POLICY 2
ROMANIA - STRATEGY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA FOR THE INCLUSION OF THE ROMANIAN CITIZENS BELONGING TO ROMA MINORITY FOR THE PERIOD 2012-2020

Municipality Bucharest
Titre de la politique Strategy of the Government of Romania for the inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority for the period 2012-2020
Policy type strategy
Contact organisation

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Social inclusion is defined as a process that ensures that people at risk of poverty and exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to fully participate in the economic, social and cultural life and that they enjoy a standard of living and welfare considered to be normal in the society in which they live.

Social inclusion ensures increased participation of these people in taking the decisions that affect their lives, as well as their access to fundamental rights (Joint report by the Commission and the Council on Social Inclusion, 2003).

The social inclusion policy of the Government of Romania is based on a proactive approach aimed at increasing the overall standard of living of the population and stimulating earnings from employment by facilitating employment and promoting inclusive policies with addressability to all vulnerable groups:

- Roma minority, disabled people, women, street children, 18 years old young people leaving state protection institutions, elderly people.

Application of social inclusion policy of the Roma minority requires a holistic approach, a process planned and a concerted action, followed by the adoption of specific strategies, programs and projects.

The social policies regarding the Roma minority, focused on the concept of social inclusion, adopted by the Government are the National Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Promotion Plan (NAPSIPP), the Joint Social Inclusion Memorandum (JIM), the National Development Plan of Romania 2007 – 2013 (NDPR), the Governmental Program for 2009 – 2012 and the National Reform Program for 2011 – 2013.

In the case of Roma citizens, the approach of public policies has been focused on measures in the social field: education, employment, health, housing and small infrastructure, fields accompanied by measures for fighting against discrimination, fighting against poverty and promoting equality of chances. The main programming documents in the field are: the Strategy of the Government of Romania for improving the condition of the Roma, adopted in 2001 (Government Decision no 430/2001, as subsequently amended and completed), and the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015, which contains a political commitment of the Government of Romania at international level.

The Government of Romania considers Roma social inclusion an issue that should be reflected in all the fields of activity on the agenda of each central and local institution. The governmental institutions through their sectoral policies and the civil society play a determined role in the process of social development of Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority and can influence, through the planning of their intervention, the social change in general and can especially contribute to improving the situation of the Roma.

According to the European Commission’s Communication of 2011, "An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020", the inclusion of the citizens belonging to Roma minority is one of the most
imperative social problems in Europe. Although the main responsibility for the social and economic inclusion of Roma minority citizens belongs to public authorities, Roma inclusion is a dual process, which involves a change in the mentality of the majority, and also in the mentality of the members of Roma community, a challenge that requires firm actions, developed in an active dialogue with the Roma minority, both at national and EU level.

An important component of the new Strategy is represented by the permanent partnership with the civil society in the implementation of specific programs, aimed at ensuring the substantial improvement of the situation of the Roma, in order to achieve sustainable results.

This strategy ensures the continuity of the measures taken by the Strategy of the Government of Romania for improving the condition of the Roma for the period 2001 – 2010 and aims at fully benefiting from the results thus obtained. The new strategy is based on the guidelines regarding Roma inclusion for the period 2011-2020 and the European legislation into force (the European Commission’s Communication “An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020” and the European Council’s conclusions of 19 May 2011 on the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020”).

The National Agency for Roma initiated a process of consultation and development of the Strategy with the representatives of ministries and the specialized institutions that will implement the measures provided by the sectoral action plans, with the associative structures of the local authorities and the civil society representatives, starting from November 2010. After consultation, in accordance with the provisions of Law no 52/2003 on the public administration decisional transparency, the document has undergone a process of public consultation during the period 1 August – 31 August 2011.

Description

The Strategy of the Government of Romani for the inclusion of the Romanian citizens belonging to Roma minority includes the following chapters:

ABBREVIATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Duration

II. RELEVANT GENERAL INFORMATION

EDUCATION

EMPLOYMENT

HEALTH

HOUSING AND SMALL INFRASTRUCTURE

CULTURE
PREVENTING AND FIGHTING AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

III. PRIORITIES, POLICIES, EXISTING LEGAL FRAMEWORK

IV. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

V. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES of the Government Strategy

