



**The Government of Romania
National Agency for Roma**

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015



*One Year of
Romanian Presidency
July 2005-June 2006*

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The Decade of Roma Inclusion – One year of Romanian Presidency July 2005-June 2006

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The National Agency for Roma is the specialised body of the Romanian Government in charge with the elaboration, coordinating, monitoring and evaluation of the public policies for Roma in Romania.

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It is also available in electronic format at the following web address:
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A.Introduction

Often described in terms related to social and economic fields and, sometimes, in terms regarding their cultural or anthropological characteristic, the Roma (or the Gypsies) still remain a mystery for the others, for all peoples of Europe.

They are present in the other people mind as an exotic people and, sometimes, carrying with them different (sometimes negative) stigmata.¹

Starting with the latest enlargement of the European Union, on 1st of May 2004, the Roma minority has become the largest and the poorest trans-national ethnic minority in Europe. One can estimate that the Roma Population number throughout Europe, at present, at 8 up to 12 million people, representing 2% percents of the population of the enlarged European Union. Starting with 1st Of January 2007, when Romania and Bulgaria join EU, the number of Roma people living within EU borders will raise with not less than 2 million persons.

¹A Necessary Change of Strategy - Report on the Implementation of the Romanian Government's Strategy for Improvement of the Roma Situation, EDRC, Cluj Napoca, June 2004 See also www.edrc.ro

The Roma are facing social and economic difficulties almost in all the European countries. On brief, the main (but not the only) problems faced by most of the Roma people are: their weak healthcare state, their low educational stock, their poor housing conditions and the high-rates of unemployment and, as a consequence, the lack of revenues, all these being combined with multiple forms of discrimination they are being suffering from, all leading to social and economical marginalisation and exclusion. On brief, all these cumulated problems create a vicious circle which is very difficult to be broken.

The social and economic development of the Roma minority group represents one of the most delicate and controversial challenges that the Central and Eastern Europe countries (where he overwhelming majority of the Roma people are living in - see the Annex 1 bellow) have to deal with these days. The poverty rate in these countries is some time ten times higher than the one measured in the case of the rest of the population. In the year 2000, World Bank statistics showed that 40% of the Roma living in Hungary were forced to subsist with less than 0.3\$/day while in Romania and Bulgaria this percentage raised to 80%. In some countries, 90% of Roma children have fulfilled only the primary level of education while many of these Roma ethnic origin children are frequently sent to schools for the mentally and physically disabled when they go to school at all. Regarding the health condition it is enough to mention that, in the case of Roma people the life expectancy is 10 - 15 years shorter than the one measured for the rest of the population.

Due to the above mentioned reasons and to the fact that the Roma people found themselves, almost all the time, at the margins of history and of the societies they have been living in, the Roma have received for the last two decades a special care and attention from the part on International Organisations, National Governments, Local Authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations, but the first initiative which joined together at a large scale all these actors is all this actors above mentioned is the Decade of Roma Inclusion. The Decade of Roma inclusion is a trans-national effort, involving national and international public and private actors, designed to raise the public awareness upon the Roma condition and to coordinate the actions of the governments and international organisations in partnership with the Roma civil society. It is also a unique attempt to break the routine of a perpetual vicious circle of poverty by offering some real possibilities for Roma people to involve themselves in the economic and social aspects of the Central and Eastern European countries' public life.

B. What Does the Decade of Roma Inclusion represent?



DECADE OF
ROMA
INCLUSION
2005 - 2015

The Decade of Roma Inclusion is a political commitment by national governments in Central and South-Eastern Europe which is designed within a ten year timeframe 2005-2015 and it is meant to combat Roma poverty, exclusion and discrimination within a regional framework.

As above mentioned, the Decade is an international initiative that joins together governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as Roma civil society to accelerate the progress toward improving the welfare of Roma and to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way by adopting, implementing and monitoring measures meant to promote the social inclusion and the equal opportunities for Roma people and also to suppress the segregationists and discriminatory tendencies and behaviours the Roma people are frequently facing.

Decade is neither a supranational structure (a sort of EU for Roma) bonding its member state to delegate powers to it nor a supranational organism and not even an international treaty in the classical judicial acceptance of the term which would engage its member states to respect, at least theoretically, its

strict provisions. It is rather an act of political will at the international level to recognize the difficulties of the Roma minority within the members' states boundaries and to act coherently to improve the Roma people social and economic status. Moreover, the Decade is neither another new institution nor bureaucracy; it is not a new *pot of money* for Roma either however it is a sort of joint international programme, coordinated and financed by the national governments and international organisations that adhered to it and it is leaving the door open for the participation of other Member States.

Over the past 15 years, there have been developed uncountable independent efforts - public and private policies, programmes and projects - aiming to alleviate and improve the condition of the Roma in post-communist countries. These initiatives have sought to re-convert and/or improve the Roma persons' skills and qualifications, building and/or restoring the infrastructure and housing conditions in the Roma communities or to tackle the gender and discrimination issues. Giant entities such as: EU, World Bank, UNDP, International NGOs and charities, all sponsored such projects. There was, however, little coordination among all these initiatives, with the exception maybe of the Informal Contact Group of International Organizations on Roma, Sinti and Travellers, where representatives of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, and the OSCE met on a more or less regular basis starting from 1999.

Taking into account the above mentioned considerations, ***the Decade for Roma Inclusion represents a precedent*** from several points of view: first of all, the Decade is the first large-scaled international initiative concerning the largest and the poorest ethnic trans-national minority in Europe - the Roma minority; secondly it is a medium and long time designed programme (2005-2015) which, once initiated under the framework of the political will of several national governments of different political orientations, will face itself difficulties in the future due to the national political changes (elections, political domestic changes and trends, new governments etc.) and international developments²; thirdly it implies both public

²Some of the Decade Members States are members of the EU (e.g. Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia) or some other states will join soon (e.g. Romania and Bulgaria), while some states are candidate countries (e.g. Croatia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) while other states are facing recent radical political transformations (e.g.

(national governments and financial institutions) and private actors (International and Roma non-governmental organisations) with rather different interests and, fourthly, the full participation of Roma representatives at all the decision-making and concrete actions implementation levels is compulsory. Funding the Decade will presume the reallocation of existing resources in national budgets and aligning these plans with funding instruments of multinational, international, and bilateral donors (WB, UNDP, OSI, EU).

C. The background and the beginnings of the Decade of Roma Inclusion

C.1 Year 2003: Conference “Roma in the Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future”

The idea of launching a Roma Decade emerged from the ***“Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future”*** regional conference on Roma issues, held in the summer of 2003 at Budapest and organised by the Open Society Institute, the World Bank and the European Union. The conference brought together Roma leaders, high-level government officials from (at that time) eight Central and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, FYROM, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia) and other international leaders to address the need for Roma inclusion in policymaking processes. The conference also offered to the Roma leaders the opportunity to identify the issues of most concern to their community. The motto of the conference was *“Nothing for us, without us”* which will subsequently become the motto of the Decade. The panel discussions were focused on discrimination, education, employment, housing, and health. A separate Roma Women's conference, held on June 29, highlighted the need to make gender equality part of the discourse on Roma integration.

The initiators of the idea of launching a Decade of Roma Inclusion belonged to two prominent personalities: the

Serbia and the independence of Montenegro).

President (at that time) of **The World Bank**, **Mr. James Wolfersohn** and the **President of the Open Society Institute**, **Mr. George Soros**. *“The Decade represents a comprehensive approach to address the issues that Romani leaders have identified: education, employment, housing, and discrimination,”* said Mr. George Soros (see the Annex 2 for the official dinner remarks of Mr. Soros). Mr. Wolfersohn stressed upon the human dimension of the approach: *“We are all here to deal with the question of the Roma. We are united not because of our backgrounds, but because this is an issue which speaks to us all at a human level. And it is at the level of humanity that we come together, not a level that we are forced to, or a level of conscience, or a level of moral persuasion. Finally, we united because we have come to recognize, as we look around the world, that it is just impossible to let this issue persist in the way that it has.”*

Within the same Budapest Conference it was decided upon the need for a political will from the part of the national governments of the countries in the region in dealing with Roma issues. *“It [the Decade] marks the first time the highest levels of government and international leadership have come together with the Roma to assist them in determining their own future.”* also said Mr. Soros.

At the closing session in the famous Hungarian Parliament building, the governments of Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, FYROM, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia each endorsed the **"Decade of Roma Inclusion"** which aims to provide a framework for governments to set their own goals for Roma integration. Roma and their advocates are hopeful that the governments' endorsement of the Decade, which was called for by George Soros, the Open Society Institute founding-father and chairman, will mark a turning point in the campaign for better minority policy in Central and Eastern Europe.

C.2 Year 2004: Preparatory year, Actors involved, Priority fields of intervention, National Plans of Action, International Steering Committee

The year 2004 was the preparatory year for the official launch of the Decade of Roma inclusion. The governments involved made the necessary preparatory steps for the official launching of the Decade. The initial eight countries³ taking part in the Decade were Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Slovakia. All of these countries have significant Roma population (see *the Annex 1*) and the Roma minority has been rather disadvantaged, both economically and socially.

Among the Decade ***main actors involved***, besides the national governments of the above mentioned member states, we can find some very important international organizations, partners of the Decade of Roma inclusion: the **World Bank**, the **Open Society Institute**, the **United Nations Development Program**, the **Council of Europe**, **Council of Europe Development Bank**, the **Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues of within the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights within the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe**, the **European Roma Information Office**, the **European Roma and Travellers Forum**, the **European Roma Rights Centre**, and the **Roma Education Fund**.

In preparation for the Decade, each country has identified a limited number of **measurable national goals for improvements**. Planning for the Decade was guided by an **International Steering Committee (ISC)**, made up of representatives of governments, Roma representatives, international donors, and other international organizations. This decision-making structure holds its meetings on a periodical basis, three ISC meetings taking place during the preparatory year 2004. One of the first decisions taken within the ISC

³ Which, in the meanwhile, become nine member states: in May 2006, Montenegro held a referendum on independence, which narrowly passed. On June 4 the federal president of Serbia and Montenegro, Svetozar Marovic, announced the dissolution of his office, and the following day Serbia acknowledged the end of the union. The EU and the United States recognized Montenegro on June 12, 2006

meetings is that the Decade' Presidency to be ensured on an annual basis, Romania being the first country that took the responsibilities for this important and challenging position. The **International Steering Committee** also established the **four priority fields of intervention** for the Decade: **education, employment, health, and housing**. Three crosscutting themes can also be found in all aspects related to the above mentioned horizontal fields of intervention. These crosscutting issues are: (fighting against) **poverty**, (fighting against) **discrimination** and (providing of) **gender equal opportunities** for Roma.

