

**REPORT FOR 2019 UNDER THE “HEALTH CARE” PRIORITY
of the NATIONAL ROMA INTEGRATION STRATEGY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA 2012 - 2020**

Operational objective: A national monitoring progress report has been prepared for implementation of *Measure 1.1.2. “Performing obstetric and gynaecological examinations with mobile offices in settlements with compact Roma population”*.

During the period 01.07—20.11.2019, **a total of 2,261 prophylactic medical examinations** were carried out with the four mobile gynaecological offices to uninsured persons of Roma origin and to persons with difficult access to medical facilities, as 951 women were diagnosed with diseases.

The implementation of the activity for each Regional Health Inspectorate is in accordance with an order of the Minister of Health to carry out not less than 500 examinations with each mobile gynaecological office. Financial resources of BGN 12,500 were allocated for each mobile unit, totalling BGN 50,000 for the four units.

During the reporting period, the mobile gynecological offices were divided into four areas: **Varna** (the city of Varna, the village of Kamenar, the town of Ignatievo, the village of Staro Oryahovo, the village of Sindel, the village of Dubravino, the town of Provadia, the town of Devnya, the town of Suvorovo, the village of Chernevo, the town of Valchi Dol); **Silistra** (Tutrakan Municipality– the town of Tutrakan, the village of Tsar Samuel, the village of Nova Cherna, the village of Staro Selo, the village of Belitsa, the village of Preslavtsi, the village of Tarnovtsi, the village of Shumentsi, the village of Varnentsi; Glavinitsa Municipality– the town of Glavinitsa, the village of Bogdanci, the village of Zafirovo, the village of Stefan Karadzha, the village of Listets, the village of Valkan, the village of Kalugerene, the village of Nozharevo, the village of Suhodol, the village of Kosara; Sitovo Municipality – the village of Sitovo, the village of Bosna, the village of Iskra, the village of Lyuben) **Sliven** (the town of Sliven - prophylactic gynaecological examinations of prisoners; Kotel Municipality, the village of Gradets; Sliven Municipality, the residential district of Nadezhda, the residential district of Komluka, the village of Sotirya, the village of Gergavets and the village of Topolchane, the village of Chintulovo, the village of Selimanovo, the village of Draganovo, the village of Trapoklovo, the village of Krushare, the village of Zlati Voyvoda, Tvarditsa Municipality, the village of Oborishte, the town of Shivachevo, the town of Nova Zagora) and **Shumen** (the town of Novi Pazar, the town of Shumen, the town of Kaspichan, the town of Pliska, the village of Zaychino Oreshe, the village of Stan, the village of St. Mihaylovski, the village of Vulnari, the village of Pamukchi, the village of Zurkvitsa, the village of Zlatna Niva, the village of Zhilino, the village of Voivoda, the village of Kriva Reka, the village of Enevo).

The performed prophylactic obstetric and gynaecological examinations in the settlements were carried out after prior coordination, help and organizational assistance from the mayors of the municipalities and the health mediators in the Roma neighbourhoods. A number of meetings were held in the municipalities with the mayors of the settlements in order to inform the target population in the Roma neighborhoods. A preliminary schedule for conducting the examinations was prepared and disseminated for each settlement.

The average age of the persons was 40-50 years. Obstetric and gynaecological examinations and tests (PAP smear, biopsy, histology) were performed. All persons with established diseases (chronic adnexitis, chronic parametritis, ovarian cysts, colpitis senilis, dysmenorrhea, vaginal descendus, etc.) were referred to specialists for further consultations, examinations and tests and, if necessary, hospitalization. At the discretion of the obstetrician gynaecologists, outpatient therapy and a follow-up medical examination were assigned to some of the persons with diagnosed diseases.

Increased morbidity was observed in patients from hard-to-reach areas, due to the low level of prophylactic activities.

All examined patients were explained in detail their general condition, advice and recommendations were given to prevent unwanted pregnancies in young women; advice on proper monitoring in the presence of a desired pregnancy and the risks associated with it; recommendations on the usefulness of periodic examinations of women who have already given birth and methods of contraception at a later age.

Table 1 Number of examinations and diagnoses carried out with the mobile gynaecological offices in 2019 by area, as well as financial resources spent.

Districts	Mobile units	Persons examined	Persons diagnosed	Amount of financial resources
Varna	OB/GYN	519	433	12,500 BGN
Silistra	OB/GYN	504	200	12,500 BGN
Sliven	OB/GYN	720	52	12,500 BGN
Shumen	OB/GYN	518	266	12,500 BGN
Total:		2 261	951	50,000 BGN

Task 1.3. Improving health care for newborns and preschoolers

Measure 1.3.2. “Conducting talks and conversations with young mothers on the importance of immunizations of children in order to motivate their regular application according to the National Immunization Calendar”

Pursuant to an order of the Minister of Health, the directors of the Regional Health Inspectorates in Burgas, Varna, Vratsa, Dobrich, Montana, Pazardzhik, Pleven, Razgrad, Sliven, Sofia District, Shumen and Yambol should organize the implementation of activities under measure 1.3.2. of the National Action Plan 2015-2020 for the implementation of the National Roma Integration Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria for 2012-2020.

Prophylactic examinations in the designated regions are preceded or accompanied by conducting training activities among the Roma population on the following topics: the importance of prophylactic examinations, vaccination of the population with mandatory immunizations according to the National Immunization Calendar (NIC), the benefits of recommended immunizations. Information materials on the topics “Vaccinating the population with mandatory immunizations under the NIC” and “Organizing trainings for people involved in raising young children” were disseminated. The following activities were carried out: 3,150 talks and lectures with more than 31,500 people covered; presentations – 1,700 with 19,500 people covered; film and video screenings – 1,900 with 4,700 people covered; consultations conducted – 6,700, press releases – 60; health educational materials disseminated – 3,500.

