adults, 68% are totally inactive, 20% work illegally on the black market and 12% are working on a contract-base. A specific training project was proposed by the municipality involving young Roma from two Roma groups: Bergitka (open to change) and Lovari (conservative and traditional). Bergitka group members had all primary education, whilst 34% of Lovari had not even primary education.

#### **4.1.2 General conclusions and lessons learnt on the topic**

The group of experts came up with the following general conclusions (not in specific order)<sup>59</sup>:

##### ***As regards employment and vocational education and training in national Roma integration strategies***

Generally-speaking, employment is not given sufficient political and financial priority in national Roma integration strategies in comparison with education, health and - for some countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina – housing chapters. The same observation is valid for vocational education and training.

Pre-school education, primary and to a certain extent general secondary education receive much more attention by policy makers as reflected in national Roma integration strategies or (Roma Decade) action plans. Educational policies in favour of Roma children should be backed up by an active adult education and vocational education policy, as recommended in the Council of Europe CM/Rec No R (2000) 4.

For any policy measures targeting vocational education and training, close cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour should be ensured (the same applies between various municipal departments at local level). There is a need to mainstream gender and youth within national Roma inclusion strategies, including in policy measures for vocational and training education. Should the national Roma integration strategy includes a specific chapter for Roma women (example in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”) or for youth (examples in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia), these chapters should refer to vocational education and training.

##### ***As regards education of Roma in general***

The generally low level of education of Roma is one the main factors determining the current position of Roma on the labour market throughout Europe.

Both, authorities and Roma activists should pay more attention to the legal obligation related to compulsory education. In almost all European Union countries the compulsory education age let the pupils to (almost) reach at least the level of vocational education (see Appendix 5). Too much passivity toward this problem is observed among either the authorities or Roma parents and community leaders. Compulsory education should be made really compulsory in practice and inclusive education should be the rule. By ensuring the duty of compulsory education, Roma pupils would reach the stage of vocational education at least. Experts of the thematic group believe that ensuring compulsory education is a fundamental condition for the later professional activation of Roma.

The group of experts could not however come to an agreement whether sanctions for Roma parents should be introduced if Roma children do not attend regularly school (examples in the Netherlands and in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”). According to the Polish legal system, parents are responsible to send children to school and could be sanctioned with fines if they do not but some Polish interlocutors said during the visit that this was not a solution and believed more in awareness-raising campaigns.

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<sup>59</sup> Member States not taking part in this thematic group are mentioned when they have been mentioned during the thematic visit as examples.

Compulsory pre-school education should be introduced at an early age, ideally as early as the age of three or four (example in Hungary), and support measures, including Roma school assistants in pre-schools, should be introduced to encourage Roma parents to include their children in pre-school facilities. Celebrating Romani holidays and elements of the Romani culture in kindergartens could help attract Roma families and familiarize non Roma parents with Romani culture.

Higher education should be equally promoted among Roma communities, providing e.g. scholarships as from secondary education level (example in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and Poland).

School books should be borrowed, not given, so as not to prepare young Roma to the “claiming attitude”. Home schooling (teachers going to families), which is quite present among the Lovari group in Poland, should be limited. Roma parents should see some benefits for sending their children to school, e.g. providing counselling at school. Roma mediators should be engaged to ensure a smooth bridge between Roma and the school environment.

Over-representation of Roma in special schools due to additional support to families if they send their children to these schools can be unwittingly economic incentive which ameliorate negative phenomenon of placing Roma pupils in special school system, especially for poorest Roma families. Enrolling children in special schools or programmes for mild mentally disabled definitely and negatively influence their future on the labour market.

### ***As regards employment of Roma in general***

The comparison of unemployed Roma and non-Roma shows several factors common to all participating countries of this thematic group and beyond, including a huge disproportion in the education level between Roma and non Roma to the disadvantage of Roma; and a higher level of young people within Roma community compared to non-Roma.

The age structure of Roma communities in Europe (probably the youngest European ethnic group) has an ambivalent character: on the one hand, taking into consideration the low level of their education it means that the group of unemployed people will rise in the Roma community in upcoming years; on the other hand, the fact that the Roma youth is more “open for change” - combined with support mechanisms dedicated to Roma communities in European countries - means that that young Roma have more possibilities to continue their education than the generation of their parents. The latter factors can positively influence the situation of Roma in the labour market in the near future provided that they finish at least compulsory school (far beyond the primary level).

Employment of Roma women should receive more attention and support (examples of projects targeting Roma women in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and Turkey). When discussing the situation of the Roma community one should pay attention to the phenomenon of slow emancipation of Roma women, stemming especially from less traditional communities. Although women are formally less in charge of Roma NGOs than men, at least in a country like Poland, experience of the past 10 years shows a much higher level of their involvement in projects and will to introduce change in the community, even from professional perspective<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>60</sup> For example: in Poland Roma women represent the majority of Roma education assistants (approx. 70%), of students of Roma origin (63% in 2014), as well as of high school students in secondary schools (approx. 59% in 2014).

One of the most common tendencies in contemporary labour market is the almost structural unemployment that touches mainly women (see Eurostat statistics table 1 in Appendix 6) and young people (see table 3 in the same Appendix). Similar tendencies are observed also among Roma women and youth, although there are some differences and sometimes different reasons to this phenomenon.

The group of experts identified both systemic and socio-cultural reasons for unemployment:

**Systemic reasons:**

- relatively high level of work costs for the entrepreneurs;
- non-correspondence of demand and supply for certain services or products, caused by economic crisis, high concurrence or poor management;
- lack of flexibility due to strict legal regulations for labour-related legislation (licenses, permits, business licenses, etc.);
- non-correspondence of work demand and labour force on a given territory;
- low level or lack of professional experience among school leavers and young workers;
- lack of incentives for entrepreneurs to hire persons from disadvantaged groups (other than disabled persons);
- discrimination, including negative stereotypes and attitudes, towards Roma.

**Socio-cultural reasons:**

- early school drops-out;
- lack of education and professional experience;
- reluctance to take low prestige and low paid jobs;
- dependence on social welfare system, sometimes inherited through generations;
- migrations and gaps in education triggered by migration;
- reluctance to occupy certain job positions for so-called cultural motives or cultural prohibition (internal issue within some Roma traditional communities);
- hermetic character of certain, more traditional, Roma communities;
- patriarchal model of Roma families which affect Roma women's further education and, as a result, their access to the labour market.

***As regards the organisation and curricula of vocational education and training***

For many years, the trend was to reduce vocational education in several European countries (Poland is a concrete example). Now, this attitude is opposite which is a good "turning point" to pay attention to the positive effects that vocational education and training could have in the professional activation of Roma.

Market research should be part of vocational training. When designing vocational education and training programmes, attention should be paid to ensure as far as possible a correspondence between territorial/local situations and needs regarding the labour market and Roma communities on the one hand and required job resources on the other. In practice there is often a lack of correspondence between demand and supply. Experts noted that it might be easier to reach a certain balance in regions with a relatively small number of Roma or in countries where Roma are not massively present in certain geographical areas. Different approaches should be designed to respond to different situations (e.g. Roma living in urban areas v. Roma living in rural areas).