As fundamental national documents concerning the Decade, each country participating in the Decade has developed a **National Action Plan** that specifies the goals and the indicators to be achieved in the in above mentioned areas of intervention. In 2004 these plans started to be developed and included the public policies to be implemented for the benefit of the Roma people with details concerning the objectives, the measures and the actions to be taken, the timeframe, the responsible actors (public institutions and NGOs) and the budgets. In preparing its action plans, each country has identified set of indicators which it will use to measure progress in reaching its Decade goals. Monitoring these outcomes will require a combination of designing and implementing new data collection instruments, and upgrading existing data sources to ensure that Roma are effectively included. UNDP has been supporting these efforts through implementing a cross-country baseline survey and convening a data expert's group for sharing information. In preparing these National Plans of Action, each country identified a series of (qualitative and quantitative) indicators which will be used in the measurement/evaluation of the progress achieved in the process of attaining the Decade's goals.⁴

The Decade financial operations require the support from the national states' budgets while the financial plans will be made compatible and harmonized with the financial instruments of the present of potential international donors. (i.e. European Union financial exercise for the 2007-2013 period).

⁴ In Romania the National Plan for all the four sectors of the Decade were designed using feasibility studies elaborated together with the United Nations Development Program.

C.3 Year 2005: The Decade official launch and the “Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion”



The official launch of the Decade of Roma Inclusion took place on **2nd of February, 2005** at **Sofia**, the capital of Bulgaria. The governmental leaders from Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary,

FYROM, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia signed the Decade Declaration (see *the Annex 3*) and pledged themselves to implementing their National Action Plans. The ceremony was also attended by Roma leaders and representatives of international organizations which have been supporting the Decade, including the Open Society Institute, The European Commission, the World Bank, The Council of Europe and its Development Bank, and UNDP.

“In the context of a united Europe, it is unacceptable to have a large and growing Roma minority which is so much worse off than the majority which itself is shrinking in numbers. It is morally unacceptable, but it is also politically unthinkable in terms of Europe’s long-term stability and security,” said World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn.

“This is the first time that the governments are showing real political will to see that Roma are equal citizens in a growing Europe” said George Soros, Chairman of the Open Society Institute. He also added that *“The governments must put in force their action plans, and galvanize public support for full integration....At issue is more than improving the lives of Roma. The Decade is for society as a whole.”*

D. The Romanian Presidency of the Decade of Roma inclusion

D.1 The taking over of the Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion

On October 4, 2005 at Bucharest, the Government of Romania, by the intermediate of the National Agency of Roma, officially overtook the Presidency of the Decade within a ceremony that took place in Bucharest at its headquarters - the Victoria Palace. Romania was the first country that officially took over the Presidency of the Decade for Roma Inclusion according to the Decade documents and Romanian Official commitments. Until that moment, the Decade had been managed by Hungary.



Mrs. Mariea Ionescu, the President of The National Agency for Roma - a specialized institution within the Government of Romania dealing with the elaboration, the supervising of implementation, the

monitoring and the evaluation of the public policies for Roma in Romania (and which will provide the Technical Secretariat of The Decade) – undertook two envelopes containing the Decade of Roma Inclusion Documents from her Hungarian counterpart, Mr. László Teleki, State Secretary for Roma Affairs within The Government of Hungary. The documents had been elaborated by the Hungarian Technical Secretariat of the Decade and they were officially handed over to the Romanian representatives within the above mentioned ceremony which also hosted important guests - Romanian officials and International organisations representatives – as following: **Mrs. Renate Weber (at that time) councillor of the Romanian president Mr. Traian Băsescu, the Romanian Deputy Prime Minister Mr. Marko Bela, and several other high**

representatives of UNDP, Word Bank, the EC Delegation in Romania, etc.

D.2 Romania's presidency priorities, the institutional technicalities and the mainstreaming vs. targeting approach

The Government of Romania ensured the **Presidency of the Decade for Roma inclusion** during the **period July 2005 - June 2006** while the National Agency for Roma (NAR), as its specialised institutional body dealing with Roma issues, was the **National Coordinator** of this programme and it provided the **Technical Secretariat of the Decade**. Among the NAR' self-assumed responsibilities within the Decade framework, we mention, on brief, the fact that the agency was the most important catalyst of the progresses achieved by each country within the Decade framework, that it promoted the top priorities representing subjects of general interest for all the participants and it contributed to a deeper collaboration with the International partner organisations. Generally, the Decade Technical Secretariat' main activities were focused on organising the International Steering Committee (ISC) reunions and of those thematic meetings concerning the Decade fields of intervention.

The objectives of the Romanian Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion are formulated in a programmatic document stipulating Romania's priorities for the 2005-2006 presidency (see *the Annex 4*) of which provisions sought to be fulfilled by NAR. Basically the technical objectives of the Decade as the Adoption of the **Terms of Reference** (see *the Annex 3*), the establishment of a **Decade Trust Fund** and the organizing of at least two workshops on progresses achieved by each Decade Member State in the sectoral and cross-cutting fields of intervention were successfully fulfilled during the Romanian Presidency. Thus, on its 17th November 2005 session, the Government of Romania approved the Memorandum regarding the agreement signed between the Romanian Government and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (also known as the Word Bank) regarding the Trust Fund establishment, specially created for supporting certain Decade' activities. Also, during the same month, a convention having as partners the Ministry of Public Finances, the General

Secretariat of the Government and the National Agency for Roma was signed for the implementing of a 350,000 Euros fund, designed for sustaining the development of the institutional capacity for the development of a Roma social inclusion programme.

All the activities established as Romania's priorities for the period it provided the Decade's Presidency were approved on 30th of September 2005 by a Memorandum (see *the Annex 4*) signed by the Romanian Prime Minister, Mr. Călin Popescu Tăriceanu. The costs meant to make the programme operational were introduced at the Romanian State Budget for the financial years 2005 and 2006.

Regarding the Romanian Presidency vision on approaching the public policies elaboration within the Decade framework, there is very important to underline the fact that it tried to reach at a consensus regarding the ***mainstreaming versus targeting*** dichotomy approach (see *the annexes 3 and 4*). For quite sometime a debate has been going on related to the issue of mainstreaming and targeting. Unfortunately views have been expressed putting the two concepts on antagonistic positions: mainstreaming versus targeting. While Roma NGOs and many institutions emphasize the need of mainstreaming, some international donors have expressed a preference to consider the Roma just as a target group, thus allowing them to release funds for specific projects. Romania considers that this is an artificial and counterproductive approach. The two concepts must not be seen as conflicting but as complementary, and this clarification needs to be made during the Decade by all participants.

a) Romania's view is that one should keep on with the original idea of inclusion: therefore, Roma mainstreaming means that in each and every public policy regarding a certain sector of each country be it political, social, economic, educational, cultural, Roma dimension must be present. The opposite the notions of Roma inclusion and mainstreaming is Roma isolation, a situation that NAR strongly fight against.

b) At the same time, Romania considers that the role of promoting the inclusion belongs to all state authorities. NAR does not want to have only one institution dealing with Roma issues that would be kept responsible for the achievements

or failures. The role of such an institution - be it a special agency, an office for Roma or any other structure - should be a coordinating one, making sure that in every public policy of the four areas of the Decade and other as well the Roma is taken into account.

c) In this way the concept of targeting would simply imply that each time when in a public policy special attention needs to be paid to Roma, specific projects should be conceived and implemented.

D.3 International Steering Committee Meeting: the Adoption of the Decade Terms of Reference and the Media Workshop

In preparing its first International Steering Committee (ISC) meeting, the National Agency for Roma (NAR) organised on 4th of November 2005 at its headquarters a meeting with an Hungarian Delegation formed by **Mr. László Teleki** and other two Hungarians governmental experts in ordered to analyse, along with two well-known international consultants: **Mr. Stephan Muller** and **Mr. Iulius Rostas**, the draft proposal for the Decade Terms of Reference which subsequently was to be submitted for debate and approval within the ISC meeting.



Between 17th and 18th of November, the Technical Secretariat of the Decade organized the **Seventh Meeting of the Decade's International Steering Committee**. This was the 5th meeting gathered the representatives of the all decision making

actors involved in this ample initiative: governments, international organisations that are partners, Roma civil society. The Technical Secretariat of the Decade was supported in organising this event by the Open Society Foundation. Among

the important guest and participants we do mention: the **Prime Minister of Romania, Mr. Călin Popescu Tăriceanu**, the **President of the Open Society Institute, Mr. George Soros**, the **President of the National Agency of Roma, Mrs. Mariea Ionescu**, the **councillor (at that time) of the Romania's President, Mrs. Renate Weber**, the **Vice-President of the World Bank for Europe and Central Asia, Mr. Shigeo Katsu**, the **head of Phare Section for Justice and Home Affairs, Social Sector and Civil Society and Head of ISPA Section from the European Commission Delegation in Romania, Mrs. Anne de Ligne**, the **UN coordinator and resident representative of UNDP in Romania, Mrs. Soknan Han Jung**, the **Secretary of State for Roma issues in the Government of Hungary, Mr. László Teleki** and the **Secretary of State from the Romania's Department for Interethnic Relations, Mr. Marko Attila**, participated and spoke at this opening ceremony. This was followed by a press conference.

During these two days there were two actions developing in parallel: on one hand the Decade's International Steering Committee and, on the other hand a workshop with the theme "Media and Roma" where media specialists from the Decade's countries took part. The ISC meeting had two sessions. Within the first session there were reports on the progresses and obstacles faced in implementing the Decade's National Action Plans in each of the eight participant countries. These reports were presented by the governmental delegations that were participating at this event.

The Roma civil society pulled some emergency signals regarding the need to improve the communication between the governmental institutions and the Roma NGOs and on increasing the level of involvement of the Roma civil society in all the stages of the Decade. At the same time the partner international organisations reaffirmed their will to get themselves involved in the Decade' process and to help at the completion of the Decade's objectives through financial instruments that already exists and also through new means of financial intervention and support.