Target groups

VI. PRINCIPLES

VII. DIRECTIONS FOR ACTION

A. EDUCATION

B. EMPLOYMENT

C. HEALTH

D. HOUSING AND SMALL INFRASTRUCTURE

E. CULTURE

F. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

F.1 Child Protection

F. 2. Justice and public order

F. 3. Community administration and development

VIII. RESULTS AND INDICATORS OF PROPOSED ACTIONS

IX. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

X. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

XI. THE MECHANISM FOR MONITORING AND ASSESSING THE GOVERNMENT STRATEGY

XII. FURTHER STAGES AND RESPONSIBLE INSTITUTIONS

Responsible structures
a) At central level level

b) At regional/county/local level

Civil society involvement

Organisational measures

Annex 1 to the Strategy – Sectoral measure plans


Strategy

Additional documents available Oui

Partners Civil society, including Roma community, European institutions, governmental, local or regional

Does the policy respond to a EU request and/or refer to EU Directive ? Non

Method used

See the Plans of sectoral measures (Annex 1 of the Strategy).

The short term Action Plans for implementing the Government Strategy for the inclusion of Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity are based on the sectoral plans and indicate the funding sources required for achieving each objective.

The costs generated by the implementation of this draft regulatory act for the period 2012-2015 amount to: 234 710 thousand lei, of which:

2012: 158 063 thousand lei;

2013: 55 992 thousand lei;

2014: 11 313 thousand lei;

2015: 9 342 thousand lei.

The costs shall be incurred from state budget allocations, refundable and non-refundable external funds, the budgets of administrative-territorial units, the budget for unemployment insurance and from other sources, under the law, included in the budgets of the chief authorizing officers in charge of Strategy implementation.

The costs were estimated for the next 4 years according to the provisions of G.O. No 1361/2006 on the content of the instrument for presenting and motivating draft regulatory acts subject to Government’s approval.

The actions, including a set of measures that could not be quantified to date, shall be incurred from the budgets estimated for the period 2012-2015 corresponding to the chief authorizing officers in charge of Strategy
Following the first interim assessment of Strategy implementation, expected to be done at the end of 2013, there will also be an analysis of the budgetary impact, in order to update the implementation costs.

Participation of and consultation mechanisms with Roma Responsible structures

a) At central level
1) the coordination of the implementation and the monitoring of the enactment of the Strategy – to be carried out by the Central Compartment for Monitoring and Assessment
2) the implementation of the Strategy, depending on the relevant area of competence for each action plan, is to be carried out by:
   - Ministry of Justice
   - Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Protection
   - Ministry of Health
   - Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sports
   - Ministry of Administration and Interior (including the County Offices for Roma)
   - Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism
   - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
   - Ministry of Environment and Forests
   - Ministry of Culture and National Heritage
   - General Secretariat of the Government
   - National Council for Combating Discrimination
   - Department for Inter-ethnic Relations
   - Ministry of Foreign Affairs

b) At regional/county/local level
- Decentralised public services within responsible institutions;
- County Offices for Roma within prefectures;
- Local public authorities and their associate structures;
- Civil society involvement

In order to ensure the successful implementation of the Government Strategy leading to a high level of social inclusion of Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity, the active involvement of Roma ethnics in these actions is essential. To this end, starting from 2012, the NAR shall take action for establishing a mechanism for consultation and permanent involvement of the civil society in implementing and monitoring the Strategy for the inclusion of Romanian citizens of Roma ethnicity. Organisational measures

a) at central level, the competent ministries and other responsible institutions and authorities shall be represented in the Inter-ministerial Working Group, established under Prime Minister’s Decision No 36/24.03.2011, published in OG No. 210/25.03.2011.
   - The Working Group is coordinated by the Vice Prime Minister and headed by the NAR’s president in collaboration with two state secretaries from the MLSP and MAI.
   - The working group shall operate according to its rules of organisation and functioning, shall hold monthly meetings; each semester, the group’s president shall present, during the Government meeting, a note on the activity and results of the implementation of the Government Strategy.
   - At ministerial level, the Ministerial Commissions for Roma (MCR) shall be established or, where appropriate, reactivated, within 30 days from the adoption of the Government Strategy, by orders of the competent ministers.
   - The MCR shall include as well representatives from the NAR, as a specialised institution, and, where appropriate, representatives from non-governmental Roma organisations with relevant expertise.