In economies where crafts and market services correspond to a demand and could offer well-paid jobs, vocational education and training should help supporting Roma traditional crafts and skills.

Vocational education and training should focus on specific qualifications in the shortest possible time. For most Roma students and adults, it would be preferable to propose more practical and less theoretical vocational education and training. A three-year schooling period seems for many too long. A provision of care for children when parents participate in vocational training could be envisaged to facilitate parent's enrolment.

Teachers in vocational schools should receive training to work in a multicultural environment and should have basic knowledge of local Roma culture(s) and family relationship. A Roma youngster can hardly count on his family support for his/her education and, on the other hand, if the family is convinced about education it often can hardly financially support it. Possible future employers should participate in vocational training courses.

***As regards the impact of vocational education and training measures***

Vocational education and training programmes should in theory lead to concrete jobs or at least facilitate an early access to the labour market. The actual employment of the beneficiaries of vocational education and training programmes is not necessarily an objective of such programmes which raises questions about their impact and effectiveness. An illustration of this can be found in the outcome of ESF 2007-2013 funded employment projects in Poland which led to the employment (as employees or self-employers) of 421 persons out of 8,762 beneficiaries, i.e. less than 5%. Priority should be given to job training and product development.

A system of tutoring and mentoring for Roma students during vocational education and training would be worth establishing as a general practice. Paid interim and traineeships, including in public services and ministries, should be privileged since Roma could gain professional experience without having to spend several years in vocational schools since there is often a risk that they drop out before finishing their studies. A debate however took place whether trainees should get paid or not to attend vocational or other type of training. "In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", there are usually paid to attend training. In some Polish municipalities, this was the case at the beginning but resulted in attracting persons who were not really eager to start working afterwards, so this practice was stopped.

There is a certain lack of information regarding the middle and long term impact of vocational education and training. It would be important to follow what happens with Roma people who have been engaged in such training programmes to see whether they managed to get employed over the long term.

***As regards the interest of Roma for vocational education and training***

Vocational education and training seem *a priori* a proper response for many Roma and should at least be one of the education options. It gives Roma certified professional skills and serious job perspectives which would enable young people to support their family. Vocational education gives the possibility to create "family run businesses" which is also important for many Roma. In terms of Roma community development, vocational education responds to some patterns existing in Roma traditional communities, such as skills learning within the family environment, child/early marriages (unions) and relatively early parenthood. Vocational education is a kind of "transmission belt" into the labour market for those who take responsibility for the family at an early age and for those who do not want or cannot carry on with their studies.

In practical terms, the situation varies a lot: in Finland, vocational education seems to attract a large number of Finnish Roma whilst in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Poland there is relatively low interest from Roma for vocational education (though figures are slightly increasing). In Poland, an explanation could be the traditional fact that cultural aspects and traditions are not sufficiently taken into consideration in vocational education and training offers.

The choice of vocational orientation may vary from country to country. It is often different for men and women, and can considerably vary from one Roma community to another because of certain traditions and cultural prohibitions. Several participants indicated that vocational education and training is more attractive for Roma women and youth. Roma men often bring more money at home by working in the grey economy or sometimes through more illegal ways.

Roma men tend to work with machines, or as mechanics, taxi, bus or truck drivers (e.g. in Wroclaw). Others chose office work, cook, rescue assistant, commercial, etc. Women choose sewing or textile (Turkey), cleaning (Bergitka women in Poland), cooking, aesthetics, hair-dresser, gardening, etc. The job of Roma mediator (Bosnia and Herzegovina and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Roma school assistant (Poland) and Roma cultural coordinator (Finland) also attract many applicants.

The economic crisis plays also a role, as well as the location of vocational schools. Within one Powiat (equivalent to a French *département*) not all the jobs can be taught in vocational schools. The distance between the place of residence and the school plays a role.

### ***As regards a targeted/tailored v. general approach to vocational education, training and employment***

A key for success is to support tailored projects to the local and regional needs and opportunities on the labour market, as well as to the experience and skills of specific Roma groups, families or individuals. This remark is not valid just for vocational education, training and employment.

Public funding should concentrate on those Roma parents/families that are already sending their children to school (including pre-school) and on those Roma individuals who are actively seeking for a job. Budget is limited and public/EU funds should not be wasted for persons who have no real interest for education or employment<sup>61</sup>. It does not mean that the latter who are often living on social benefits should be left out but they should be rather the targets of awareness-raising campaigns on the benefits of education and employment rather than integrating them already in training projects. The need to make this distinction requires some sort of assessment and prior consultation with potential beneficiaries of projects or training. One should ensure that this not always the same people who attend (“people addicted to training”). Selection criteria for enrolling Roma beneficiaries (in vocational training or employment activation projects) should be fair and transparent.

### ***As regards funding***

Whilst on the one hand, European Structural Funds (ESF) and IPA funding offer a wide range of possibilities and should be more often used for Roma professional activation, the financial contribution from the state (and municipal) budget is crucial so as not to rely only from external donors.

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<sup>61</sup> One of the reasons given by a Polish speaker to explain why people are registering themselves as job-seekers, whilst they are in fact not really interested, was to obtain medical insurance.

State/local funding shows political commitment and is a better guarantee for the sustainability of the action. In that regard Bosnia and Herzegovina (for the involvement of state and local budget for its Roma housing policy) and Poland (for the use of state and local budget on top of EU funds) can be regarded as positive examples. “The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, however, is able to implement programmes mainly through IPA and other international sources of funding (e.g. REF).

It is important to build and ensure the financing of projects that can be sustainable, including from municipal and regional budgets (good examples in Wroclaw and Wadowice).

Once embarked in financial the professional activation of people, and Roma in particular, the sustainability of funding is crucial: any break in financing individuals will immutably demotivate them and embed mistrust of Roma toward the authorities and the majority. In that respect, some Polish interlocutors regretted the sometimes late arrival of ESF instalments which creates major delays and problems to manage the projects and the motivation of participants.

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) can finance, via loans, education and vocational training projects, and the related infrastructure, such as the construction and/or rehabilitation of early childhood education facilities, primary and secondary schools, technical colleges, vocational training centres, establishments of higher education or specialized learning and/or research and development centres. Eligible investments may include sports and socio-cultural centres/equipment, as well as residence facilities pertaining to such establishments, learning materials, furniture and equipment.

As an example, in 2005, a €5million loan was approved by the CEB in favour of the Government of Hungary for the partial financing of investments in the fields of housing, education and vocational training to promote the social integration and improve the living conditions of Roma in Hungary.

In additional, the CEB provides Programme Loans with the primary purpose of promoting the creation and preservation of viable permanent and/or seasonal jobs by facilitating access to credit. Such loans can finance fixed productive investments, including through leasing, or working capital requirements as deemed eligible by the CEB. They are aimed at micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs), including those exercising craftsmanship/artisan activities or small family-owned enterprises engaged in regular economic activity. Reflecting its social mandate, the CEB prioritizes for its support the smaller MSMEs and those with limited, less favourable, or even no access to credit. This includes in particular start-ups and enterprises owned by women, by minorities and by vulnerable groups. In 2014, the Roma Economic Development Initiative (REDI) was initiated by the CEB, CoopEst and OSF with the aim to finance micro-credit vehicles in favour of Roma entrepreneurs. In November 2014, the CEB approved an amount of € 200,000 in favour of CoopEst to strengthen Roma entrepreneurs’ capacities, facilitate their access to credit and support microfinance institutions in dealing with Roma entrepreneurs as clients.