During the second day the governments agreed and signed ***the Decade's Terms of References – ToR*** (see *the Annex 3*),

which means that, since that moment, **a guiding line official document was created and become the official document, the framework and the basis for Decade future actions.**

Debates on the mass media influence on the Roma image took place within the **Media Workshop**, which took place in parallel. Starting from some relevant examples, some issues such as the freedom of the press and its limits, the press speech which instigate at ethnic hate, the Roma image through some stereotypes were intensively discussed and debated by the participants. Also, there were discussions regarding the need of an active and involved Roma mass media which has to present and broadcast the real image of the Roma communities. The conclusion was that mass media has to assume the responsibility of the presented aspects because they have a very big impact on the perception of Roma by the rest of the population. **The Media thus became one of the cross-cutting themes of the Decade.**

Another important issue was the introduction of the Romany language as the official language of the Decade

The two-days meeting conclusions were presented by Mrs. Mariea Ionescu, the Romanian National Coordinator of the Decade of Roma Inclusion:

“One can appreciate the open and pro-active attitude of the governments to communicate relating to applying the best practices and overcome the obstacles.

One must find ways of communicating between the civil society and governmental institutions. The public institutions should also to prove more transparency both in the consulting process with the civil society and related to the problems faced by Roma ethnics.

By the intermediate of the Decade of Roma Inclusion there will be made all the necessary efforts both from to part of the governments and civil society representatives to include Roma representatives in the local and central administration structures.

All the international organisations involved re-stated their will to support the Decade for Roma Inclusion, both by the intermediate of the existent financial instruments offered by the European Commission and by the intermediate of the support

and technical assistance from the World Bank and Open Society Institute.

Founding the Roma Decade Trust Fund, as an annual contribution from the member-states governments, is the proof of the common interest of the governments involved in the process.

The Romani language was also introduced as an official language of the Roma Decade Terms of References.

Once ToR adopted, the consulting process among the governments involved was completed; the next step will consist in the application of the National Action Plans of the every single member-state.”

As a prove of the political and financial support with which the Decade was governmentally sustained, on its 17th November 2005 session, the Government of Romania approved the Memorandum on the Agreement between the Romanian Government and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (also known as the World Bank) regarding the Trust Fund establishment specially created for supporting certain Decade’ activities.⁵ Also, in order to maintain this trend, in the same month it was signed a convention among the Ministry of Public Finances, the General Secretariat of the Government and the National Agency for Roma valuing 350,000 Euros projected for funding the development of the institutional capacity for the development of a Roma social inclusion programme.

D.4 Roma Health Conference “Past and future projects and policies: how to impact Roma health most effectively?”

⁵ According with the Romanian Constitution, the International Agreements have to be ratified by the Romanian Parliament and, for this, the Romanian Government elaborated a law project which was submitted for the approval of Romanian Parliament (the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate); within their sessions, the President of The National Agency for Roma and the national co-coordinator of the Decade, Mrs. Mariea Ionescu presented and lobbied the project and these legislative bodies approved the project of law in April 2006. Accordingly to the above mentioned law project, the Romanian Government’s contribution to the Trust Fund is ensured by state budget allocations and it is approved by Government Decision.

The next main activity organized by NAR within the Decade of Roma Inclusion Programme was the conference entitled: **“The Roma health conference *“Past and future projects and policies: how to impact Roma Health most effectively?”*** The Conference took place on 12-13th of December 2005 at the Marriot Hotel in Bucharest.



The opening ceremony was conducted by **Mrs. Mariea Ionescu**, the coordinator official of The Decade of Roma Inclusion together with important representatives

of the Romanian Government: **Mr. Marko Attila, Secretary of State, Mr. Cristian Vlădescu – the president of the National House for Health Insurance, DI. Szekely Ervin, Secretary of State, Ministry of Health and Mr. Iulius Rostas.**

Among the conference' objectives we mention: sharing with government representatives and other stakeholders the conclusions and recommendations of the Open Society Institute (OSI) study on Roma Health Mediator programs in Bulgaria, Finland and Romania; analysing the opportunities and challenges raised by Roma Health Mediator programs; assessing the effectiveness of current policy frameworks regarding broader issues related to Roma health and discussing and agree upon next concrete steps on the implementation of the Decade National Action Plans on health.

The conference main message was that the member-states governments must urgently adopt national plans of action seeking to improve Roma health condition. Another important message issued by the conference participants was a challenging one: Institutional capacity and mechanism building for monitoring and evaluating the active health mediators within the Roma Communities. Starting from the mainstreaming and targeting concepts, it was underlined the need for a legislative

framework change and improvement in a manner that would allow the facing problems Roma people to obtain the medical insurance.

The conference can be considered to be the first meeting in the health field that gathered representatives of the governments from the countries involved in the Decade of Roma Inclusion, Roma



activists and specialists in elaborating, implementing and assessing public health policies. The OSI study on Roma Health Mediators from Bulgaria, Finland and Romania was also presented (see *the Annex 5*). The Roma Health mediator programmes within these three countries could be consider as good practice pattern of intervention in the field of Roma health public and/or private policies. Also, for the first time a discussion on Roma women participation at the community life took place within in a governmental framework, thus debating the gender cross-cutting theme within the Decade framework and reaching to the creation of a broader vision on the gender issues through the social needs of the Roma communities. The working methodology within the conference was the organising of several workshops on different touching related topics i.e. gender issues, the multiple forms of discrimination faced by Roma women, the fragile healthcare state of most Roma people etc. (see *the Annex 5*)



Following this conference, the main recommendations were the following:

1. The need of increased efforts in

- the fields like advocacy, assistance services, improving the legislation on health care through institutional partnerships;
2. Addressing the health programmes for Roma women to be realised taking into account the crosscutting between gender, health care and human rights;
 3. Institutional assessment regarding the quality of the health mediators programmes;
 4. Multiplying the experience of the health mediators in the Decade's participant countries.

Some challenging themes for further analysis and clarification were identified such as: public debates regarding the building of institutional evaluating instrument fro the health mediators; establishing the mechanism of monitoring the activity of the health mediators; identifying those institutions and NGOs which should cooperate in order to improve the Roma health conditions while some other questions were raised: Who does check the fact that the Roma who have obtained the medical ensured status are really provided with qualitative medical services? Which is the period in which the health mediator is activating thus, on the long term, to be avoided the dependency on the health mediator? Who is ensuring the continuous training and formation of the health mediator?

D.5 The launch of Roma Education Fund and other activities

Between the first Decade International Steering Committee Meeting organised under the Romanian Presidency in November 2005 (the seventh on the whole) and the second one, organised in June 2006 (the eight on the whole) some other actions were taken and other planned events were organized by the National Agency for Roma as important steps made for or within the Decade process.



The Roma Education Fund, founded by **Mr. George Soros**, was launched on February 22, 2006 in Bucharest at the headquarters of the University of Bucharest - The Faculty of History.

The Roma Education Fund was created in the framework of the Decade of Roma

Inclusion. Therefore it also shares the goals of the Decade.

The goal of the Roma Education Fund (REF) is to contribute to closing the gap in educational outcomes between Roma and non-Roma, through policies and programs to support quality education for Roma including desegregation of educational systems

The Roma Education Fund finances projects that meet its goals and are proposed and implemented by Governments, NGOs and private organizations. The Roma Education Fund supports greater research, studies and evaluations that contribute to effective policies and programs for inclusion of Roma in national education systems the Roma Education Funds supports exchange of ideas, views and experiences across the Decade countries but also with any country that has relevant experience in promoting the goals of the REF. ⁶

Also, in the same month of February 2006 NAR drafted an **Intermediary Report** on the Decade Presidency activities which was posted on the NAR website⁷ and sent to all the member-states, Decade partner institutions and Roma civic organisations.

Provided the support of the Open Society Foundation – Bucharest and of the NAR, the **Romanian Magazine “22”**, an important publication for certain target groups of readers, elaborated and issued three supplements with articles containing interviews with Roma and Romanian public personalities and officials involved in the Decade development in Romania and reports on the public life and public policies for

⁶ See also <http://www.romaeducationfund.org>

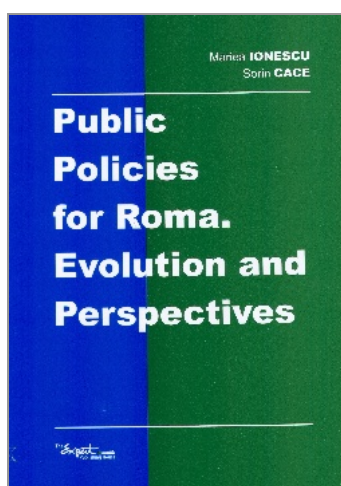
⁷ See also <http://www.anr.gov.ro/html/deceniul.htm>

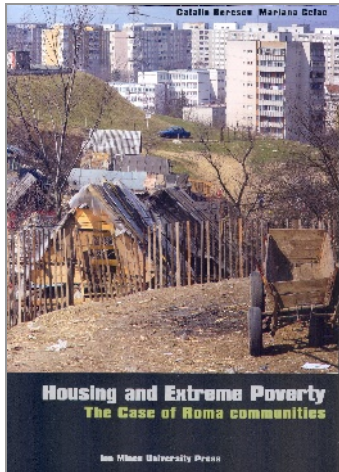
Roma, especially on those relating education, health, fighting against discrimination and the status Roma woman.

On 16-17th of March 2006, a delegation conducted by the President of the National Agency for Roma participated at the colloquium entitled “**The role of the informal education for the Roma integration into the society**” at the invitation of the French Embassy at Sofia, Bulgaria. Taking profit by this event, **Mrs. Mariea Ionescu** met the national Bulgarian Coordinator of the Decade, **Mrs. Maya Cholakova the Director of Ethnic and Demographic Issues within the Bulgarian Council of Ministries**. The purpose of this meeting was the debating on the status of **Decade Troika**, the advantages and the shortcoming in taking over and/or providing the Decade Presidency, the Romanian experience so far in the matter and the afferent costs of ensuring the Decade Presidency.

Within the framework of assessing the impact of the Roma Decade in Romania, the Technical Secretariat of the National Coordinator of the Decade identified common points in the public policies addressing the Roma minority in Romania, the relation between the public policies for Roma adopted by the Government and other internal and international; the relations among different social, public and private actors and their involvement in the process of public policies making, the used language etc. The result of this process was the publications of the following three important publications:

- **“Public Policies for Roma people from Romania - Evolution and Perspective”**; authors: Mariea Ionescu and Sorin Cace, Institute for Quality life Research, Bucharest, 2005
- **“Workforce Employment policies for the Roma People from Romania”**; authors: Mariea Ionescu and Sorin Cace, Institute for Quality life Research, Bucharest, 2005;
- **“Housing and extreme poverty – The Case of Roma communities”**, authors: Cătălin Brescu, Mariana Celac, Oana Ciobanu / Cosmin Manolache, Ion Mincu University Press, Bucharest, 2006.