Measure 1.3.3. “Conducting immunizations with mobile teams in settlements without GPs.”

With the four mobile offices for general practice **890 children were examined, of whom 543 immunized/re-immunized children** aged 0-18 years with incomplete

immunization status according to the National Immunization Calendar. Children with incomplete immunization status are sought through the Regional Health Insurance Funds (RHIF) and General Practitioners (GPs) on the territory of each district. According to information from the Regional Health Inspectorates a large part of children have GPs as a result of binding mandatory immunizations with the receipt of social benefits.

The activity of mobile offices for general practice was organized in the period 01.07—20.11.2019. The mobile offices were distributed in 4 districts of the country – **Vratsa** (Byala Slatina Municipality: the town of Byala Slatina, the village of Altimir, the village of Tarnava, the village of Bardarski Geran, the village of Bukovets, the village of Tlachene, the village of Galiche, the village of Barkachevo, the village of Vranshak, the village of Gabare, the village of Drashan, the village of Popitsa, the village of Turnak, the village of Sokolare, the village of Komarevo), **Pazardzhik** (the town of Velingrad; the residential district of “Asphaltova Baza” and the residential district of “Anezitsa”); **Sliven** (Kotel Municipality, the village of Gradets; Sliven Municipality, the residential district of Nadezhda, the residential district of Komluka, the village of Gergavets and the village of Topolchane, the village of Chintulovo, the village of Selimanovo, the village of Draganovo, the village of Trapoklovo, the village of Krushare, the village of Glufichevo and the village of Zlati Voyvoda) and **Pleven** (Beleno Municipality, Gulyantsi Municipality, Dolna Mitropolia Municipality, Dolni Dabnik Municipality, Knezha Municipality, the residential district of Iztok, Disevitsa, the town of Slavyanovo, the village of Desevitsa, Cherven Bryag Municipality);

For performance of the activity of each RHI, BGN 7,000 were allocated, totalling BGN 28,000.

According to NHIF data, in 2019 the number of newborns covered by immunization was 80,654 and the number of immunized children was 435,611.

In connection with the import of measles virus onto the territory of the country and registered 1,231 cases of measles in 15 administrative regions, measures were taken to limit the spread of the disease on the territory of the country, including conducting priority vaccination against measles in children with omissions. Meetings were held with NGOs for active participation of health mediators in the search for children with omissions in immunizations.

As a result of the joint efforts, 23,259 children with omissions in the immunisation of measles, mumps, rubella were sought and covered in 2019.

In September 2019, an extraordinary immunization campaign was also carried out in 5 districts of the country (Burgas, Montana, Pazardzhik, Plovdiv and Sliven) to cover with one dose of measles, mumps and rubella vaccine children aged 13 months to 8 years from vulnerable groups of the population and groups with difficult access to health services. Additional 12,073 children were covered by the campaign.

Measure 1.3.6. “Conducting prophylactic examinations with mobile paediatric offices in neighbourhoods with predominantly Roma population and in remote settlements”

In 2019, a total of 2,186 examinations were carried out in the three mobile paediatric offices. The paediatric offices were distributed in 2 districts of the country – **Sliven** (Kotel Municipality, the village of Gradets; Sliven Municipality, the residential district of Nadezhda, the residential district of Komluka, the village of Gergavets and the village of Topolchane, the village of Chintulovo, the village of Selimanovo, the village of Draganovo, the village of Trapoklovo, the village of Krushare, the village of Glufichevo and the village of Zlati Voyvoda) and **Targovishte** (the village of Plastina, the village of Vrani Kon, the village of Kamburovo, the village of Zelena Morava and the village of Belomortsi in the Omurtag Municipality, as well as in the town of Omurtag) for organizing and conducting prophylactic examinations of children up to 18 years old, who do not have a selected GP and/or do not have a permanent address registration.

For performance of the activity of each RHI, BGN 8,100 were allocated, totalling BGN 24,300.

The following diseases were mainly diagnosed during the examinations: obesity, spinal distortions, which were notified to the parents and the children were referred to an appropriate specialist. Treatment was carried out in recorded cases of acute respiratory diseases (rhinitis, laryngitis, nasopharyngitis, bronchitis, pneumonia, angina). Recommendations were given on diets and exercise regimens for the prevention of these diseases. The identified cases of retardation in the neuro-psychological development were directed to an appropriate specialist.

Table 3 Number of prophylactic examinations of children by districts, as well as the financial resources spent.

Districts	Mobile units	Persons examined	Persons diagnosed	Amount of financial resources
Sliven	Paediatric office	1,541	120	16,200 BGN
Vratsa	Paediatric office	645	54	8,100 BGN
Total:		2,186	174	24,300 BGN

Task 1.4. Improving prophylactic activities among the Roma population

Measure 1.4.1. “Conducting awareness campaigns on the need to vaccinate the population with mandatory immunizations under the National Immunization Calendar for the benefits of recommended immunizations”.

Two hundred and thirty awareness campaigns were conducted (more than 45,500 people were covered), 159 workshops with health mediators to explain the benefits of immunizations and motivate them for their regular implementation according to the NIC. 4,200 videos and audio clips on the importance of immunizations were broadcast, 750 health educational materials were disseminated (HEMs) on the need to vaccinate the population with mandatory immunizations.

Measure 1.4.2. “Carrying out early diagnosis and screening studies with mobile mammography for the prevention of breast cancer”.