In 2010, the CEB also approved a €8 million loan in favour of *Caja de Ahorros y Monte de Piedad de Madrid* for the partial financing of the ACCEDER Programme, run by the *Fundación Secretariado Gitano*. This training programme is principally intended for the Roma population in order to facilitate their access to the job markets and thus foster their professional and social integration in Spain.

### ***As regards the social welfare system***

The social welfare system sometimes creates negative phenomena, like a dependency on social benefits, and incentives for not seeking actively a job (again not just economically non-active Roma persons).

In Finland adopted some incentives for Roma to choose employment rather than social benefits: if the salary is 300 Euros, the person keeps its right for social benefit of 300 Euros (whilst in other national contexts, Roma would lose their rights to social benefits if they start working which is not an incentive especially for big families). In “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, it is a middle-way system: a Roma person would get 80 Euros as social benefit per month for a family of five persons (other family members do not get anything). Families would receive extra money if they send their children to school.

### ***As regards data collection and definitions***

In almost all European countries, there is a lack of data illustrating the unemployment phenomenon among the Roma communities. Nonetheless there are still some possibilities to extract the needed data from censuses, national surveys on unemployment and by combining and comparing data related to the majority population with data concerning the Roma population (as Polish authorities did for the thematic visit). Another source of data can and should be data from hitherto realized projects. Since at least 2011, most EU countries have adopted strategies for Roma social inclusion and most non-EU countries in Europe have done the same. Authorities are obliged to monitor the progress in any taken actions; therefore ethnic-based data to monitor progress in the implementation of targeted policies towards Roma should be made possible, provided it respects certain international standards concerning data protection. Collecting detailed data concerning the level of education, level of professional qualifications and professional experience of Roma and specific cultural patterns on the one hand, and analysis of the local labour market on the other hand, could be the first steps before developing locally based action plans towards the professional activation of Roma communities.

Whilst we may find some ethnic based data concerning school attendance of Roma pupils and students in pre-school, primary, secondary and university levels, as well as Roma attending vocational education, there is a need to collect more ethnic-based data illustrating the phenomenon of unemployment among the Roma population, distinguishing active and passive job-seekers. Most of the academic research and analysis are based on census results (e.g. in Poland) which provide only a partial picture of the situation of Roma since many do not self-declare as Roma. Ways should be found to conduct similar research and analysis based on accepted estimated figures of the Roma population. Statistics and data collection are difficult to compare because they are also linked to definitions and the scope of the used terms may vary from a country to another (e.g. *unemployed persons versus economically inactive persons*)

One of the weak points of public discussions on Roma’s employment or unemployment situation is that such discussions rely on widely shared convictions that Roma are widely unemployed without any concrete data. This assumption fails to integrate that many employed Roma either do not declare themselves as Roma because of the negative image and the risk to lose their job or clients, or work on the black market/grey economy (which is not a Roma characteristic).

### ***As regards discrimination and measures aimed at breaking stereotypes***

Discrimination in the field of employment, especially in the private sector, remains very high in all participating countries. It is often difficult to convince employers to recruit a Rom. When the employer sees a Rom he usually refuses giving the job. If the girl wears traditional dress, it is immediate no. The address of the applicant can also play a negative role. For the few of them who get a job, it is often preferable to hide their Roma identity. Some might get insulted or bullied if they do.

More studies should be conducted and, where necessary measures undertaken, to address bullying and discrimination on the work place. Finland has good examples in combating bullying at school level. More efforts should be introduced and training provided to human resources and employers conducting job interviews to avoid falling in to the trap of prejudice. Some municipalities have adopted positive measures for the employment of Roma in the municipality, which helps breaking stereotypes, like in Wadowice<sup>62</sup>. There has been a greater acceptance of Roma workers within the municipality. But, too often, only the municipality provides employment for Roma, enterprises do not recruit Roma.

### ***As regards Romani culture and traditions***

The will to preserve Romani culture and traditions shall not result in having Roma staying backwards of the rest of society and Romani culture and traditions be used as an excuse by policy-makers not to be pro-active in proposing and implementing projects for Roma. The experts from Bosnia and Herzegovina and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” were particularly shocked to notice how much the so-called “Romani traditions” in Poland could become real obstacles to enrol Roma in vocational education or for occupying certain jobs. Experts from these two partner countries indicated to Polish interlocutors present, including members of Roma communities, that Romani culture and traditions are not playing a preventing role in their respective countries.

On the contrary, Polish interlocutors, including members of the Roma community, gave numerous examples of professions that certain traditional Roma groups, such as Lovari and Polish Roma, would disregard or categorically refuse if they would be proposed such occupations. It relates for example to occupations connected to human body secretions (impacting medical jobs, such as doctors, nurses, gravediggers, etc.) but also with rubbish (cleaning personnel, plumber, etc.). They cannot wear uniforms such as those of policemen, judges, prosecutors, doctors, nurses, etc. Roma performing jobs connected with law enforcement services (policemen, including municipal police, prosecutors) or dog-catchers are under threat of exclusion from the community. Others cannot according to their tradition collect money from others and can therefore not work at a cash desk. Lovari women can work in esthetics with face and hands but not with feet. Bergitka Roma, however, would accept any job, including cleaning.

These relations to certain professions also vary from a country to another. For example, a debate took place between Polish and Finnish experts, following the intervention of Mr Jerzy Ozga, the Polish entrepreneur from Northern Poland who was considering employing Roma in his horse business, which gives a wide range of employment possibilities, including equestrian sports, horseback riding, hippotherapy, horse breeding, horse studs, touristic use of horses (like hansom cabs) etc. Whilst it is still an emerging market in Poland and the connection with horses is valued in Polish society, including among Roma, the horse business has considerably declined in Finland and the association of Roma with horses has become for Finnish Roma a negative stereotype to which they are ant to be associated with.

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<sup>62</sup> Since the beginning of the vocational training project, 63 employment contracts were signed (but often the same people are employed). 12 to 15 Roma are part of this project (9% of the total), including three Roma women. Two Roma employees take care of municipal gardens and one works as a driver. One works as Roma assistant. One person is employed on a full time basis out of six who followed the training (in both cases, they benefit of a so called 13<sup>th</sup> salary in a year which is a rule for state employees). They work for 9 to 10 month annually and receive also vouchers to clean their work cloths, free material and transport. Children are given textbooks, and can participate in summer camps. Every year an apartment is purchased and modernized for a Roma family. Women are given paid maternity leave and receive additional welfare through social funds. The condition to access this type of employment is to be registered in the employment office. Out of 70% Roma covered by the social welfare centre, only 10% are registered in the employment office. Many Roma people do not know how to manage budget and hardly think about their future pension.

Several Polish municipalities shared their challenging experience in enrolling Roma from different groups in vocational training programmes. Wrocław for example said that they did not succeed in organising joint classes; bringing the Bergitka and the Lovari groups together only took place once at the end of the programme during one festive event.