Partially related to the Decade framework and objectives, the **International Conference on the Implementation and Harmonization of National Policies for Roma, Sinti and Travellers-Guidelines for a common vision**”, took place at Bucharest on 4 and 5 of May 2006.⁸ The **Conference addressed the current situation concerning implementation of practices at national and local levels of state policies in the fields of housing, employment and relations with the police**: examples of best practices bearing in mind requirements of the OSCE Action Plan for the Improvement of the Situation of the Roma and Sinti and of relevant legal instruments and recommendations of the Council of Europe, the European Union and other international organisations/institutions including the Decade on the Roma.

⁸ The Conference in Bucharest took place under the aegis of the Romanian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belgium as the OSCE Chairmanship in Office and with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria as Presidency of the European Union; and a number of international NGOs, in particular the European Roma and Travelers Forum (ERTF) and the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER) were also co-organizers

The participants shared experiences, the best practices and lesson learned along the years, inclusively those learnt during the Decade development, for ensuring the effective participation of the Roma, Gypsies, Sinti and Travelers in the processes of implementation and assessment of the policies' impact on the communities and as main beneficiaries of these policies.

D.6 8th International Steering Committee Meeting: The EU involvement in the Decade of Roma inclusion

Because of its tremendous significance and great importance, this meeting was the corolla of the Romanian Presidency activities carried out within the Decade of Roma Inclusion framework. Thus, we stress upon its details on the debates and presentations

D.6.1 Framework, participants and opening workings

The National Agency for Roma (NAR), organised the 8th International Meeting of the International Steering Committee – ISC - of the Decade for Roma Inclusion Programme which was held on 12th of June at the Sheraton Hotel in Brussels.⁹

This reunion was organized by the Romanian Government, by the intermediate of the National Agency for Roma with the support provided by the European Commission, by the Romanian Official Delegation to Brussels and by Open Society Institute, through its local offices placed in Brussels and Budapest.

The simple fact that the ISC Reunion was held in Brussels showed the importance of the European Union key-role for the Future in the Decade process as this role was to be unanimously recognized by the Decade Member states and partner international organisations.

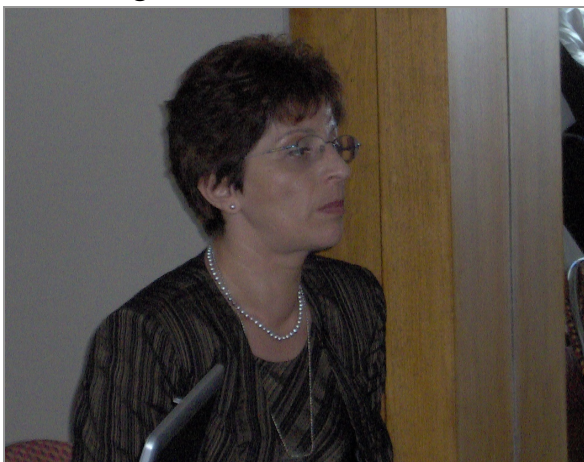
⁹ It was the 2nd and also the last ISC meeting organized under the Romanian Presidency auspicial and choosing Brussels as location was far from be accidental.

The Conference' goal was to identify the methods and instruments of the European Commission which are meant to support the Decade' National Governments involved in the achievement of objectives of the Decade of Roma Inclusion project.

This Reunion of the International Steering Committee (ISC) gathered important officials of the European Commission, the representatives of the nine national governments involved in the Decade for Roma Inclusion' programme, representatives of the partner international organisations and civil society activists.

In the conference opening there were held speeches by the following personalities: **Mr. Vladimir Spidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Mr. Marko Bella, State Ministry within the Romanian Government and Mrs Mariea Ionescu, State Secretary and the President of the National Agency for Roma, the Romanian national co-ordinator of the Decade.**

The main messages launched by the conference were the followings:



Mrs. Mariea Ionescu opened the conference by stressing upon the importance of the moral support from the part of the European Commission regarding the accomplishing of the Decade for Roma Inclusion' objectives,

by the intermediate of the EU financial instruments: the pre and the post accession funds.

Another important point of Mrs. Mariea Ionescu' message has referred to the technical expertise of the representatives of the European Union and to their lobbying capacities, as key-

elements for achieving the goals of the Decade for Roma Inclusion.

Mr. Marko Bella underlined the importance of formulating a definition for a common framework, required to alleviate the social and economic discrepancies between the condition of the Roma ethnic groups living in Central Europe and the majority of population.



Within this common approach, the responsibility for implementing of the measures should be in the burden of every single Member State in the Decade, whose territories are inhabited by Roma people and the success of this endeavour still depending on the coordination of all member states within a quest based on solidarity. He also mentioned the fact that the problems the Roma minority is facing (not only social but also ethnic and cultural problems) will have to be tackled simultaneously, both at the individual level and at the level of local communities, the solving of these issues in a long lasting manner being not possible without the direct participation of the Roma ethnics to the decision making process regarding the projects they are directly concerned in. He also did mention the Romania' achievements in its position of being the first state holding the Decade Presidency and he stressed upon the added value that a good integration of the "Decade" in the European Commission projects could bring to the EU future policies.



At his turn, the European commissioner **Mr. Vladimir Spidla** estimated the fact that the Roma social inclusion constitutes one of the main problems of the contemporary Europe, given the fact that the marginalisation phenomenon that this

minority is facing still remains while the economic measures adopted by the governments during the transition period affected deeper and sharper this minority, comparatively with the effects on the majority population. He also has stressed the fact that the solving of the Roma' issues as disadvantaged social group should be approached in a coherent, continuous, integrated manner within different fields of intervention as: education, health, employment, participation to the social life, housing and this it will have to represent a common objective of the EU institutions, of the national and local authorities and of the civil society.

He did also mention the fact that the executive body of the EU (the Commission) does not uphold competencies in the field of social inclusion of Roma people, this task being under the burden of the National Governments. Nevertheless, the EU' Executive advises the national Governments to harmonise the national policies with the EU policies regarding the following aspects: the promoting the collective rights of the national minorities, the prevention and fight against discrimination, the access to the labour market, the promoting of the affirmative measures and of innovating social policies regarding the social disadvantages groups. These measures can be co-financed by the intermediate of European Social Fund and Regional Development Fund.

D.6.2 Reports on the development stage of the Decade National Actions

The representative of Bulgaria restated the unconditioned support that the government of his country confers for this

international project by appointing a National Co-ordinator for the Decade, by taking over, for one year long 1st 2006 of July -30th of June 2007, the Decade Presidency from the Romanian Counterpart and by instituting the Direction for Demographic Policies, social policies and equal opportunities” which deals, among other things, with the elaboration of policies for Roma

Regarding the stage of the elaboration of the Bulgarian National Plan for Action took the following measures: in the Educational field it was set up Centre for educational integration of children and students from the ethnic communities and the elaboration, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and Science , of the municipal strategies and plans for integrating the children who come from these multiethnic communities; the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy implemented a pilot social programme from which almost 200 children (most of Roma origin) are beneficiating; in the cultural field The Ministry of Culture founded Roma Cultural Info Centres and in the Health field there were trained 51 Roma health mediators who have been employed by another programme entitled “From Social Care to Employment” in order to make from this occupation a permanent job, the health mediator profession being already officially recognised in Bulgaria; in the Employment field of the insertion on the labour market of 16,500 persons of Roma ethnic background is planned for 2006 and there were held 10 job fairs for Roma people and other 86 official meetings between officials and informal leaders of Roma in order find solutions in the occupational field; in the crosscutting field of combating discrimination there are held weekly trainings called “Police work with ethnic communities”; in the Housing and infrastructure field in March it was adopted in “The National Program for Improving of the Housing Conditions for Roma people in Bulgaria for the period 2005-2015” and in 50 localities (from the total 60) inhabited with more than 10% of Roma ethnic origin population there were elaborated plans for developing the local infrastructure and, finally, within the Ministry of labour and Social Policy a Council for Roma integration is going to be created.

The representative of Montenegro, a brand new state on the world map, estimated the number of Roma people inhabiting this state at the total amount of about 20,000 people, despite the fact that at the last Census only 2061 persons declared themselves as being Roma. The Montenegro national Plan of Action is based upon strategic documents, elaborated with international support and with the help provided from the civil society. The Montenegro Government appointed a National Coordinator in the person of **Mr. Remyija Ademovic**, the representative speaker of the country to this reunion. On the Decade four fields of action the National Plan of Montenegro looks as followings: in the Educational field, the number of Roma origin children enrolled in the educational system doubled within the last three years, the teachers and the school officials and teachers are attending training courses and seminars while free books and school accessories and materials were offered to the most part of Roma children, on the whole a high level of socialisation and integration of Roma children has been achieved; in the field of Employment, the Offices for Work and Employment are targeting through their policies the growth of employment level within the Roma population, yet there is a need for a updated evaluation of dimension of the target group; in the Health field the *mainstreaming* principle was supported, every citizen having access to the public health services but a targeting action is imagined by seeking to conclude a national program for Roma; regarding the poor housing conditions and it is hoped that the national plans regarding the habitats will have an impact upon the housing condition of the Roma. In the final part of his speech, the Montenegro representative appealed for financial support meant to sustain the Montenegro National Plan of the Decade.



The Hungary presentation showed a brief framework of the institutional building meant to support the elaboration and the implementing the National Plan of Action, including some financial details. A first draft of the

National Plan was elaborated by a National Working Group which included representatives of the ministries, of the Roma Self Government and of the Roma NGOs. In the summer of 2005 regional and national consulting meetings took place gathering more than 700 participants. The national action plan is going to be endorsed every two years by a governmental decree while the budget for the period 2007-2009 had been already detailed. A civil forum will annually evaluate the fulfilling of the tasks and objectives enclosed in the National Plan. The already ongoing projects within the plan are targeting the following fields: housing with an approved budget of 3.2 mil. Euros for 2005 and of 3.08 mil Euro for 2006; de-segregation in educational system with 0.5 mil Euro allotted; equal opportunities, scholarships for Roma children – in 2005 23,000 pupils benefited of 2.2 mil. Euros; a PHARE antidiscrimination campaign of 2 mil. Euros stipulated for the 2004-2006 period and an information campaign regarding the Decade with an amount of 60,000 Euros. The overall Hungarian National Budget allotted for the Decade amounts to 80 mil. Euro and it is focused mainly on targeting actions while the value of the mainstreaming actions (territorial approaches, long-term employment policies, people living in disadvantaged micro regions etc.) cannot be accurately estimated. The National Development Plans (2004-2006 and 2007-2013) financed by the Structural Funds positively influence the *mainstreaming* type actions.