In 2019, **a total of 1,008 examinations** were performed with the two mobile mammography offices, **198 people were diagnosed with diseases**. The two mobile offices were distributed in the districts of **Kyustendil** (Dupnitsa Municipality, Sapareva Banya). Bobov Dol, Boboshevo and Kyustendil) and **Burgas** (with the town of Burgas, the town of Pomorie, the town of Sredets and the town of Kameno). All persons with established diseases were referred to appropriate specialists for follow-up treatment.

For performance of the activity of each RHI, BGN 10,000 were allocated, totalling BGN 20,000.

Measure 1.4.3. “Performing early diagnosis and screening for arterial hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, pulmonary diseases, diabetes mellitus with mobile fluorography, echographs and laboratories”.

In 2019, prophylactic examinations were conducted with the three mobile clinical laboratories with a total of **5,780 tests, with 975 tests establishing abnormalities**.

Mobile clinical laboratories were distributed in three districts of the country - **Dobrich** (Shabla and Krushari), **Stara Zagora** (the town of Radnevo, the town of Maglizh and the town of Kazanlak, the town of Stara Zagora, the village of Orizovo, Bratya Daskalovi Municipality, the village of Cherna Gora, Bratya Daskalovi Municipality, the village of Khan Asparuhovo, Stara Zagora Municipality, the town of Gurkovo, the town of Nikolaevol) and **Razgrad** (the

village of Topchiiy, the village of Kamenar, the village of Brestvene, the village of Yasenovets and the town of Tsar Kaloyan).

For performance of the activity of each RHI, BGN 7,500 were allocated, totalling BGN 22,500.

The clinical examination of a person included a set of the following indicators: blood count with at least 8 (eight) indicators: haemoglobin, haematocrit, erythrocytes, leukocytes, platelets, MCV, MCH, MCHC; blood sugar, cholesterol. The persons were mainly diagnosed with: increased blood sugar levels, increased triglycerides and cholesterol, decreased haemoglobin levels.

All tested persons were provided with the results, which were interpreted by a doctor in connection with the deviations in the tests with a view to prevention of the most common cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and some blood diseases in the Bulgarian population.

A total of 1,772 examinations were carried out with the three mobile echographic offices in three districts of the country: **Stara Zagora** (the town of Radnevo, the town of Maglizh and the town of Kazanlak, the town of Stara Zagora, the village of Orizovo, Bratya Daskalovi Municipality, the village of Cherna Gora, Bratya Daskalovi Municipality, the village of Khan Asparuhovo, Stara Zagora Municipality, **Sofia District** (the village of Dolni Kamartsi; the village of Gorna Malina; the village of Aprilovo; the village of Sarantsi, Cekanchevo; the village of Makotsevo: the village of Dolna Malina; the village of Belopoptsi; the village of Gaitanevo; the village of Lesново and the village of Baylovo) and **Yambol** (the town of Straldzha, the village of Lozenets, the village of Zimnitsa, the village of Veselinovo and the village of Zavoy).

For performance of the activity of each RHI, BGN 8,000 were allocated, totalling BGN 24,000.

As a result of the examinations, 660 persons were diagnosed with liver damage, chronic hepatitis, bile duct disease, cholecystitis, chronic pyelonephritis, nephrosclerosis, kidney stones; diseases of the urinary tract (myoma uteri, ovarian cysts, prostate adenoma).

A total of **1,361 examinations** were carried out with the two mobile fluorographic offices in two districts of the country: **Sliven** (the town of Kubrat and settlements from Kubrat Municipality - the village of Bisertsii, the village of Seslav, the village of Sevar, the village of Yuper and the village of Belovets) and **Montana** (the village of Obnova; the village of Bulgarene; the village of Komarevo; the village of Bozhuritsa; the village of Gorna Mitropoliya; the village of Yasen and the town of Slavyanovo).

For performance of the activity of the above-mentioned RHIs, BGN 8,000 were allocated, totalling BGN 16,000.

Pulmonary diseases, such as chronic bronchitis, pneumophibrosis, bronchiectic disease, pulmonary emphysema, pulmonary stasis, **were diagnosed in 256 persons**. All patients, in whom abnormal pulmonary status was found, were invited to dispensary wards for expansion of their diagnostic activity and appointment of appropriate therapy.

Measure 1.4.4. "Carrying out awareness campaigns on the importance of prophylactic examinations among the Roma population"

According to an official assessment of the National Network of Health Mediators - **in the target municipalities, through the work of the health mediators, the number of health insured persons among the hard-to-reach communities increases by more than 1,000 people per year**. This information was also made public on 27 November 2019 within the framework of the national information campaign dedicated to the activities of the National Network of Health Mediators held at the National Assembly under the patronage of the Parliamentary Health Committee.

Explanatory campaigns on the importance of prophylactic examinations continue and the disseminated information materials are related to early diagnosis and prophylactic examinations for arterial hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, pulmonary diseases, prophylaxis in influenza, acute respiratory diseases, diabetes mellitus and intestinal infections, the benefit of prophylactic examinations of children from 0 to 18 years old, prophylaxis in breast cancer, etc. The campaigns were conducted in 11 districts of the country (Burgas, Varna, Vratsa, Dobrich, Kyustendil, Montana, Pazardzhik, Pleven, Razgrad, Sliven, Silistra, Stara Zagora, Sofia District, Targovishte, Shumen and Yambol). Over 3,500 health packages containing toothbrush, toothpaste, a pack of wet towels and soap and over 6,500 information materials were disseminated. The health packages were disseminated during campaigns and training activities in settlements and neighbourhoods with predominantly Roma population. Forty-five educational campaigns were conducted in the community in connection with the celebration of thematic days (April 7 - Health Day, September 29 - World Heart Day, etc.) and the importance of prophylactic examinations among the Roma population.