***As regards the self-esteem and self-image of Roma***

In order to better adjust the vocational educational and training programme for Roma, diagnostics tests were conducted with Polish Roma from Wrocław under the Project “*Different citizens, one city*” funded by ESF and State Roma Integration Programme budget. Tests that aim at showing the self-image of a given person revealed the big difference between the real image and the self-image among Roma participants which confirmed the difficulties encountered when activating Roma in vocational education and training. Though one should be careful not to draw any generalisation since each individual is different, these tests drew certain conclusions. Some Roma have too high expectations compared to what they can do; others have a too low self-esteem. Some do not accept criticisms on the workplace or dislike subordination to employers. Due to insufficient social skills, lower educational level and linguistic barriers many have difficulties to manage an enterprise (hence the failure of Roma social cooperatives).

After the project, an expertise was prepared with recommendations concerning activation of the Roma community. Vocational education for Roma is needed because of quick acquisition of specific skills and lower general education requirements. It was recommended that incomes cannot be too low because Roma have to support large families. Vocational education and training therefore need to concentrate on professions that are in demand. Generally-speaking family-business, social co-operative, and self-employment should be privileged, provided Roma receive support, especially at the starting phase.

The Holanda performed test showed that artistic and creative features are prevalent among Roma. Problems are solved through action and tools for solution are connected with movement. Entrepreneurial personality test revealed an ease for establishing contacts but the unreal self-image makes some of them unable to run their enterprise. Many are skilful for handling machines and for doing work which requires precision. Roma women appreciate more stability in the working field than men. Artistic abilities and creativeness make them easy to work with children.

Raising awareness about the benefits of education and publicizing Roma educated professionals who are still proud of their traditions and culture as role models, would be needed. As a positive example, a campaign “*One of many*” (<http://jednizwielu.pl>) was conducted in Poland; it attracted however many anti-Roma reactions. Contacts with those Roma role models (for instance those have finished vocational education or have created their own business after following a vocational training programme) should be facilitated. Organising national competitions for the best apprentice could be also envisaged and motivate Roma involved in educational education (in France, several Roma won such competitions).

***As regards job advisers, career counsellors, school assistants and mediators***

People assisting Roma, whether job advisers, career counsellors, school assistants, mediators, etc. should not be all necessarily of Roma ethnic origin. Most important is their knowledge about the community and their capacity to build bridges between the Roma individuals and families on the one hand and the institution (employment office, school, hospital, etc.) on the other hand.

However it has proved useful to recruit Roma, and especially Roma women and young people, on those positions to respond, especially at the beginning, to the existing mistrust of many Roma in state and public institutions, as well as to overcome linguistic barriers when they exist. More Roma should be recruited as employment mediators in local employment offices (good example in Bulgaria) or as career counsellors in municipal social services (some examples in Poland). Career counselling for children, and Roma children in particular, should be introduced at an early stage of education (before they drop out of school) and activity aimed at involving Roma parents in the education of their children should be developed (example of Roma incubators in Slovenia).

Closer co-operation between education-related stakeholders (schools, Roma school assistants, Roma school mediators, Roma NGOs involved in education, etc.) should be facilitated with local entrepreneurs.

### ***As regards required education levels and skills accreditation***

The educational level (graduation) is not the only criterion for recruitment procedures (including for Roma school assistants, mediators, career counsellors or job advisers) and is too often put forward as a barrier for recruitment. Concrete grassroots experience and skills of non-educated young or adult Roma should be also valued, e.g. in artistic areas, trade and traditional crafts, provided the latter are adapted to the demand of modern societies.

A system of professional skills accreditation for those Roma who are not graduated because they have dropped school earlier and have not finished compulsory should be more systematically put in place and regarded as equivalent to official qualification standards, using positive experiences, like the VAT<sup>63</sup> system in France (see Appendix 4) or the system of extra-mural exams for vocational and training education qualifications in Poland for people who have two year professional experience (after their accreditation, they can register as job-seekers in employment offices).

### ***As regards employability***

Measures should be taken to respond to systemic reasons put forward by employers for not recruiting more: high labour costs; stiff labour law and strict labour rules (regulations; permits, etc.); lack of correspondence between demand and supply; lack of sufficient experience from the graduates; lack of sufficient education, etc. On the other hand, job seekers are not interested by low esteem or poorly paid jobs or if social benefits (all family members included) are higher or relatively the same as the proposed salary<sup>64</sup>. An early contact with possible employers is a key to success. Job-fairs (example in Romania) bringing together potential employers and Roma looking for a job could be organised.

The State and municipality should provide the example: in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” for instance, 1,600 Roma are working in state and local self-governments. Hundreds of them are policemen. Three Roma women are working in high position in ministries. Finland and Bosnia and Herzegovina have also numerous examples of that kind.

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<sup>63</sup> VAT stands for *validation des acquis de l'expérience*.

<sup>64</sup> As an example, in Poland, unemployment benefit (in average 200 Euros) is time dependent (up to 6 months) and depends on the previous salary. An average gross salary in Poland is 800 Euros (400 to 500 Euros for people with no low education). So if several family members get social benefits, a low salary offered by an employer is not an incentive for work.

***As regards instruments and tools for professional activation and support measures:***

The group of experts identified the following instruments and tools:

- **intervention works:** employer receive from labour agencies partial reimbursement of the employees' salary and social security fees;
- **paid community service:** can be organised by local authorities for unemployed people without the right to dole, usually for the benefit of local services, welfare or cultural institutions.
- **internship and vocational training in enterprises:** can be organised for young unemployed people (up to 25 years old) and young unemployed academy leavers (up to 27 years old);
- **professional training:** dedicated to long-term unemployed people, or to people without any professional qualifications, or to persons over 50 years old, disabled people, etc.;
- **public works:** mainly infrastructure works paid by government funding;
- **social economic entities such as social cooperatives:** can be voluntary established associations of an unlimited number of people deriving from vulnerable groups (unemployed people, ex-prisoners, homeless people, refugees, Roma, etc.).

The above activation tools can be accompanied by **support measures**, such as the reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs for workers. Other support measures include scholarships for Roma students, and, in some countries, scholarships for unemployed young people who decide to continue their education (up to 25 years old). Micro-credits to help Roma starting an enterprise (example in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"), free-of-charge vocational training courses for the most vulnerable and incentives to entrepreneurs to hire Roma (examples in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia") are also among support measures mentioned during the thematic visit. Such incentives also exist in Turkey but exclusively if they are combined with other categories (age, gender, vocational educational background, disabilities etc.). Recommendation letters from authorities for Roma (examples in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia") in their applications for obtaining scholarships, social housing or micro-credits can also be efficient. The Finnish experts were particularly interested by this practice.