The Slovakia representative presented the main programmes and projects implemented in the four fields of Decade intervention: in the Health field there were presented the PHARE programmes regarding the improvement of the access to the health services by employing 40 field health workers in 59 localities, by founding of sanitary health centres in 9 localities and of some mobile medical units for remote settlements and also by developing a disinfection programme in 50 localities in Eastern Slovakia; in the Educational field the programmes PHARE and REF regarding the systematic reform of the educational system were presented, some programmes regarding the de-segregation and adopting in the school curricula of some elements concerning the Romany Language and Roma literature along with the founding in Nitra of an institute of Romology and in Prešov of an Roma Education Centre were among achievements; in the Housing field, The ministry of Construction and Regional Development contracted

workings for the Roma settlements respecting the following algorithm: 80% grants for construction and 20% worked off by the construction tenants while the municipality role was to provide the land and the technical documentation for construction; in the employment field, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family targets actions regarding the equal opportunities, increase of employability of the disadvantaged groups and a program for Community Social Work developed by the Social Development Fund, the EQUAL European funds play an important role by the intermediate of micro-credits and social enterprises.

The Romanian presentation targeted the idea of tightening the connection between the European Commission and the Decade. There were analysed the funding possibilities of the Decade National Plans of Action by the contributions from the national budgets (including the Trust Fund) in the case of all states but also by the intermediate of the PHARE programmes for the candidate states or for the states that are in train to join EU in January 2007, by the intermediate of the structural funds in the case of the states already members of the EU and of other funds (grants or loans awarded by international financial institutions). The range of Romanian public policies for Roma was analysed and their connexions with the funds by the intermediate of which they are financially sustained. The European framework legislation and the international financial instruments related to the Decade were reviewed and, as instead of conclusions, the Romanian delegation' presentation re-stated the necessity for a political support for the Decade, the necessity of funding measures targeting the Roma and an inclusion of the Roma in all the European social policies regarding the social development; the Romanian counter part proposed the creation of a task force which would include representatives of the EU Direction: Employment, Social Affaires and Equal Opportunities, the National Co-ordinators of the Decade and representatives of the Roma NGOs in order harmonise the European policies in the field with the national ones.

D.6.3 “Mainstreaming and Targeting” session

The concept of “*mainstreaming*” was developed by the feminist movement and it is constantly brought to open debates in order to establish the position of disadvantaged groups within the context of equal opportunities.

The *mainstreaming* concept guides those who activate in the process of public policies elaboration aiming to emphasize the disadvantaged groups (*targeting*) when the beneficiaries can be quantitatively estimated as a group affected by a certain context (e.g. social inequality); this concept recommends that, from the elaboration stage until the evaluation phase in the process of public policies endorsement, different interests have to be taken into consideration, along with the profile and the level of development of the group for which the policy is designed.

Targeted approach guarantees us the participation of the group, given our case – the Roma people - , from consultation stage to the implementation and assessment stages; therefore it is recommended to focus on the integration of the targeted measures within a *mainstreaming* framework.

Taking both concepts into consideration, in a systematic manner when referring to the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of the public policies, the two approaches - *mainstreaming* and *targeting* - could prove productive and could be simultaneously accomplished with greater outcomes, if, from the very beginning, the group specificity and differences are taken into consideration in the policies elaborating stage.

These two concepts do not exclude themselves, but the border between these two approaches– *mainstreaming* and *targeting* - must be clearly identified, as they are very similar notions.

One cannot talk about *mainstreaming* policies lacking the political will while the political will is often lacking because the specific needs of disadvantaged group are not known.

It is our duty to make aware the governments, the institutions and agencies that, in the process of public policies elaboration and in order to cover all the basic needs of the social disadvantaged groups, all active social actors involved in this matter should be consulted. Regarding the harmonisation and the complementing of the Decade National Action Plans, a further process of cooperation and consultation among all the Decade Member States is required in order that the public

policies addressing Roma be compounded of targeted measures within an active mainstreaming framework.

D.6.4 EU officials presentations

Mr. Peter Ungar from the DG Regional Development spoke about the EU cohesion policy and about the planning and programming cycle, about the national strategic reference frameworks, about the main strategic guidelines concerning the EU regional development, about the EU health policy: the health infrastructure and the national and EU investments in this field, about the EU cohesion policy for the period 2007-2013 etc; He also presented two study cases on health programmes in Italy and Hungary, financed by the intermediate of the structural funds.



Mrs. Rachel Lancry from The DG Regional Development presented the financing possibilities in the case of entrepreneurs activities for Roma, justifying the focus for this field by the Structural Funds traditional guiding towards the disadvantaged groups by the intermediate of the

Lisbon Strategy motto – *growth and jobs* - , following the discussions held by the European commissioners with personalities (e.g. George Soros) which raised the conclusion that the Roma are good entrepreneurs and by the Open Society Institute experience in financing programmes for sustaining small-business activities in Central and Eastern Europe. Thus, despite the fact that barriers still remain subject to accessing the funds, the trainings and raising awareness one cannot find a reasonable argument not to involve Roma in creating growth

and jobs. The EU regional development funds may contribute to this process by the previous experience, micro-credits, access to support and consultancy and raising awareness. These types of support can be included in the financial exercise 2007-2013 by including them in the programmes along with the specification that they are targeting the Roma and, once in documents, the projects sponsor may apply. Her conclusions: Roma have problems but also potential and the Regional Development Fund may help the Roma in solving their problems

Mrs. Catherine Magnant from the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities presented the project “The 2007 European Year of equal opportunities for all – towards a just society”. The objectives of this programme are raising awareness among general public on benefits of a society that offers the same opportunities to all, irrespective of their sex, sexual orientation, age, racial or ethnic origin, disability, religion or belief and highlighting the benefits of diversity as a source of socio-economic vitality for Europe. This event was initiated because of delays/problems in transposition, the lack of implementation into the domestic law and the lack of knowledge of relevant EU Directives and national legislation. The programme will also approach issues related to gender and will be based upon the humankind values and principles: the respect for human rights, representation, recognition and respect. The total budget allotted for this programme amounts to 15 mil. Euro and shall target actions both at national level



and at the EY level to alleviate the field legislation implementing and for the great public to be aware of its rights and duties.

Mr. Colin Wolfe from the DG Regional Development presented the topics of integrating the Roma problematic in the mainstreaming guidelines of the European social policies referring to Lisbon Agenda, the European legislation against discrimination, the National Action Plans of the decade and the national and international funding.

Approaching the Roma issues should include the planning with them and for them of the social intervention *pre school training, employment, youth, education, insertion, entrepreneurship, health, housing, security & justice, awareness, habitat, land issues, anti-discrimination etc.* Even during these days of time, within the Member States and those who are going to join EU there are finalised the financial programming details for 2007-2013 by the intermediate of the already negotiated National Strategic Reference Framework and the Current finalization and negotiation of EU Structural Fund "Operational Programmes" the Slovakian case being relevant upon the need for establishing a "Roma Committee" for EU-funding monitoring. The projects concerning and involving the Roma minority have to well designed and prepared by a well prepared training support and consultancy and followed by partnerships conclusion before the drafting and selecting process stages. All will seek the improving the Roma social condition and their economic development conditions.

In a second presentation **Mr. Wolfe** spoke about housing and infrastructure fields that should be approached as a common package by municipalities in the frameworks of regional and national actors and involved in the housing strategy that should take into consideration the following variables: the *housing, the security, the habitat, the land issues, the pre school training, the-employment, the youth, the education, the insertion, the entrepreneurship and health along with the awareness and the anti-discrimination factors.*

D.6.5 Reunion Final Remarks

At the reunion conclusion, **Mr. Nikolaus Van der Pas**, director of the DG Employment and Equal Opportunities had

stressed upon the interest of the European Commission and upon the financial support designed to promote the activities regarding the prevention and combating of the ethnic discrimination against Roma population and particularly to



increase the access of Roma people to the labour market. Mr. **Nikolaus Van der Pas** has also mentioned that a priority for DG Employment is the prevention of the discrimination against Roma people, this priority being also previously underlined by the Mrs. Commissioner **Vladimir Spidla**, who restated the engagement of the EU in the antidiscrimination activities and the financial support allotted to the activities in this field. Mr. **Nikolaus Van der Pas** reaffirmed the Commission' opening for any form of collaboration with all the partners that pledge for the same cause: stopping discrimination”

The Commission is supporting and can support more activities concerning these issues but they cannot be successful unless by applying the European Commission support to a concrete, very well defined framework by the Member States and involving the full participation of the actors involved into a inclusive society.

The financial instruments of the European Commission are the structural funds developed within a deepen collaboration of the Member States and with the organisations involved in this issue. The inclusive approach of the Commission refers to a common scheduling and its aim is to pass from the individual action to a common action by approaching the structural funds within the member states' national strategies framework and within the Sector Operational Plans.

The European Commission appeals the member states to pay attention to the Roma people within the national strategies and plans both as a answer to their basic needs and as a mean for including them into society, thus attaining the general aim of the Union.

Another issue at European Union' level is the demographic evolution which has among the consequences the fact that a small percent of active, young population must sustain a bigger percent of old population. Within this context it is important to achieve the inclusion into society, and especially into the labour market, of all human resources, to promote the insertion of this work force and to fructify its productive potential.

Mr. **Nicholas Van der Pas** thanked to the National Agency for Roma which has organized this reunion and appealed to the all the interested parties - active NGOs and institutions involved in the process - to make common efforts regarding these issues.

D.6.6 Topics of general interest within the conference' framework

- The need for solving the problems faced by Roma occupies a high-ranked position on the European Commission' working agenda but within this approach, the national states are those who must take over the initiative and to propose common action projects. The EU executive (the Commission) showed openness towards the idea of supporting the actions deployed within the" Decade" framework, provided these actions' compatibility with the EU sectoral policies (social, health, education etc.).
- It was stressed upon the European Commission engagement for supporting the Decade' members states on the direction of preventing and combating the discrimination cases faced by the Roma minority, category of citizens which accordingly with the EU executive' opinion will have to constitute a top priority in the anti-discrimination campaign.
- The European Commission may bring an added value to this effort provided the case that the national member states, mainly those with a significant number of Roma population, bring also their contribution in a sustainable manner.
- With this regard, the EU executive appeal all those states to pay enough attention to the importance of the Roma category in designing their planning strategic documents meant to address the use of the funds (from the national budgets and from EU) and to those meant to contribute to Roma social development, in general. Moreover, it promotes the use of the structural funds, accessible after joining to EU for alleviating the minorities' inclusion on the workforce market.
- The European Commission will be able to fund sectoral housing projects for Roma (not the building process of the dwellings itself but, rather, of the additional facilities to the housings), many of these projects not being deployed yet due to the uncertainty of the property status over the fields the Roma are living on.
- In the field of Education (considered as the best mean for social inclusion, but, at the same time, as a field that can perpetrate the social exclusion), the European Commission does not have in its view the funding of Roma minority' specific activities but the financial support for different

projects affecting this minority. The emphasis will be on the pre-scholar education and on increasing the quality of education.