Measure 1.4.5. "Analysis of activities for uninsured pregnant women and women who have recently given birth"

Under Ordinance No. 26 on the provision of obstetric care to women without health insurance and for carrying out examinations beyond the scope of the compulsory health insurance for children and pregnant women, the Ministry of Health provides the genetic laboratories with kits, reagents and consumables for conducting biochemical screening of pregnant women for the most common chromosomal abnormalities.

According to data obtained from genetic laboratories in the country, 21,748 pregnant women were surveyed in 2019, of which 19,347 in the first trimester and 3,953 in the second one. There was an increase by 2% in the number of women surveyed compared to the same period of the previous year. There is a steady trend towards an increase in the number of women surveyed in the first trimester and a decrease in those in the second trimester, which should be taken into account when planning the activity. The number of conducted antenatal diagnostics in 2019 was 800 compared to 829 in 2018. A decrease in the number of invasive antenatal diagnostics is reported annually due to the entry of non-invasive tests.

Cytogenetic diagnosis - a total of 145 antenatal diagnostics were performed as indicated for an increased risk of chromosome abnormalities, with 8 pathological pregnancies associated with numerical and structural abnormalities and chromosomal rearrangements.

DNA antenatal diagnostics for numerical chromosome abnormalities – a total of 394 antenatal diagnostics were performed, with 54 pathological pregnancies identified. The diagnosed diseases are Down syndrome, Edwards syndrome, Patau syndrome, as well as numerous abnormalities of the sex chromosomes.

DNA antenatal diagnostics in Monogenic Diseases and Microdeletion Syndromes – a total of 122 antenatal diagnostics were performed according to indications of risk pregnancy due to family history of hereditary disease, the most common indications being: cystic fibrosis, beta thalassaemia, spinal muscle atrophy, Duchenne/Becker muscular dystrophy, neuromuscular disease, phenylketonuria, microdeletion syndromes associated with mental retardation or polymalformative syndrome, etc. 23 pathological pregnancies were identified: including cystic fibrosis, beta thalassaemia, spinal muscle atrophy, Duchenne/Becker muscle dystrophy, microdeletion syndromes and neuromuscular disease.

Reference of uninsured pregnant women for the reported activities and payments made in 2019 by the National Health Insurance Fund with transfer funds provided by the Ministry of Health under Ordinance No. 26/14.06.2007 on the provision of obstetric assistance to health uninsured persons outside the scope of mandatory health insurance for children and pregnant women.

No. by order	Municipality	HEALTH INDICATORS FROM THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO THE NATIONAL ROMA INTEGRATION STRATEGY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2012 - 2020			
		Number of screened uninsured women during pregnancy	Paid financial resources in BGN	Number of births of uninsured women	Number of medical diagnostic tests in accordance with Article 3 of Ordinance No. 26 of 14.06.2007
1	Bansko Municipality			5	1
2	Belitsa Municipality			5	
3	Blagoevgrad Municipality	19	408.5	19	6
4	Gotse Delchev Municipality	1	21.5	21	4
5	Garmen Municipality			29	
6	Kresna Municipality			4	
7	Petrich Municipality	3	43	43	
8	Razlog Municipality			17	
9	Sandanski Municipality	2	43	19	
10	Satovcha Municipality			6	
11	Simitli Municipality			9	
12	Strumyani Municipality			6	
13	Hadzhidimovo Municipality			1	
14	Yakoruda Municipality			3	
15	Aytos Municipality			72	13
16	Burgas Municipality	1	21.5	172	14
17	Kameno Municipality			33	
18	Karnobat Municipality	39	838.5	42	149
19	Malko Tarnovo Municipality			5	6
20	Nesebar Municipality			26	7

21	Pomorie Municipality			33	
22	Primorsko Municipality			8	
23	Ruen Municipality			29	
24	Sozopol Municipality			26	
25	Sredets Municipality	35	752.5	50	18
26	Sungurlare Municipality			13	13
27	Tsarevo Municipality			13	
28	Varna District				
29	Avren Municipality			18	7
30	Aksakovo Municipality			24	
31	Beloslav Municipality			11	
32	Byala Municipality			12	7
33	Varna Municipality	4	86	133	436
34	Vetrino Municipality			8	
35	Valchi Dol Municipality			29	
36	Devnya Municipality			11	
37	Dolni Chiflik Municipality	136	2,924	63	211
38	Dalgopol Municipality			43	5
39	Provadia Municipality	54	1,161	44	14
40	Suvorovo Municipality			11	7
41	Veliko Turnovo District				
42	Veliko Tarnovo Municipality	4	86	27	33
43	Gorna Oryahovitsa Municipality	103	2,150	24	90
44	Elena Municipality	1	21.5	18	5
45	Zlataritsa Municipality			13	19
46	Lyaskovets Municipality			8	10
47	Pavlikeni Municipality	17	365.5	31	30
48	Polski Trambesh Municipality	346	7,439	7	188
49	Svishtov Municipality			2	
50	Strazhitsa Municipality			17	32
51	Suhindol Municipality			6	6
52	Vidin District				
53	Belogradchik Municipality	135	2902.5	6	4
54	Boynitsa Municipality			1	
55	Bregovo Municipality			3	
56	Vidin Municipality	2	43	34	4
57	Gramada Municipality			4	