#### ***4.1.3 Lessons learnt per country***

##### ***Poland***

From the implementation of the three Polish programmes targeting the Roma community, the following conclusions were drawn by the Polish authorities:

- The activities aimed at professional activation of the Roma population will not be effective if they are targeted at all Roma in the category defined as "unemployed". There is a chance for greater effectiveness of the actions if they are based on individualized needs;
- Additional measures to bolster employment and professional activation should be directed at a group of unemployed people, describing themselves as "ready to work";
- Unemployed Roma showing a willingness to work should be the beneficiaries of the integration strategies, and the Roma belonging to the "economically inactive", many of them being women, should be rather the beneficiaries of social welfare activities and awareness-raising campaigns;
- Efforts should be directed at strengthening the group of unemployed expressing readiness to take up any work, thus counteracting the phenomenon of expansion of inactive people;

- There is a deep need for cooperation between the employers and educational institutions. Of particular importance is the cooperation with employers in the case of groups of students requiring special support, such as Roma;
- Retrofitting the vocational school with modern equipment and teaching materials to ensure high quality education and enable the implementation of the core curriculum in the competition;
- Fostering Roma pupils' knowledge about vocational training through vocational schools and primary schools in order to present proficiencies;
- It is of vital importance to promote vocational training among the Roma parents and other members of the Roma communities;
- Co-operation of Roma NGOs carrying out professional activation should be developed with vocational schools and employers, especially since apprenticeships and practical classes are usually conducted by employers;
- Conducting effective career guidance in vocational schools, with particular attention to planning individual educational and professional paths of students/learners, significantly increases the chances of graduates on the labour market;
- There is a need to harmonize the actions taken at local level: some municipalities are active, others are not.

Given that 92% of the Roma community live in urban areas (major cities) their access to educational tools at the general level and at the professional level is much higher than the non-Roma population in rural areas. Another optimistic factor that can have a positive impact on the level of integration remains the demographics of this group with a significant proportion of young people. The amount of pro-employment applications submitted to government programmes aimed at the Roma is a reflection of the interest of local governments and Roma organisations for pro-employment activities.

An analysis of areas of intervention proposed under national strategies for Roma integration since 2001 indicates a progressive specialization and restriction from 8 to 4 main areas. In Poland, the new "Programme for integration the Roma community in Poland 2014-2020" will focus in only four intervention areas: education (including civic and historical education and promotion of Romani culture), health, housing and professional activity (8 areas in previous strategies 2001-2003 and 2004-2013 have been aggregated into four areas).

When examining the previous experience of Roma social cooperatives one should keep in mind the past experience (3 EQUAL Initiative projects). The evaluation of these projects is critical due to the instability of the achieved results in the context of the funding for each operation. In most developed model solutions were not used in subsequent projects activating the Roma community in the labour market, and tied partnerships ended its activities at the end of project financing. The main diagnosed cause of this situation was: the lack of an experienced manager and the lack of understanding among members for the need to invest profits in the development of the cooperatives. Nonetheless, social cooperatives can become business incubators and can be adjust to Roma culture patterns (family business).

### ***Bosnia and Herzegovina***

Focusing on *permanent* employment through an integrated approach that would combine housing, education and employment is one of the lessons learnt from practice. The vocational education and training of Roma would need to be further developed under the Action Plan for Roma Employment.

One of the priorities is also the solving of identity and other documents which still create considerable obstacles for Roma to access their rights, including in the fields of education and employment.

### **Finland**

Finnish Roma pupils have discovered vocational studies. Over the last ten years, seeking vocational education has more than doubled. Enrolment rates in upper secondary schools continue to be very low among Roma pupils. Specific pupils' career guidance counselling has produced some positive results.

The first monitoring report of the National Policy for Roma came up with the following self-assessment of the vocational education and training policy:

- **Supporting and enhancing the participation of Roma in qualification-oriented vocational education and training**

*The general level of education of the Roma population can be raised by using the existing educational services and by developing the implementation of education and training aimed at Roma. It will be necessary to provide part of the adult Roma population with an opportunity to complete their comprehensive school studies.*

*To enhance their access to vocational education and training and to support their studies, the basic vocational education aimed at adult Roma should include study-enhancing operational models developed within the preparatory training and careers guidance system. The opportunities afforded by the competence-based qualifications system should be utilised by taking into account students' varying learning readiness and by providing individual study plans.*

*On the basis of experience gained in various educational projects aimed at Roma, there is a need for motivating them and supporting them in their studies, in addition to helping them in learning to learn. Their participation in education and training is often hampered by other factors complicating their lives, which is why counselling is in a key position.*

- **Enhancing opportunities for vocational education and training, as well as vocational choices for the Roma population**

*The lack of vocational role models in the Roma community and a lack of awareness of various professions and the education or training required for them have been recognized as factors that prevent the integration of Roma into the educational system and the labour market.*

*The importance of vocational and study counselling for the Roma population has been emphasized in surveys on educational projects aimed at adult Roma in particular.*

*Workers with a Romani background are needed in social welfare and health services and educational services, for example. They have been shown to play a key role in enhancing the social inclusion and interaction of the Roma population. The number of Roma working in these areas should be supported through various forms of education and training. Furthermore, the participation of Roma, according to their individual skills, in various vocational fields and educational levels should be supported through educational guidance and vocational counselling.*

▪ **Enhancing vocational education and training for adult Roma - Need for development**

*It is necessary to provide part of the adult Roma population with an opportunity to complete their comprehensive school. Educational structures that enhance the learning skills necessary in vocational studies need to be developed to help Roma gain access to vocational education and training and to support their studies. These include, for example, study guidance and preparatory training along the same lines as the study guidance and preparatory training for vocational studies given to pupils who are about to complete their comprehensive school. According to lessons learned in educational projects aimed at Roma, motivation-enhancing encouragement and support are also needed.*

*Actual vocational education and training aimed specifically at Roma was initiated in Finland in the late 1970s, in the form of short-term labour market training. The emphasis in vocational education and training was mainly on the traditional Romani means of livelihood or development work based on them. Past vocational adult education and training did produce some results, in the sense that many middle-aged Roma actually do have an occupation, but the education activities have proceeded in fits and starts and have not always guaranteed permanent employment for Roma. On the other hand, short-term education and training was aimed at enhancing the Roma population's motivation for seeking access to further studies.*

*Very little vocational labour market training aimed exclusively at Roma has been offered in recent years. The positive aspects of vocational education and training aimed specifically at Roma include the lowering of the threshold for education and training and the peer support provided by the group. Such vocational education and training aimed at the Roma population has been included in various projects, and also in the NOSTE Programme, which offers youth instructor and clothing design training programmes, for example.*

*It is not possible or expedient to provide separate education or training in all areas, which leaves the alternative of supporting the participation of Roma in general education or training and vocational labour market training. The Roma population also considers participation in general vocational education and training important. It provides them with more options to choose their occupation and facilitates integration into working life. The educational model developed in projects aiming at the development of education for Roma, where study guidance and preparatory training is specifically aimed at Roma, and where each student can, according to an individual study plan, seek access to integrated vocational education and training within the general education system, has proved a viable method of implementation.*

*The importance of vocational and study counselling for the Roma population has often been emphasized in surveys on educational projects aimed at adult Roma in particular.*

***“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”***

Regardless of the fact that many institutions and international organisations are working together to improve education and employment of Roma, more needs to be done to speed up the whole process. Results start being visible in the field, but needs are still present. Whilst a national action plan was adopted in the field of Roma employment with the objective, inter alia, to raise the education and qualifications of Roma, budgetary allocation would need to be more targeted at making Roma better informed about employment opportunities and legislation, at enhancing employment prospects, and at emerging Roma from underground economy.