- The Romanian Presidency proposal that in every single member state participant to the Decade should be constituted a consultative body (consisting in Roma and non Roma experts) which is to support the competent national authorities in implementing the national plans of action adjacent to the “Decade”.
- The World Bank will manage the Trust Fund allotted to the Decade, will finance technical assistance projects in the field, seminars and other actions meant to promote the Roma’ dialogue with the majority population and with the authorities. Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro were asked to conclude with the World Bank the contribution agreements to the fund, an instrument that, up to now only Croatia paid the national contribution.
- Regarding the Romania’s case, during the period 2001-2003 there were deployed a number of 26 specific projects for supporting the Roma Community, projects financed by PHARE assistance (2/3) and co-financed from the national and local budgets. Most of those funds (1/3) were invested in projects targeting the education field (school rehabilitation and endowment, school manuals editing etc.) and only 10% (a percent estimated as insufficient by the EU) in projects targeting the integration/reinsertion of the Roma on the labour market. From the PHARE budget for the years 2004-2006 there are still stipulated substantial funds accessible starting with 2006.

D.7.7 Reunion Conclusions

The main gain of the Reunion consists in raising the level of the European Commission involvement in the national steps meant to improve the Roma condition, to restate the EC role regarding the Decade for Roma Inclusion, fact that are proved both by the repeated engagements stated by important officials in charged within the Commission and by the high level and high number of EU executive’ representatives that attended this event.

The EU officials’ presentations brought their contribution to the clarification of some issues concerning the technical procedures

required for EU funds accession and which are focused to some projects meant to contribute at the economic and social life' alleviation.

One can consider this event as a successful corolla of the Romanian Presidency mandate of the Decade for Roma Inclusion programme.

D.7 Handing over of the Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion



On 4th of April 2006 at the palace of Culture form Sofia took place ceremony of Decade Presidency handing over

from Romania to Bulgaria. From the Romanian part participated the **President of the National Agency for Roma, Mrs. Mariea Ionescu** while from the Bulgarian counter part participated the **President of Bulgaria, Mr. Georgi Parvanov**, the **Bulgarian Prime Minister Mr. Sergey Stanichev** and **Mr. Yavor Dimitrov** the **Deputy Minister within the ministry of Labour and Social Policies**, the **national coordinator of the Decade**. Representation of the Bulgarian counterpart at the highest level proved the strong will and commitment for the Bulgarian central authorities and institutions' involvement in providing a proper continuation of the Decade activities within the Bulgaria' chairmanship. The Romanian counter part said

that the Decade of Roma Inclusion may be characterised as a “Decade of social solidarity along Central and Eastern Europe, absolutely necessary for the proper social inclusion of Roma, for the a substantial diminishing of historically rooted gaps consisting in social–economic discrepancies which separate the Roma population form the rest of the citizens” **Mrs. Mariea Ionescu** also expressed the Romanian full support and availability for assisting the neighbour country in carried out its tasks and actives while holding the Decade presidency.

E. Romanian Presidency Achievements, Conclusions and Guidelines for the future

Under the Romanian Presidency were drafted, discussed and came into force the main important documents of the Decade: the Terms of Reference and the National Plans of Action. By gathering together at the same table the various actors: National Governments, Roma representatives (inclusively Roma women and Young Roma leaders) and International Organizations (powerful NGOs and Donors) proved the great international importance awarded to the Decade and the political will of all the participants Members States to tackle more coherently, at an enhanced scaled-level, the problems the Roma are facing with.

The Decade financial support by the intermediate the intermediate of the Trust Fund (established also under the Romanian Presidency) and through the national budgets support for the implementing of the National Plan of Actions, not to mention the fact that international financial institutions are the fuel that makes the Decade go on.

The introduction of media issues as other cross-cutting theme of the Decade along with gender, poverty and anti-discrimination issues happened also under the Romanian Presidency.

The establishment of a mechanism for monitoring the activity of the Roma health mediators (which principles could be established in the future for the other fields of intervention: housing, employment and education) is a useful tool to check-put the Decade practical results.

Creating tasks force for different fields of intervention and bi-lateral approaches of different issues could prove useful for all the partners involved in the Decade different Members States, Roma organizations and International Organizations.

For the Future, the Decade will have to face different challenges raised from the discrepancies that might occur between theory and practice, between the political will and concrete implementation, between the increased and complex Roma problems and the ways of tackling these issues all under the spectrum of EU enlargement process. The involvement of the EU in the Decade made its first steps but others should be achieved for the future.

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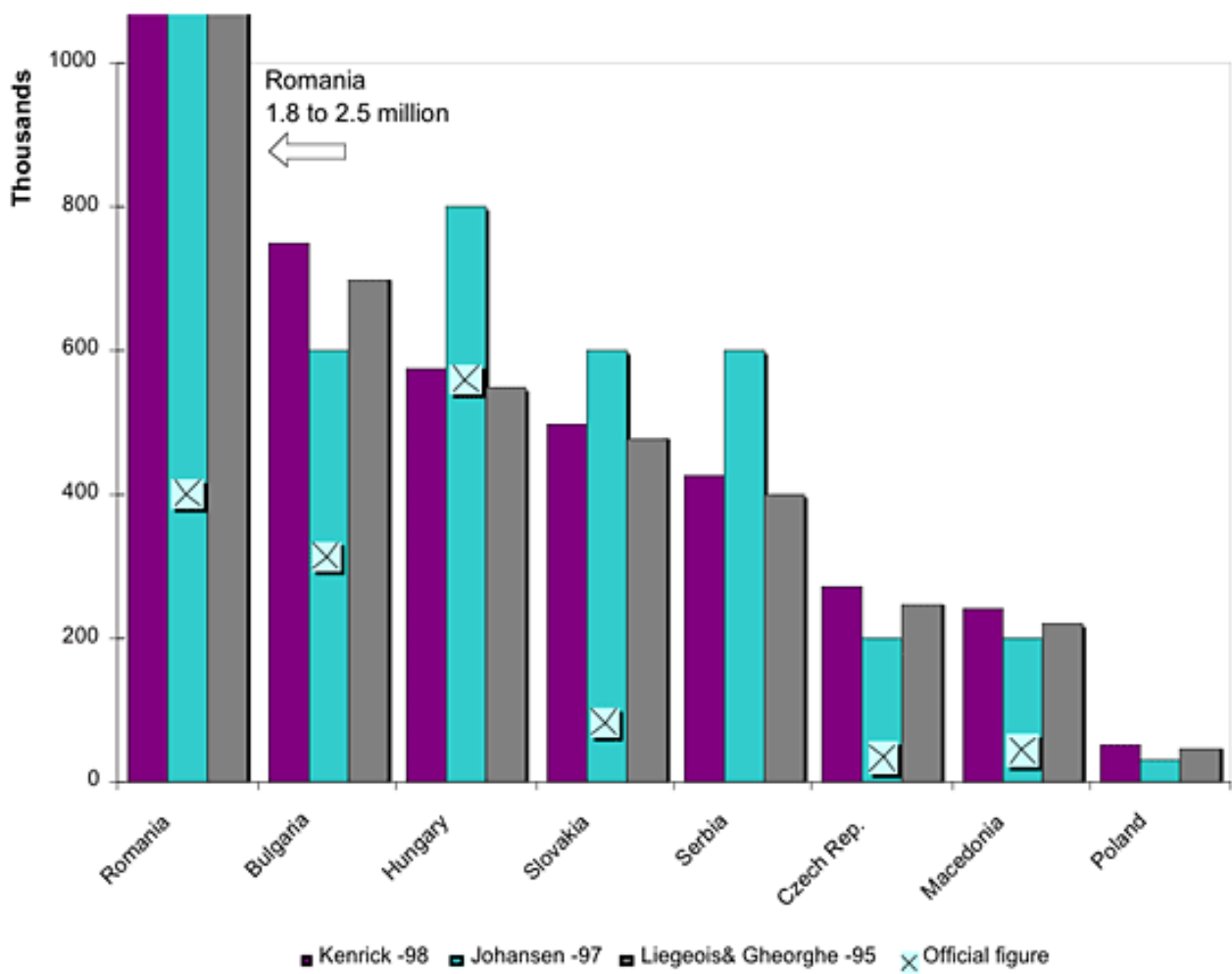
Annex 1. Official and unofficial estimation upon the number of the Roma people living in some Central and Eastern European countries

Annex 2. Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future - Remarks delivered by OSI Chairman George Soros at a conference official dinner on June 30, 2003

Annex 3. Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 – The Decade Terms of Reference elaborated under the Romanian Presidency

Annex 4. The Memorandum establishing the Romania's priorities during "Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015", Presidency mandate and the Schedule of the International Activities related.

Annex 5 Contact lists for the representatives of the Members States governmental bodies, International Partner organisations and Young Roma Leaders involved in the Decade of Roma Inclusion



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**Annex 2. - Roma in an Expanding Europe:
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2003**

Budapest, June 30–July 1 2003

I am really very happy to have the occasion to address you tonight and I am very happy that this conference is taking place. So first of all, I'd like to thank my co-hosts the World Bank and the Hungarian government, particularly [World Bank President] Jim Wolfensohn, who's taken the time to come here and attend the conference. I really appreciate your involvement in the Roma issue, because coming from Australia or some distant land, you do not really have first-hand acquaintance with the problem. So you really have shown great understanding and it's a tremendous help for all of us. ... and the Hungarian government, and of course naturally the Finnish government, and the Swedish government, and the Council of Europe Development Bank, and UNDP [United Nations Development Program], and all the governments that are represented here. The prime minister of Bulgaria [Simeon Saxe-Coburg Gotha] is here. I haven't seen the prime minister of Montenegro [Milo Djukanovic], who was here this morning. And a number of them are coming in tomorrow morning for a very important meeting, so I want to thank them all.