58	Dimovo Municipality			8	
59	Kula Municipality			6	
60	Makresh Municipality			1	
61	Novo Selo Municipality			1	
62	Ruzhintsi Municipality			1	16
63	Chuprene Municipality			5	
64	Vratsa District				
65	Borovan Municipality			17	2
66	Byala Slatina Municipality	193	4149.5	42	22
67	Vratsa Municipality	11	236.5	42	49
68	Kozloduy Municipality			36	4
69	Krivodol Municipality			19	4
70	Mezdra Municipality			17	3
71	Mizia Municipality			1	
72	Oryahovo Municipality			9	16
73	Roman Municipality			10	
74	Hayredin Municipality			5	
75	Gabrovo District				
76	Gabrovo Municipality			14	3
77	Dryanovo Municipality			3	
78	Sevlievo Municipality			28	
79	Tryavna Municipality			3	
80	Dobrich District				
81	Balchik Municipality	1	21.5	22	8
82	General Toshevo Municipality			23	
83	Dobrich Municipality	273	5869.5	49	148
84	Dobrich Rural Municipality			55	13
85	Kavarna Municipality	31	666.5	31	84
86	Krushari Municipality			14	24
87	Tervel Municipality	1	21.5	32	4
88	Shabla Municipality			1	26
89	Kardzhali District				
90	Ardino Municipality			2	
91	Dzhebel Municipality			7	
92	Kirkovo Municipality			1	
93	Krumovgrad Municipality	1	21.5	20	
94	Kardzhali Municipality	1	21.5	28	
95	Momchilgrad Municipality			8	
96	Chernoochene Municipality			2	
97	Kyustendil District	20	365.5		

98	Bobov Dol Municipality			2	
99	Boboshevo Municipality			0	
100	Dupnitsa Municipality			33	
101	Kocherinovo Municipality			0	
102	Kyustendil Municipality			42	4
103	Nevestino Municipality			7	
104	Rila Municipality			1	
105	Sapareva Banya Municipality			1	
106	Treklyano Municipality			0	
107	Lovech District				
108	Apriltsi Municipality			3	
109	Letnitsa Municipality				
110	Lovech Municipality			46	7
111	Lukovit Municipality			58	7
112	Teteven Municipality			15	
113	Troyan Municipality			22	
114	Ugarchin Municipality			16	
115	Yablanitsa Municipality			18	
116	Montana District				
117	Berkovitsa Municipality			29	
118	Boychinovtsi Municipality			24	8
119	Brusartsi Municipality			14	28
120	Valchedrum Municipality			21	64
121	Varshets Municipality			19	
122	Georgi Damyanovo Municipality			8	
123	Lom Municipality	106	2,279	31	240
124	Medkovets Municipality			16	32
125	Montana Municipality	43	924.5	61	4
126	Chiprovtsi Municipality			9	
127	Yakimovo Municipality			20	32
128	Pazardzhik District	164	3,526		
129	Batak Municipality			9	4
130	Belovo Municipality			6	

131	Bratsigovo Municipality			15	29
132	Velingrad Municipality			42	1
133	Lesichovo Municipality			12	
134	Pazardzhik Municipality			151	43
135	Panagyurishte Municipality	1	21.5	16	3
136	Peshtera Municipality	98	2,107	23	203
137	Rakitovo Municipality			31	
138	Septemvri Municipality			41	11
139	Strelcha Municipality			13	
140	Sarnitsa Municipality			2	
141	Pernik District				
142	Breznik Municipality			7	
143	Zemen Municipality			1	
144	Kovachevtsi Municipality			5	
145	Pernik Municipality			54	
146	Radomir Municipality			8	
147	Tran Municipality			5	
148	Pleven District				
149	Belene Municipality			4	
150	Gulyantsi Municipality			39	
151	Dolna Mitropolia Municipality			44	18
152	Dolni Dabnik Municipality			35	
153	Iskar Municipality			19	15
154	Knezha Municipality	94	2,021	34	472
155	Levski Municipality			40	
156	Nikopol Municipality			13	
157	Pleven Municipality	82	1,763	126	616
158	Pordim Municipality			18	
159	Cherven Bryag Municipality			48	22
160	Plovdiv District				
161	Asenovgrad Municipality			63	
162	Brezovo Municipality			12	
163	Kaloyanovo Municipality			18	
164	Karlovo Municipality			82	
165	Krichim Municipality			16	
166	Kuklen Municipality			2	

167	Laki Municipality			10	
168	Maritsa Municipality			43	5
169	Perushtitsa Municipality			8	
170	Plovdiv Municipality	1	21.5	201	8
171	Parvomay Municipality			37	4
172	Rakovski Municipality			47	4
173	Rodopi Municipality			25	
174	Sadovo Municipality			12	
175	Sopot Municipality			2	
176	Stamboliyski Municipality	2	43	15	
177	Saedinenie Municipality			14	
178	Hisarya Municipality			4	
179	Razgrad District				
180	Zavet Municipality			8	
181	Isperih Municipality			16	
182	Kubrat Municipality			20	
183	Loznitsa Municipality			7	
184	Razgrad Municipality			37	
185	Samuil Municipality			7	
186	Tsar Kaloyan Municipality			5	
187	Ruse District				
188	Borovo Municipality			11	
189	Byala Municipality			12	
190	Vetovo Municipality			16	
191	Dve Mogili Municipality			19	35
192	Ivanovo Municipality			22	
193	Russe Municipality	3	64.5	68	
194	Slivo Pole Municipality			38	
195	Tsenovo Municipality			19	1
196	Silistra District				
197	Alfatar Municipality			8	
198	Glavinitsa Municipality			14	
199	Dulovo Municipality			31	
200	Kainardzha Municipality			14	
201	Silistra Municipality			27	1
202	Sitovo Municipality			10	
203	Tutrakan Municipality			9	
204	Sliven District				
205	Kotel Municipality			46	66