The European Training Foundation (ETF) argues that despite the continuous legislative improvements and changes through recent educational reform, the new legislation still has some of the old weaknesses which limit the effectiveness of the education policy. Most of the weaknesses are systemic ones, with unclear division of responsibilities and competencies between the several newly established institutions (for instance, the Bureau for Development of Education and Centre for Vocational Education and Training) and lack of synchronization between laws. In spite of a number of successful interventions, certain issues in the remained unregulated or insufficiently regulated.

The ETF study also found that the Law on Secondary Education is not coordinated with the other laws, such as the Law on Vocational Education and Training and the Law on Local Self-government. Local self-government units have insufficient information about the local labour markets, and vocational education and training is not a priority for them. Programmes and strategies (e.g. the Strategy for Reduction of Poverty and Social Exclusion) do not make any specific reference to vocational education as a potentially powerful tool for increasing social inclusion and cohesion.

The project providing scholarships, mentoring and tutoring for Roma pupils in their 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th years of secondary education, supported by the Roma Education Fund (REF), has had satisfactory results so far. The progress, attendance and attainments of the pupils were all increased, cooperation between the school, parents and children has also been improved, pupils were socialized, and the availability of textbooks and transportation to schools have also been improved. As reported in one of the schools, the progress of pupils, in general, is slower when parents are with lower education, poorer families and rural areas<sup>65</sup>.

Other follow-up measures to improve the situation would include:

- The promotion of active measures for employment among unemployed Roma;
- The preparation of measures only for unemployed Roma through an analysis of their profile, skills, and education level;
- Putting emphasis on the implementation of vocational and training activities from the National Action Plan for Employment;
- Working with employers to employ more Roma.

## **Turkey**

There is a need to adopt and implement the National Strategy Document for the Social Inclusion of Roma People. This thematic report might be timely to introduce in the action plan some of the good practices identified in other member States concerning vocational education and training, and more generally-speaking education (pre-school, primary, secondary and university) and employment. There is also a need to collect statistical data concerning the depth and width of the social exclusion towards Roma.

There are incentives for employers encouraging them to employ more people based on the categories of age, gender, vocational educational background, disabilities etc. Jobseekers among Roma people can benefit from these incentives individually if he/she matches with any of the corresponding categories. A possible recommendation would be to make Roma themselves one specific category for the employers to benefit from incentives.

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<sup>65</sup> Assessment based on an interview with a school pedagogue, from Prilep municipality.

## 4.2 Good practices identified

### Poland

- *Reactivation and modernisation of vocational education and training;*
- *Making vocational activation an obligatory part of projects financed from European Social Fund, including the obligation for at least 3-month paid internship for Roma in ESF supported projects;*
- *Availability of ethnic data based on the national census: Poland has managed to collect some ethnic based data illustrating the general situation of the Roma ethnic minority in Poland through the National Censuses conducted in 2002 and 2011 respectively, and through available studies undertaken by the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS). Regular collection of data provide the possibility to compare, analyse, draw trends for better policy and budget planning;*
- *Scholarship programme for Roma pupils who continue education beyond the primary level;*
- *A thirteenth month salary (bonus) for those employed on regular basis with permanent state paid job;*
- *Roma assistants (more than 100) employed in city municipality social welfare offices<sup>66</sup>;*
- *Social cooperatives (if they follow certain criteria and conditions).*

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

- *Harmonisation of the educational system, including Secondary Education and Training;*
- *Recommendation letters from authorities to help Roma accessing scholarships, jobs, etc.;*
- *Good cooperation with international organisations and donors;*
- *Though this was not the main topic of this thematic visit, the Polish experts were impressed by the housing policy and measures for Roma developed by Bosnia and Herzegovina and concluded that they should focus and invest more on Roma housing.*
- *Free school meals, free textbooks, and free transport for Roma children in primary schools;*
- *Sponsored vocational training programmes targeting Roma women.*

### Finland

- *Support and counselling provided to Roma to pursue their studies or to get acquainted with regional possibilities to study in vocational institutions or in general upper secondary schools;*
- *Roma pupils and students' career guidance;*
- *Individualised career guidance (for example under the Kainuu project, Kajaani municipality);*
- *Roma cultural mediators;*
- *Combatting bullying at school;*
- *Incentives to choose employment rather than social benefits;*
- *ROM-EQUAL project for qualification-oriented vocational education/training for Roma adults;*
- *Participatory approach involving and consulting Roma throughout the process, from the drafting of projects and policies up to the monitoring of their implementation.*

### "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

- *Micro-credits to help Roma start an enterprise;*
- *Free-of-charge vocational training courses for the most vulnerable;*
- *Incentives for entrepreneurs to hire Roma;*

<sup>66</sup> The Roma assistant from Harangos association who was present at the meeting indicated that in five months she helped two persons finding a job, managed to have one child accessing kindergarten and helped several families for family planning, diet and other health care issues. Three Harangos' association members are working as Roma school assistants, employed by Cracow municipality (schools) who are taking care of all together 180 Roma children (averagely they are therefore responsible for 60 children each, but not every of those children need a support of Roma school assistants).

- *Good cooperation with international organisations and donors, including REF, UNICEF and IPA;*
- *On-the-job training with a strong focus on Roma youth and women;*
- *Internship/traineeship programmes;*
- *Needs assessment for unemployed young Roma;*
- *Free books and transportation from the place of residence to the school for children enrolled in secondary education;*
- *System of mentoring and tutoring;*
- *Scholarships for the students from poor families, especially Roma students;*
- *Introduction of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) for children from poor families who regularly attend secondary schools. The transfer is given when a child from a family that receives social financial assistance is enrolled and regularly attends a school with the joint aims of strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the social safety net, as well as of enhancing the human capital of children from socially disadvantaged families;*
- *Reduced criteria (points) for enrolment of Roma pupils in secondary school by 10% from the prescribed minimum points..*

#### **Turkey**

- *The catch-up education programme approved by the Education Board in 2008, which is directed at children 10-14 years of age who have never been enrolled at school or who have dropped out. This initiative which concerns mostly Roma children reinforces opportunities in access to education and to employment;*
- *Inclusion of Roma women in the MS4ROW project in Dücze providing vocational training courses;*
- *Social Solidarity Centres (SSC) promoting social integration of Roma women in 15 regions and providing vocational training and social activities.*

### **4.3 Possible follow-up**

#### **Poland**

- *Tailored promotion of vocational education and training among Roma;*
- *Promotion of any forms of co-operation with craft chambers at the level of regions by the network of Regional Plenipotentiaries of Voivodes on the National and Ethnic Minorities;*
- *Putting emphasis on one of the measures of the “Programme for the integration on of the Roma community in Poland for the period 2014-2020” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter called “THE EMPLOYMENT”, i.e.: “Attendance of Roma taking advantage of training and courses to lift vocational qualifications” bearing in mind its specific objective which is to raise the level of vocational activity of the Roma at the level of 6 % growth. It can be achieved by gaining vocational skills and apprenticeships, retraining or raising vocational qualifications, professional internships, etc.*