I will not talk about the Roma problem because you know more about it than I do, so I will not go into that at all. I will tell you a little about my involvement and then in particular I would like to talk about where do we go from here? Several journalists asked me today why I am so involved in the Roma issue. And my answer to that is: How can I not be involved in the Roma issue? This is one of the greatest social iniquities that still prevail in this region so it is natural that we must address it. That's why I'm so glad that this meeting is taking place, because it means that the issue is now recognized and therefore we have the makings of tackling it. And I'm very hopeful that in fact we will succeed.

I set up a foundation in Hungary in 1984. That was the first foundation I set up in this part of the world. And immediately the board of the foundation said we had to address the issue of Roma. And I remember getting on a plane—I think it was in 1987—and seeing a Roma, and he was accompanied by a rather attractive woman, which maybe added to my interest, and he spoke very cultivated Hungarian. So I started talking to him and it turned out that he was going to a conference in Finland discussing folk music and he was a collector of Roma music—the original Roma music, not the Gypsy music that you hear in restaurants and weddings. And he studied it and was collecting material. And then he asked me who I was and it turned out that his trip and his research were supported by the foundation. This gave me really a great deal of satisfaction because he represented the two requirements for success in dealing with the so-called Roma problem. One is that he spoke very cultivated Hungarian, therefore he was fully equal to anybody—so equality. And the other was that he was actually researching and rebuilding Roma.

Annex 3- Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 Terms of Reference Government of Romania – Under the Presidency of The Government of Romania,

Bucharest, 17-18 November 2005

Decade Declaration

[As signed by the Prime Ministers of the Participating Governments in Sofia on 2 February 2005 in English and Romany language]

Building on the momentum of the 2003 conference, “Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future”, we pledge that our governments will work toward eliminating discrimination and closing the unacceptable gaps between Roma and the rest of society, as identified in our Decade Action Plans.

We declare the years 2005 – 2015 to be the Decade of Roma Inclusion and we commit to support the full participation and involvement of national Roma communities in achieving the Decade’s objectives and to demonstrate progress by measuring outcomes and reviewing experiences in the implementation of the Decade’s Action Plans.

We invite other states to join our effort.

Deklaracia pala Rromane Integraciaqi Dekada, 2005-2015

Ame colaxaras pala momento e 2003 konferenciaqo, ‘Rroma ande Buhardi Evropa: e Avindimasqe Pharimata’, ke amare rajimata kerena buti karing e diskriminaciaqo peravipe taj te phanden pe e na-akceptuime averimata maskar e rroma taj sa e aver dzene, sarso mothodo ande amare Dekadake Akciake Planura.

Ame mothovasa, ke e bersa 2005-2015 si e Rromane Integraciaqi Dekada taj ame das vorba te zuraras e nacionalone rromane khetanimatan te saj aresen pe e Dekadake resa taj te sikavel pe o anglaripe perdal e agordinimatanqo molaripe taj perdal e eksperiencaqo virdikhipe ande e Dekadake Akciaqe Planonqi implementacia.

Ame akharas avere theman te phandaven pe amare zumavipnasa.

Sofia, Bulgaria, Februari 2, 2005

I. BACKGROUND

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 – 2015 (hereinafter “the Decade”) is a political commitment by Governments to combat Roma poverty, exclusion, and discrimination within a regional framework.

The main objectives of the Decade are to:

- accelerate progress toward improving the welfare of Roma by including Roma in the decision-making process, and
- to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way.

Due regard shall be given at all times to the close involvement and participation of Roma in the decisions and work of the Decade.

The Decade is an international initiative, which brings together Governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as Romani civil society to (i) launch initiatives to strengthen Roma inclusion as a high priority on the regional and European political agendas; (ii) learn and exchange experiences; (iii) involve Roma meaningfully in all policy making on matters concerning them; (iv) bring in international experience and expertise to help make progress on challenging issues; and (v) raise public awareness of the situation of Roma through active communications.

The Decade shall draw upon and maintain the joint focus of participating Governments, International Organisations and Roma on achieving progress toward selected outcomes over ten years. The success of the Decade will be demonstrated by measuring the progress made on Roma inclusion with respect to improvements in the living conditions of Roma over the ten-year period.

The Decade’s priority areas shall be: employment, education, health, and housing. While focussing on these priority areas, each participating Government shall in addition take into account the other core issues of poverty, discrimination, and gender mainstreaming.

The Decade shall be guided by the principle of sovereign equality of its Governments. Participating Governments shall fulfil, in good faith, the obligations assumed by them in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

II. PARTICIPATION

- A. The Founding Participating Governments of the Decade shall be the Governments of Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, FYROM, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia.
- B. The founding International Partner Organisation of the Decade shall be the following inter-governmental and international organisations (hereinafter the “International Partner Organisations”): World Bank, Open Society Institute (OSI), United Nations Development Program

(UNDP), Council of Europe (CoE), Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB), the Contact Point for Roma and Sinti Issues (CPRSI) of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the European Roma Information Office (ERIO), European Roma and Travellers Forum (ERTF), European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC) and the Roma Education Fund (REF).

- C. Other Governments and international organisations that undertake to adhere to the terms described in these Terms of Reference are invited to participate in the Decade.
- D. Any Government willing to participate in the Decade shall develop and adopt Decade National Action Plans.
- E. Governments intending to participate in the Decade and international organisations shall have the opportunity – if they are wishing to do so – to participate as Observers at ISC meetings and workshops until their decision to participate in the Decade.
- F. The Romani civil society of each Participating Country shall be appropriately represented in the Decade and at ISC meetings.
- G. Participating Governments and International Partner Organisations may terminate their participation by giving notice of their intention to do so to the ISC. Such notice shall take effect immediately the date of its receipt by the ISC.

III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Participating Governments

Each Participating Government of the Decade shall:

Ensure on an annual basis and during the whole Decade the financial commitment necessary for the implementation of the national Action Plans.

Ensure the efficient and timely implementation of its National Decade Action Plan.

Hold the Decade Presidency at least once during the ten-year period.

Seek to adopt the National Decade Action Plans and subsequent amendments thereto or to present the National Decade Action Plans and subsequent amendments thereto to the Parliament for adoption.

Ensure an effective participation of the Romani civil society in the National Working Groups, or similar bodies, in order to allow for their participation in the implementation and monitoring of the National Decade Action Plans.

Consider to facilitating and supporting the work of a Roma Consultant or of a Romani consultancy body for the Decade.

- Ensure coordination between line ministries and government institutions/offices for Roma in order to maintain coherence and continuity in implementation of the Decade Action Plan.
- Ensure transparency and sharing of information regarding the Decade within the government, with civil society, and with the general public.
- Establish an effective monitoring mechanism, which includes a way to measure progress at the national level of the National Decade Action Plan.
- Make available disaggregated data in accordance with the international standards on data collection and data protection.
- Inform at the annual meetings of the ISC on the progress made in the implementation of the National Decade Action Plan.
- Develop and implement the national communication plan for the Decade implementation at national level.
- Strengthen the capacity of Romani organisations in order to ensure their effective participation in the Decade process.
- Contribute financially to the budget of the Decade, as decided by the ISC in accordance with Section V of these Terms of Reference.

**International
Organisations**

Partner

International Partner Organisations in conformity with their respective missions, rules, procedures and their relevant budget appropriation:

- Shall actively participate in the Decade process
- Shall seek to establish a mutual supportive mechanism with the Decade and to co-ordinate their activities with the Decade in order to maximize the synergy effects.
- Shall support activities to facilitate the participation of Romani civil society in the work of the Decade.
- Shall provide needed expertise to the Decade directly or through third parties.
- May contribute financially or in-kind to the budget of the Decade, as decided by the ISC in accordance with Section V of these Terms of Reference.
- May support the Romani civil society with the establishment of a nation-wide consultation and participation mechanism of the Romani civil society in the Decade.

Romani Civil Society

The Romani civil society shall participate in the Decade process as partners at equal footing as follows.

The Romani civil society shall:

- a) Actively participate in the Decade process.
- b) Contribute to the effective implementation of the National Decade Action Plans by initiating dialogue between the local authorities and local Romani communities.
- c) Communicate the goals and objectives of the Decade to the Romani population of the Participating countries.
- d) Actively participate and offer its input and expertise in implementation and monitoring at the national level of the National Decade Action Plans.
- e) Ensure the participation of Roma to the broadest possible extent in the Decade process at national level.

III. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE DECADE

The Decade shall be governed by the following organs:

International Steering Committee (ISC)

The ISC shall constitute the highest decision-making and co-ordination body of the Decade.

The ISC shall be comprised of all Participating Governments and all International Partner Organisations, and representatives of the national Romani civil societies.

Each Government shall designate a national delegation to represent it at the meetings of the ISC. The national delegations shall be headed by the National Coordinator, appointed by the Prime Minister (or a government representative, appointed by the National Coordinator). The members of the national delegation shall be appointed by the Government. The Romani civil society of each Member shall be represented independently by one (1) delegate at ISC meetings.

The delegates of the national Romani civil societies may formulate joint positions and propose initiatives for consideration by the ISC.

Each International Partner Organisation shall designate one (1) person to represent it at the meetings of the ISC.

All decisions at ISC meeting are taken by consensus of all stakeholders.

Upon invitation of the Government holding the presidency of the Decade, the ISC shall meet at least once a year. The Government holding the Presidency of the Decade shall provide written notice of any ISC meeting at least two (2) months prior to the date set for the meeting.

The ISC shall have broad powers to manage and oversee the work of the Decade, included but not limited to the following:

- a) Based on a proposal by the incoming Presidency review and discuss the yearly Decade Work Plan, describing the priority areas of the Government holding the Presidency.
- b) Discuss and decide the priorities for activities at international level to be paid from the Decade Budget (See Section VI. of these Terms of References).
- c) Review the information on the Decade implementation progress in respective countries submitted by the Governments to the ISC.
- d) Review and adopt the annual Decade report, presented by the Government holding the Presidency at the end of its term in office.
- e) Draw conclusions from the reports and based on the exchange of experiences take relevant decisions.
- f) Discuss and agree upon any amendments to these Terms of Reference or any significant changes in the objectives or policies of the Decade.
- g) Review and approves the annual report on activities and expenses to be incurred on the international level.
- h) Approve the budget for the following financial year of the Decade for expenses to be incurred with the Decade Trust Fund.
- i) Formally approve the admission of new Governments and of International Partner Organisations.

The ISC may issue public statements on behalf of the Decade only if two thirds of the Governments are represented at a meeting and the statement does not address a missing Government.

Presidency of the Decade

Each year a Government shall serve the function of the Presidency of the Decade.