206	Nova Zagora Municipality	42	903	127	67
207	Sliven Municipality	380	8,170	399	1,615
208	Tvarditsa Municipality			125	18
209	Smolyan District				
210	Banite Municipality			1	
211	Borino Municipality			0	
212	Devin Municipality			1	
213	Dospat Municipality			0	
214	Zlatograd Municipality			0	
215	Madan Municipality			2	
216	Nedelino Municipality			1	
217	Rudozem Municipality			0	
218	Smolyan Municipality	4	86	9	
219	Chepelare Municipality			0	
220	Sofia District				
221	Anton Municipality			4	
222	Bozhurishte Municipality			1	
223	Botevgrad Municipality			44	
224	Godech Municipality			4	
225	Gorna Malina Municipality			8	
226	Dolna Banya Municipality			5	
227	Dragoman Municipality			1	
228	Elin Pelin Municipality			10	
229	Etropole Municipality			17	
230	Zlatitsa Municipality			0	
231	Ihtiman Municipality			27	
232	Koprivshitsa Municipality				
233	Kostenets Municipality			1	
234	Kostinbrod Municipality				
235	Mirkovo Municipality				
236	Pirdop Municipality			0	
237	Pravets Municipality			14	
238	Samokov Municipality			66	
239	Svoege Municipality				3
240	Slivnitsa Municipality	8	172		
241	Chavdar Municipality				
242	Chelopech Municipality				
243	Sofia District				

244	Sofia Municipality	9	193.5	403	2,738
245	Stara Zagora District				
246	Bratya Daskalovi Municipality			15	12
247	Gurkovo Municipality			32	
248	Galabovo Municipality	1	21.5	27	7
249	Kazanlak Municipality	79	1698.5	67	12
250	Muglzh Municipality			34	1
251	Nikolaevo Municipality			21	
252	Opan Municipality			2	
253	Pavel Banya Municipality			31	7
254	Radnevo Municipality			20	
255	Stara Zagora Municipality			186	7
256	Chirpan Municipality	92	1,978	47	52
257	Targovishte District				
258	Antonovo Municipality			9	
259	Omurtag Municipality			15	
260	Opaka Municipality			4	7
261	Popovo Municipality			29	
262	Targovishte Municipality	4	86	58	27
263	Haskovo District				
264	Dimitrovgrad Municipality			61	
265	Ivaylovgrad Municipality			3	
266	Lyubimets Municipality			27	
267	Madzharovo Municipality			4	
268	Mineralni Bani Municipality			14	
269	Svilengrad Municipality			31	
270	Simeonovgrad Municipality			32	
271	Stambolovo Municipality			2	
272	Topolovgrad Municipality			17	
273	Harmanli Municipality			35	
274	Haskovo Municipality	5	107.5	79	2
275	Shumen District				
276	Veliki Preslav	26	559	9	

	Municipality				
277	Venets Municipality			5	
278	Varbitsa Municipality			13	
279	Kaolinovo Municipality			12	
280	Kaspichan Municipality			17	
281	Nikola Kozlevo Municipality			9	
282	Novi Pazar Municipality	37	795.5	24	
283	Smyadovo Municipality			7	
284	Hitrino Municipality			3	
285	Shumen Municipality	20	430	53	
286	Yambol District				
287	Bolyarovo Municipality			6	16
288	Elhovo Municipality			8	78
289	Straldzha Municipality			25	189
290	Tundzha Municipality			25	183
291	Yambol Municipality	144	3,096	43	465
	TOTAL	2,879	61,748	6,763	9,258

Task 1.5. “Prevention and control of HIV, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections among vulnerable Roma communities”

Measure 1.5.1. “Capacity building and work for HIV prevention and control through counselling and guidance services for anonymous and free research on HIV and sexually transmitted infections; training; field work; health and social centres in the Roma community; mobile medical offices”.

Activities carried out in 2019 under the National Programme on Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) were aimed at reducing the vulnerability to HIV of people from the Roma community. Activities were conducted year-round in the 13 offices for free and anonymous HIV counselling and testing to RHI Blagoevgrad, Burgas, Varna, Veliko Tarnovo, Vidin, Vratsa, Dobrich, Pleven, Plovdiv, Ruse, Sofia RHI, Stara Zagora and Haskovo.

During this period, the following services were provided: field work on a pre-established schedule; motivating and accompanying people from the community for voluntary counselling and research and treatment of HIV/STDs in the mobile medical offices, offices for free and anonymous HIV counselling and testing or RHI laboratory; accompanying people from the community, if necessary, to the Centres for Services and other social and medical care offices/services; participating in regional and national ANTIAIDS campaigns in the community and in society; carrying out and providing the service “Leading a Case”; counselling and supporting seropositive persons and their partners/families; disseminating health and educational information materials and free condoms among the risk groups of injecting drug users and men who have sex with men (MSM).

In the offices for free and anonymous HIV counselling and testing, 2,647 Roma people received HIV testing and were counselled for safe sexual behaviour.