#### **Bosnia and Herzegovina**

- *Develop measures to attract more Roma in vocational education and training;*
- *Provide all Roma with identity documents so as to reduce administrative barriers;*
- *Make other countries’ benefit of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s experience on Roma housing issues.*

#### **Finland**

- *Circulating to the CAHROM and to the experts of the thematic group an English version of the national report on the education of Finnish adult Roma once it is finalised and available;*

- *Sharing the Finnish experience in attracting Finnish Roma students in vocational education/training with other member States where there is still a reluctance of Roma to enrol in such programmes.*

***“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”***

- *Providing the Polish and other partner countries’ experts with contact details and website of the Roma Education Fund and Roma Memorial concerning scholarships for young Roma who want to continue their studies.*

***Turkey***

- *Adoption of the governmental Roma integration strategy and, if time permits, introduction in its Action Plan elements concerning vocational education and training resulting from the lessons learnt from this report;*
- *Organisation of a CAHROM thematic visit on access of Roma to employment in 2017 that would build on the conclusions of the present thematic report.*

***At the level of the Council of Europe:***

- *Contacting relevant persons at national, regional and local levels to include identified promising, good and replicable practices in its online database on Roma-related good practices;*
- *Using the main conclusions and lessons learnt from this thematic report in future education or employment related thematic groups (e.g. the forthcoming thematic visit on access of Roma to employment proposed by Turkey in 2017);*
- *Facilitate contacts between various participating countries of this thematic group and the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) for eventually exploring any projects related to vocational training, micro-credits or support to small enterprises and family-own businesses.*

**Appendix 1: Official invitation received from Polish authorities on 13 October 2015**

Zeskanowano za  
pomocą urządzenia w

**Appendix 2: List of experts participating in the CAHROM thematic visit**

POLAND List of  
experts of the CAHR

**Appendix 3: Agenda of the CAHROM thematic visit to Cracow, Poland, on 26-28 November 2015**

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**Appendix 4: Other examples of projects and initiatives related to vocational education and training in Council of Europe member States that are not covered by this thematic report**

- ALBANIA:** Albanian Vocational Education Training Programme (AlbVet) – Social Inclusion, 2012<sup>67</sup>;
- FRANCE:** Skills accreditation for people who are not graduated and dropped out of school (*Validation des Acquis de l'Expérience-VAT*);
- GERMANY:** The *Stichting Sinti Werk* provides basic education for young people who dropped out of school;
- HUNGARY:** The alternative vocational school “Roma chance” in Szolnok set up in 1996 provides vocational training and remedial education for Roma and non-Roma, aged 12-22 with basic instructions and vocational training; the “Kayli Jag” Roma school in Budapest is a two-year training course for children not enrolled into state secondary schools<sup>68</sup>;
- SLOVAKIA:** Vocational training in the Liptovsky Mikulas and Rimavska Sobota districts.

<sup>67</sup> For further information see: <http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:yWxJuBE18soj:www.esn-eu.org/raw.php%3Fpage%3Dfiles%26id%3D152+&cd=6&hl=fr&ct=clnk&gl=fr>

<sup>68</sup>

[https://books.google.fr/books?id=Y4coNcT0uhkC&pg=PA88&lpg=PA88&dq=vocational+training+roma&source=bl&ots=9godmqFlhp&sig=hRRbYZ\\_BVROQvcz9mqA1TYQv5bk&hl=fr&sa=X&ved=0CFMQ6AEwB2oVChMIqKzrjLWNyQIVCoYaCh2r-wjw#v=onepage&q=vocational%20training%20roma&f=false](https://books.google.fr/books?id=Y4coNcT0uhkC&pg=PA88&lpg=PA88&dq=vocational+training+roma&source=bl&ots=9godmqFlhp&sig=hRRbYZ_BVROQvcz9mqA1TYQv5bk&hl=fr&sa=X&ved=0CFMQ6AEwB2oVChMIqKzrjLWNyQIVCoYaCh2r-wjw#v=onepage&q=vocational%20training%20roma&f=false)

**Appendix 5: Compulsory education<sup>69</sup> comparative table**

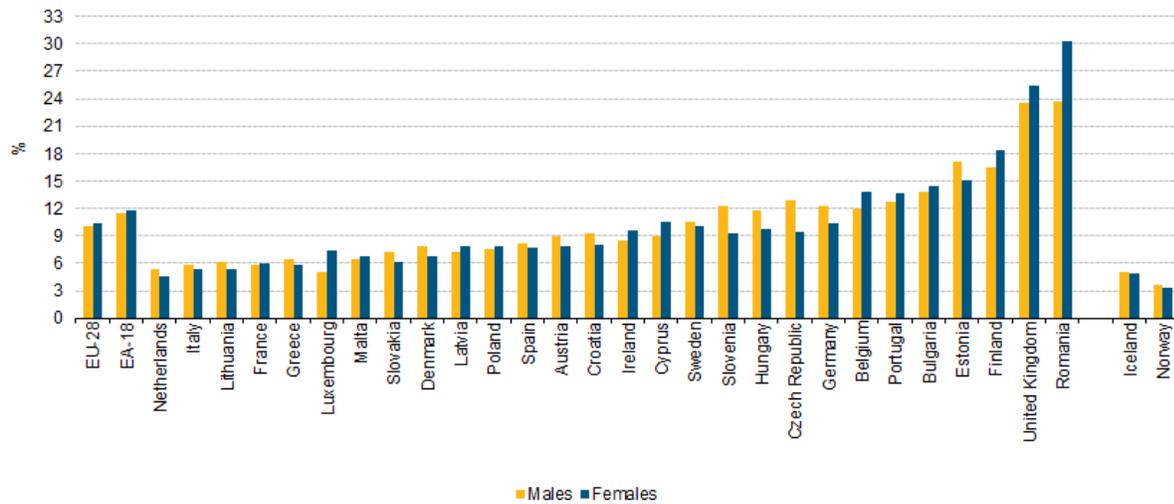
Country	Age Range	Notes
Belgium	6-18	
Finland	7-15	Beginning age is negotiable $\pm$ 1 year. Ends after graduation from comprehensive school, or at least 9 years.
France	6-16	
Germany	6-16	Varies slightly between states.
Hungary	3-16	Since 2015, kindergarten is compulsory from age 3, although exceptions are made for developmental reasons
Italy	6-16	
Netherlands	5-18	Students are allowed to leave early after obtaining their 'start qualification' (MBO level 2, HAVO or VWO degree)
Norway	6-15	Total of 10 years while primary is year 1-7 (without the grades) and lower secondary (with grades) is year 8-10.
Poland	6-18	Polish law distinguishes between compulsory school (obowiązek szkolny) and compulsory education (obowiązek nauki).
Portugal	6-18	It is the law that children living in Portugal (if there for 4 months or more) must go to school. Home schooling is available with registration at a school and quarterly examinations in the Portuguese curriculum only
Russian Federation	6-17	Student may leave after age 15 with the approval of parents and local authority.
Slovenia	6-15	
Spain	6-16	
Sweden	7-16	
"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"	6-18	There are 9 years compulsory primary education (from 0 to 8 class) and 4 years compulsory secondary education.
Turkey	6-18	From the 1st to the 12th grade, education is compulsory. Starting in the educational year of 2012-2013, an education reform took effect to bring the compulsory education up to the end of high school. The system is commonly referred to as 4+4+4.
United Kingdom	5-18	Requirement is for a full-time education, but attendance at a school is not compulsory (section 7 of The Education Act 1996).