   - b) At regional, county and local level
   - The Regional Offices (RO) of the National Agency for Roma are established under Government Decision No 1703/2004 on the organisation and functioning of the National Agency for Roma and Government Decision No 430/2001 approving the Government of Romania’s Strategy for improving the situation of Roma ethnics, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
   - The Regional Offices of the National Agency for Roma are structures organised at the development region level.
   - In order to implement and monitor the Government Strategy, Regional Offices have the following tasks:
     • Proposing or, where appropriate, extending strategic partnerships with competent public and private organisations at regional level.
     • Supporting and monitoring social actors’
efforts at regional level to implement the initiatives and reference programs for Roma minority. • Informing, collaborating and supporting the activity of County Offices for Roma, within Prefectures, appointed to the eight development regions. The County Offices for Roma are functional structures organised at county level within prefectures. Their composition includes 3-4 experts employed in accordance with the Labour Code and Law No 188/1999 on the status of civil servants, among which one has to be a Roma ethnic. The County Offices for Roma operate in subordination to the Prefect and in technical coordination with the National Agency for Roma. The nominal composition of the County Offices for Roma is established under a Prefect’s order. The activity of COR commissions is to be carried out in close connection with the activity of the County Commission for social inclusion and the County Council in order to enhance this institution’s involvement in the implementation of the Strategy and to ensure the financial support necessary to co-fund projects intended for Roma inclusion. The main activities of CORs include, but are not limited to: • Providing the technical secretariat of the Joint Working Group (JWG) set up at county level, composed of representatives from decentralised structures of ministries, members of Roma non-governmental organisations and delegates from communities of ethnic Roma citizens, including county/local councillors. The JWG is established by order of the Prefect. • Elaborating the county’s measure plan for Roma inclusion by way of harmonising the main needs of the communities with Roma inhabitants (identified through the Community facilitation process or by the local public authorities) with the measures provided for in the Government Strategy. The Joint Working Group shall adopt the county’s measure plan for Roma inclusion elaborated by the CORs, based on the Government Strategy. Each institution represented in the JWG shall be responsible for implementing the measures corresponding to its area of activity, included in the county’s measure plan. • Introducing the measures of the National Strategy for the inclusion of the Roma minority in each county’s development plan, or, where appropriate, in the integrated plans for urban development, regional development plans. • Monitoring the implementation of measures in the areas of activity of the deconcentrated services of competent ministries and those of their social partners in order to meet the objectives and tasks of the Government Strategy. • Supporting the implementation of the measures set in county plans by providing consultancy to the representatives of deconcentrated services and facilitating their access within Roma minority communities. • Drawing up semi-annual progress reports regarding the implementation of the county’s measure plan for the inclusion of the Roma minority and submitting them to both the Central Department for Monitoring and Assessment and the NAR. Local experts for Roma shall activate at city hall level. They are subordinated, on a technical level, to the county offices for Roma and, on an administrative level, to the Mayor. Local experts represent the main interface between public authorities and Roma communities. At commune level, the position of expert on Roma issues is exercised by an expert from the Roma minority. The task of the expert for Roma issues is to use the opportunities at local level, for the benefit of the local community, including the Roma minority. The main activities of local experts for Roma include, but are not limited to: Organising, at local level, local initiative groups (LIGs) and local working groups (LWGs). - The local initiative group is made up of representatives of communities of Roma ethnics where they are active. LIG’s role is to determine, based on the Community facilitation process organised by the local expert, the main needs and to establish the priorities according to the directions for action in the Government Strategy. LIG’s composition and the priorities established shall be discussed within local working groups (LWGs). - The local working group (LWG) is made up of: the local expert, representatives of local public institutions, members of the Local Council (including elected Roma counsellors), members of nongovernmental organisations (including Roma organisations) and a delegate of the local Roma community from the LIG. The LWG shall be established under Local Council Decision (LCD). • Elaborating, based on the Government Strategy, the local action plan for Roma inclusion, set on the basis of the process of identification and selection of the main needs of local communities with a significant Roma proportion and submitting it to the LWG for approval. The action plan adopted by the Local Working Group (LWG) shall be
endorsed (totally or partially) by the Local Council through LCD. Each member of the local working group shall be responsible for implementing the measures corresponding to his/her area of activity, as included in the local action plan. • Introducing the local action plan for Roma inclusion in the locality’s development strategy. • Transmitting the local action plan to the County Offices for Roma with a view to their inclusion in the county’s measure plan and in the county’s development strategy. • Monitoring the implementation of measures set in the local action plan and making proposals for their improvement. • Drawing up semi-annual progress reports on the implementation of the local action plan and submitting them to the CORs and NAR.

Assessed by European Commission
Diffusion resources Website


COE Good Practices and Policies
http://goodpracticeroma.ppa.coe.int/

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