Within the framework of the National Programme on Prevention and Control of HIV and STDs (2017-2020), activities on HIV and STDs prevention in 2019 among the risk groups were carried out in the following risk groups:

- intravenous drug users (IDUs) - 1550 people were reached; 270 people were tested for HIV; 175 people were tested for hepatitis C and 94 people were tested for syphilis; 27,269 packages for safe injection practice were disseminated;
- MSM and sex workers: 1,712 MSM and 553 sex workers were reached, of whom 204 sex workers and 776 MSM were tested for HIV; 98 sex workers and 278 MSM were tested for syphilis and 125 sex workers and 692 MSM were tested for hepatitis C. 16,750 condoms were disseminated for risk-free sexual contacts, as well as 2,450 health education materials.

By the adopted Ordinance No. 47 on the conditions and procedure for testing, reporting and accounting for infection with the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome virus the Ministry of Health regulates the conditions and procedure for testing, reporting and accounting infection with the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome virus (HIV).

The main objectives of HIV infection testing are to reduce the risk of spread of HIV, to make HIV-infected persons aware of their status and to obtain timely treatment, care and support, to ensure timely consultation and testing of partners of HIV infected persons.

In 2019, a total of 340,804 persons received HIV testing.

A national ANTIAIDS campaign is held annually with the support of the Ministry of Health.

The campaign is implemented within the framework of the National Programme on Prevention and Control of HIV and STDs of the Ministry of Health, in partnership with regional health inspectorates, municipalities, NGOs, social institutions, media, etc. These include public awareness activities on the ways of transmission and prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections and motivate people to take responsibility for their own health and their partner's health and are held four times a year on the occasion of St. Valentine's Day - National ANTIAIDS Campaign, the Third Sunday of May - Day for Empathy with People Affected by HIV/AIDS, December, 1st - World AIDS Day, Summer ANTIAIDS Campaign that lasts one month. During their conduct, 8,948 persons were covered by tests.

Measure 1.5.2. "Activities to improve the control of tuberculosis among the Roma community: risk screening, escorting and testing for tuberculosis; support in the treatment of tuberculosis patients".

For 2019, a total of 25 NGOs implemented activities among the Roma community under the Program "**Improving the Sustainability of the National Tuberculosis Program**", working among compact Roma communities in the following areas: Blagoevgrad, Burgas, Varna, Dobrich, Vidin, Vratsa, Gabrovo, Kyustendil, Montana, Pazardzhik, Pernik, Pleven, Plovdiv, Ruse, Sliven, Sofia City, Sofia District, Stara Zagora, Haskovo, Shumen and Yambol.

The following results were achieved by key indicators through the fieldwork in the Roma community:

- **A total of 5,914 persons were reached with low-threshold services, 4,418 were screened for risk of tuberculosis, of which 1,803 persons were identified as suspected of having tuberculosis;**

- A total of **1,918 persons received a medical examination** (sputum microscopy, Mantu TCT sample and/or radiographic examination) with a view to early detection of tuberculosis cases, of which **24 persons had active tuberculosis and 68 persons had latent tuberculosis infection**;
- **270** referrals and escorts to the medical institutions were made to high-risk persons;
- All persons with active tuberculosis were offered free treatment with Tier 1 anti-tuberculosis medicines and the other treatment-related costs, including diagnostic procedures, medicines and hospital stays, were covered by the budget of the Ministry of Health.
- A total of **7,763** clients were reached with services, including educational activities and individual counselling.
More than **4,657** health education materials were disseminated.

Objective 3 Increase the number of qualified Roma people working in the health system. Developing mediation and various forms of work for and in the community.

Task 3.1. Training of health mediators and their realization

Measure 3.1.2. “Training of health mediators to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills”.

In 2019, health mediators were already 245 in all 28 districts of the country. Main achievements and results during the reporting period: More than 3,500 health information meetings and trainings were held with more than 12,000 participants, assistance was provided for prophylactic examinations of children: 6,109, of adults: 5,355, for immunizations under the Immunization Calendar of the Republic of Bulgaria of children: 8,475, of adults: 1,059 – outside the emergency immunization campaigns. The hygiene campaign involves 64 municipalities and 95 health mediators. These results show that the campaigns are accepted positively by everyone because health mediators are people from the community and work daily on the field with people with the highest level of health vulnerability.

During the reporting period, the Ministry of Health introduced into the national legislation a regulation on the status of the health mediator, through an amendment to the Health Act, with the main goal taking regulatory measures for persons with the highest degree of health vulnerability. Currently, an Ordinance for mediators is being drafted, which regulates the activity of the health mediator, thus creating legal opportunities for effective prevention and increasing access to prevention of persons from groups at risk – illiterate, homeless, people from minority groups who are in social exclusion.

The adoption of the Ordinance ensures higher quality and efficiency in field work with persons with the highest degree of health vulnerability and with institutions (hospitals, GPs, etc.).

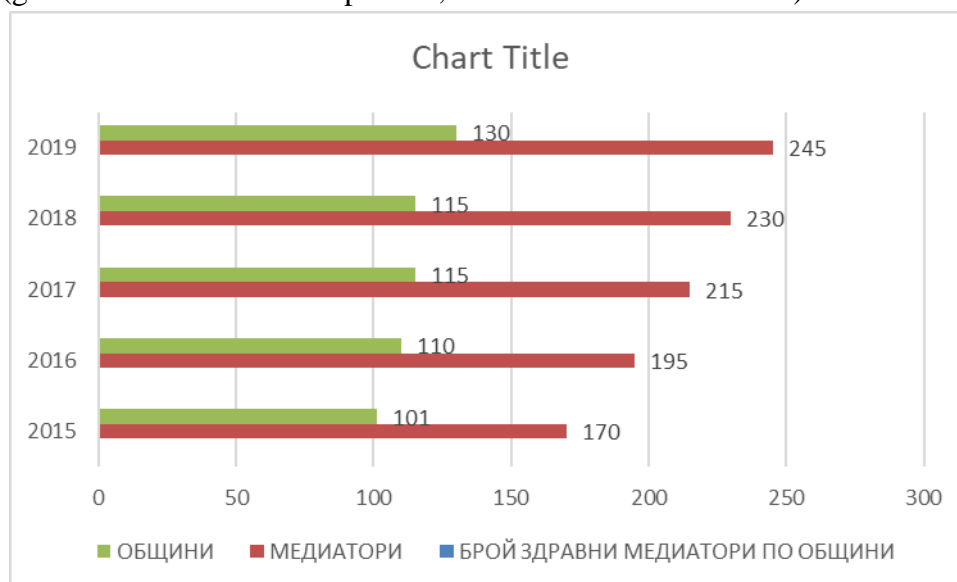
During the reporting period, the following initiatives were organised:

- Meeting-discussion on: “Exchange of experience and good practices for regulating the activities of health mediators” with representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Finance, GPs, RHI, municipalities and NGOs; Participation in the delegation on behalf of the Ministry of Health in an international seminar on “Smoking Reduction”, in the city of Sofia, organized by the WHO Regional Office in Bulgaria;

- Meeting-discussion on: “Initiative for Health and Vaccine Prophylaxis” in the National Assembly.

In 2019, according to an approved plan account, funds amounting to BGN 6,050 were allocated by the Minister of Health to provide a dormitory for 14 days for 35 new health mediators.

Distribution of health mediators in the target municipalities in 2015-2019
(green – number of municipalities; red – number of mediators)



Additional activities carried out during the reporting period in the field of the “Health Care” priority:

Immediately after the notification of the first cases for 2019, the following measures were ordered by letter of the Minister of Health to the RHI: priority coverage by GPs of non-immunized persons and persons with incomplete immunization status aged 13 months to 18 years with a single dose of the combined vaccine MMR; early detection of clinical symptoms of measles and organization of necessary actions for reporting, registration, isolation, diagnosis and treatment; consultation with an infectious disease specialist of each suspected measles patient and at his/her discretion referral for hospitalisation and treatment; hospitalisation according to epidemiological and social indications of children, especially in the early age group, living in poor living conditions, where isolation and treatment cannot take place at home and where the risk of complications and death is high; prevention of nosocomial spread of measles; carrying out immunization of the medical staff of the medical establishments for hospital care without established immunity to the measles virus and servicing measles patients, with a combined MMR vaccine; performing laboratory diagnostics at the National Reference Laboratory of the National Centre for Infectious and Parasitic Diseases.

By order of the Minister of Health, National Coordination Council for Measles Control was established as an advisory body to the Minister to assist him/her in carrying out measles control and containment activities, such as: analysing the epidemic situation and proposing measures to limit the spread of the disease, making proposals on the organization of work, assisting in the implementation of the measures, discussing and evaluating their step-by-step implementation.

With the change of the measles epidemic situation, further letters of injunction have been prepared to RHI for: use of mobile offices to cover children with MMR vaccine; carrying out reliability checks on performed immunizations; isolating patients with fever until diagnosis is established to reduce the risk of nosocomial infections; laboratory diagnosis, including

guidelines in persons suspected of measles and immunisation carried out up to two months before the onset of the disease; seroepidemiological study to determine the reliability of available data on measles, mumps and rubella immunisations carried out on people sick with measles and healthy children; improving surveillance of measles.

Pursuant to Order No ПД-01-257/05.09.2019 of the Minister of Health for the period 05.09 – 05.10.2019, an extraordinary immunization campaign against measles was conducted on the territory of the districts of Burgas, Montana, Pazardzhik, Plovdiv and Sliven, targeting children from vulnerable groups and/or with difficult access to health services aged 13 months to 8 years. Emergency measles immunizations were conducted by general practitioners and by immunization teams organized by RHI, with the involvement of medical specialists from the health offices in childcare facilities and schools and health mediators. Assistance was also provided by the Regional Health Insurance Funds and local authorities.

In connection with measures ordered by the Ministry of Health to limit the spread of measles, including active search and immunization by the GP of children with deficiency in immunization status with one dose of measles vaccine, as well as the emergency immunization campaign conducted in 2019, a total of 23,259 children were covered. In the search for Roma children, health mediators actively assisted GPs and RHI.

Information campaigns were organized by RHI on the ground to familiarize the public with the epidemic situation in the country, the importance of immunization and the risk of spread of the disease in non-immunized and irregularly immunized persons, the course of infection, etc. Health information meetings with parents were held. The Ministry of Health published on its website regular information about the epidemic situation.

The implementation of the “Health and Education for All” Programme ended in 2019. It was funded under the Bulgarian-Swiss Cooperation Program, which has a **special focus on the health of Roma women and other vulnerable groups**. Projects under the ZOV Program were implemented in the period 2013-2019 in six major municipal centres - Burgas, Montana, Plovdiv, Ruse, Sliven and Shumen. They are implemented in partnership with schools, kindergartens, health centres, NGOs, etc. and cover integration measures.

From 2013 to 2019, the following results were achieved under the health component:

- 6 renovated and equipped health centres;
- 20 trained doctors under the programme;
- 12 trained health mediators;
- 5,218 specialized medical examinations, including gynaecological examinations;
- 15,012 health counselling sessions;
- 19,665 beneficiaries of campaigns and events, women and youth health support groups;
- 2,627 medical examinations (including HIV, syphilis, PAP smears), blood tests for echinococcosis;
- 18,253 general medical examinations (GPs and paediatricians), screenings;
- 604 intrauterine devices inserted.