<sup>69</sup> Source: Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory\\_education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory_education).

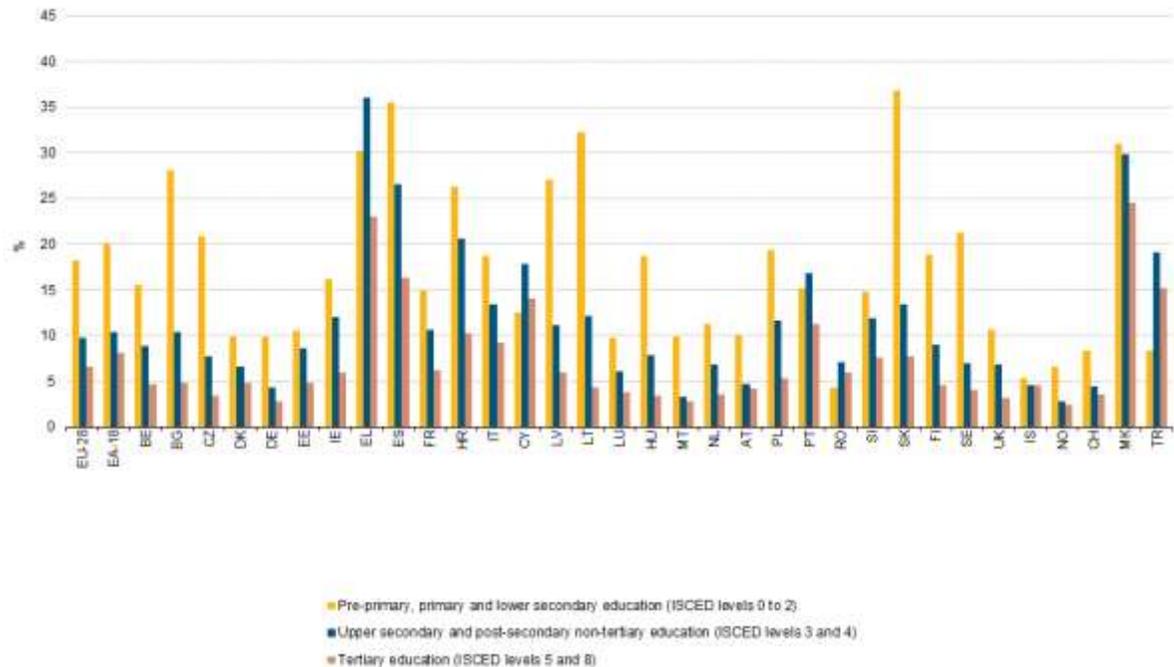
**Appendix 6: Eurostat statistical data**

There is also strong and obvious relation between the level of education and rate of unemployment<sup>70</sup>:

Eurostat Table 1: Unemployment rates, 2014, ranked on the average of male and female.



Eurostat Table 2: Unemployment rate by level of educational attainment, 2014 (in %).



70

[http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/1/1c/Figure\\_9\\_Unemployment\\_rate\\_by\\_level\\_of\\_educational\\_attainment%2C\\_2014\\_%28%25%29.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/images/1/1c/Figure_9_Unemployment_rate_by_level_of_educational_attainment%2C_2014_%28%25%29.png)

Eurostat Table 3: Youth unemployment, 2014 Q4 (in %)

	Youth unemployment rate				Youth unemployment ratio		
	2012	2013	2014	2014Q4*	2012	2013	2014
<b>EU-28</b>	23.3	23.7	22.2	21.4	9.8	9.9	9.1
<b>Euro area</b>	23.5	24.4	23.8	23.2	9.6	9.8	9.4
<b>Belgium</b>	19.8	23.7	23.2	22.4	6.2	7.3	7.0
<b>Bulgaria</b>	28.1	28.4	23.8	23.0	8.5	8.4	6.5
<b>Czech Republic</b>	19.5	18.9	15.9	14.5	6.1	6.0	5.1
<b>Denmark</b>	14.1	13.0	12.6	11.2	9.1	8.1	7.8
<b>Germany</b>	8.0	7.8	7.7	7.4	4.1	4.0	3.9
<b>Estonia</b>	20.9	18.7	15.0	14.4	8.5	7.4	5.9
<b>Ireland</b>	30.4	26.8	23.9	21.9	12.3	10.6	8.9
<b>Greece</b>	55.3	58.3	52.4	51.1	16.1	16.5	14.7
<b>Spain</b>	52.9	55.5	53.2	51.7	20.6	21.0	19.0
<b>France</b>	24.4	24.8	24.1	24.6	8.9	8.9	8.5
<b>Croatia</b>	42.1	50.0	45.5	46.3	12.7	14.9	15.3
<b>Italy</b>	35.3	40.0	42.7	42.0	10.1	10.9	11.6
<b>Cyprus</b>	27.7	38.9	35.9	33.9	10.8	14.9	14.5
<b>Latvia</b>	28.5	23.2	19.6	18.2	11.5	9.1	7.9
<b>Lithuania</b>	26.7	21.9	19.3	18.5	7.8	6.9	6.6
<b>Luxembourg</b>	18.0	16.9	21.2	23.5	5.0	4.0	6.0
<b>Hungary</b>	28.2	26.6	20.4	18.9	7.2	7.3	6.0
<b>Malta</b>	14.1	13.0	11.8	11.1	7.2	6.9	6.2
<b>Netherlands</b>	11.7	13.2	12.7	11.9	6.6	7.7	7.1
<b>Austria</b>	9.4	9.7	10.3	10.2	5.6	5.7	6.0
<b>Poland</b>	26.5	27.3	23.9	22.0	8.9	9.1	8.1
<b>Portugal</b>	38.0	38.1	34.7	33.3	14.1	13.3	11.9
<b>Romania</b>	22.6	23.7	24.0	23.6	6.9	7.1	7.1
<b>Slovenia</b>	20.6	21.6	20.2	19.1	7.1	7.3	6.8
<b>Slovakia</b>	34.0	33.7	29.7	26.9	10.4	10.4	9.2
<b>Finland</b>	19.0	19.9	20.5	21.1	9.8	10.3	10.7
<b>Sweden</b>	23.7	23.6	22.9	22.4	12.4	12.8	12.7
<b>United Kingdom</b>	21.2	20.7	16.9	16.1	12.4	12.1	9.8
<b>Iceland</b>	13.6	10.7	10.0	9.7	10.2	8.3	7.5
<b>Norway</b>	8.6	9.1	7.9	7.8	4.8	5.2	4.3
<b>Switzerland</b>	:	:	:	:	5.7	5.8	5.8
<b>Turkey</b>	15.8	17.1	18.0	19.2	5.9	6.6	7.3
<b>United States</b>	16.2	15.5	13.4	12.6	:	:	:
<b>Japan</b>	8.1	6.8	6.3	:	:	:	:

: data not available

\* The quarterly youth unemployment rate is seasonally adjusted.