The Government holding the Presidency of the Decade shall be responsible for performing the following tasks, among others:

- a) Develop a Work Plan, describing the priority areas for the year of the Presidency, and presenting it for discussion to the ISC, taking into account the priority areas and activities of the previous Presidency.
- b) Guide the work of the Secretariat of the Decade in implementing the Work Plan of the Presidency and the other work relating to the Decade.
- c) Coordinate the exchange of information and the implementation of jointly agreed activities of the Decade at international level.
- d) Propose a budget to the ISC for the activities occurring during the Presidency covered by the Decade Trust Fund.
- e) Convene, organise, conduct and chair the meetings of the ISC.
- f) Convene, organise, conduct and chair any workshops or meetings held on the four (4) priority issues or the three (3) other core issues of the

Decade, on data-related issues, or on monitoring of the work of the Decade.

- g) Convene, organise, conduct and chair any other workshops decided by the Presidency on any other Roma-related issue as laid down in its Work Plan (Priority Areas of the Presidency).
- h) Cooperate with the Roma Education Fund any activities related to the Decade.
- i) Act as the relevant contact for receiving any applications from other countries and international organisations wishing to be admitted as a Participant of the Decade.
- j) The presidency shall be entitled to invite other countries to become participants of the Decade.
- k) Act as the main representative of the Decade before the European and international institutions and other major stakeholders in promoting any initiatives aimed at furthering the goals and objectives of the Decade.
- l) Initiate, facilitate, and maintain relations at national and international levels with international organizations and institutions as well as with civil society organisations working with Roma.
- m) Organise meetings with international donors in order to help ensure the most effective use of their efforts in improving the Roma's situation.
- n) Present the annual Decade report to the ISC.
- o) Communicate the Decade goals and objectives as well as its activities and results to the media.

The Presidency of the Decade shall rotate annually among the Governments in the following chronological order:

Romania 1 July 2005 – 30 June 2006

Bulgaria 1 July 2006 - 30 June 2007

Hungary 1 July 2007 - 30 June 2008

Serbia 1 July 2008 - 30 June 2009

Slovakia 1 July 2009 - 30 June 2010

Czech Republic 1 July 2010 - 30 June 2011

FYROM 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012

Croatia 1 July 2012 - 30 June 2013

Montenegro 1 July 2013 - 30 June 2014

Should any of the above Governments decide to relinquish the Presidency function, the Presidency will pass on to the Government next on the list.

Secretariat of the Decade Presidency

The Secretariat shall rotate among the Participating Governments every year along with the Decade Presidency. The Government holding the Decade

Presidency shall ensure that the Secretariat has sufficient personnel and is appropriately equipped for carrying out its assigned activities.

The Secretariat shall play mainly an administrative role in support of the Decade Presidency and in doing so shall perform the following tasks, among others:

- a) Help the Presidency in the implementation of the decisions taken by the ISC.
- b) Organise the annual ISC meeting, as well as other meetings convened by the Presidency.
- c) Prepare all documentation related to the Roma Decade and required by the Presidency.
- d) Distribute any new and relevant information related to the Decade to all Governments and International Partner Organisations, as well as Romani civil society and relevant international institutions.
- e) Cooperate with the Decade Trust Fund with regard to all international communication campaigns and programmes (*i.e.*, web-page, publications, etc).
- f) Produce the annual report of the Presidency.
- g) Liaise with Governments, International Partner Organisations, Romani civil society and other relevant organisations.
- h) Under the guidance of the Decade Presidency, receive and process applications from countries and international organisations intending to be participants or observers of the Decade.
- i) Centralize and communicate to ISC members the calendar of activities related to Roma Decade, for avoiding overlapping.

V. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Decade Trust Fund

A Decade Trust Fund (DTF) shall be established for the purpose of financing international activities of the Decade, according to the provisions as laid down in the agreements on Decade Trust Fund between the relevant Governments and the World Bank. The fund may finance international activities and technical assistance to participating Governments such as cross-country communication and awareness raising, monitoring and evaluation, information, dissemination and knowledge management.

The Fund shall be capitalised from annual contributions of the participating Governments and International Organizations, shall be determined at a minimum of 20.000 Euro for the year 2006. For each subsequent year the ISC decides on the amount of the annual contribution. The international organizations shall contribute in accordance with their missions and rules to the Trust Fund. One international organisation will take the responsibility for executing the DTF.

The managerial structure of the DTF will be determined in separate Terms of Reference as attached to the agreements on Decade Trust Fund between the relevant Governments and the World Bank.

FURTHER FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Further costs of participation in the Decade shall be financed as follows:

- The costs of organising the ISC's meetings and other meetings and workshops relating to the Decade as well as all other costs arising from holding the Presidency shall be borne by the Government holding the Presidency.
- The costs of personnel of the Secretariat shall be borne by the Government holding the Presidency.
- Each Government shall bear all expenses incurred in sending its delegations or representatives to the ISC's meetings and to other meetings and workshops relating to the Decade.
- International Partner Organisations shall bear all expenses incurred in sending their representatives, as well as the representatives of the Romani civil society from the participating countries, to the ISC's meetings and to other meetings and workshops relating to the Decade in accordance with their missions and rules.

a)VI. COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission supports the objectives of the Decade of Roma Inclusion. It will participate in the International Steering Committee and in other relevant meetings linked to the Decade as an observer.

It is intended that the Decade, on the one hand, and EU initiatives designed to promote social inclusion and combat discrimination against Roma, on the other hand, should be complementary and mutually supportive. Participating countries are encouraged to explore the possibility of using EU funding to support activities which promote Roma inclusion, subject to the eligibility requirements of the relevant financial instruments.

Participating countries' Decade Action Plans should be consistent with related policy documents prepared in the EU context (employment and social inclusion national action plans, joint inclusion memoranda etc). Participating countries should take into account the provisions of EC anti-discrimination legislation and policy, as part of their strategy to tackle discrimination (legal and other relevant measures, including awareness-raising) in the Decade priority areas (employment, housing, health, education) within their Decade Action Plans.

The European Commission is keen to receive regular information from the participating countries on how they intend to use EU funding and policy instruments to help them to meet the objectives set out in their Decade Action Plans.

VII. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

These Terms of Reference shall enter into force from November 18, 2005.

The closing conference on the Decade of Roma Inclusion shall take place on 30 June 2015.

Any participant of the Decade may propose amendments to these Terms of Reference.

Romani and English shall be the official languages of the Decade.

All relevant documents of the Decade shall be translated into national official languages.

Annex 4 – the Memorandum establishing the Romania’s priorities during “Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”, Presidency mandate and the Schedule of the International Activities related.

Bucharest, 30 September 2005

APROVED

PRIME MINISTER

**Călin Popescu
Tăriceanu**

MEMORANDUM

From: Mrs MARIEA IONESCU – The President of the National Agency for Roma

To: Mr. MIHAI ALEXANDRU VOICU, Minister delegate in Charge with Coordinating of the General Secretariat of the Government

Thematic: establishing the Romania’s priorities during the “Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”, Presidency mandate and the Schedule of the International Activities related.

I. 1. Conceptual delimitations

We are facing, at the national and international level, an entire debate concerning the *mainstreaming* and *targeting* terminology issues. A large number of NGOs and international organisations give more credit to the notion of mainstreaming while others stakeholders prefer to imagine the

Roma as a well coagulated targeted group in order for them to better a lot the appropriate financial resources.

Romania does consider this cleavage approach as an artificial and counter-productive one. The two concepts must not be considered as being in opposition one against the other but as being complementary. This clarification must be underlined within the Decade framework.

- Romania is pro-sustaining the initial signification of the *social inclusion* term regarding the fact the Roma issue has to be on the agenda of every single, central or local, public institution in all the fields of public activity.
- Romania will conceive a document which will be transmitted to all the participants and, also, will organise a workshop who's purpose is to debate and to clarify over the two concepts and, especially, to decide over the best modalities of implementing the Decade goals.

2. Informing and communicating: the Media role

Romania is convinced that, without the help and supporting activities from the Media partners, it will be very difficult to transform the concept of *inclusion* into a very substantial and easy to understand fact, both for the Roma origin population and for the Non-Roma population, living within the Decade Members States.

- A special dedicated workshop will be organised during the Romanian presidency of the Decade as an opportunity for the Mass-Media representatives to debate over the ways of identification of the Roma people involvement in the Media process.

3. The dissemination of the best-practices in the Central and Eastern Europe Countries

In some Decade fields of action, it is a common and accepted reality the fact that that some countries are more developed and experienced than other member states. Among these states a concrete information dissemination concerning the Decade achievements will be useful for all the member states involved in the process.

Best –practices patterns proposed by Romania

- Offering information about the Roma Health Mediators, initiative which proved successful until present. By leading to a good end the process of creating and developing the Roma Health Mediators network it will be alleviate the access of Roma people to health services in the localities where these health mediators activate.

4. The Troika Decade (Transferring the Presidency from a member state to another)

As a consequence of the member states governments' agreement, the Troika example (a model that works both at the OSCE level and at the EU level) could be implemented during the Decade for Roma Inclusion in order to prepare the process of taking over the presidency, on the behalf of the next

country designated and, also, it will be a good learning example from the previous experiences.

5. The achievements reporting of the Romanian Presidency

By the end of its Presidency, Romania will conceive two reports:

- One report will enclose the progress achieved in the four Decade action fields.
- Other report will enclose the fulfilment of the objectives goals engaged by Romania and lesson learned for the future.

II. The Schedule of the International Activities

The schedule engaged by Romania in the near future during its presidency of the Decade encloses the development different activities at the national and international level. All the data have a temporary character and all the participants involved will be well informed and we will ask for their consultancy before we will establish the concrete data.

October 2005	Taking over the attributions of the Decade from the Hungarian Government
November 2005	International Steering Committee Meeting Workshop: Roma people and Mass Media
December 2005	Thematic Reunion: The role of the Roma Health mediators in the Roma communities
January 2006	Working Group: mainstreaming and Targeting, complementary themes
February 2006	The intermediary report of the Decade Presidency
March 2006	Troika Establishment
April 2006	Thematic Workshop: Best practices within the Members States/Education/employment/housing;
May 2006	Final Report of the Decade Presidency
June 2006	The International Steering Committee Meeting

Concerning all mentioned, please do approve the above-mentioned priorities during the period of the Romanian Presidency of the “Decade for Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” and, also, the International Activities Programme.

***Annex 5 - “The Roma health conference
“Past and future projects and policies: how to impact Roma Health most effectively?”
extract from the Official Report of the Conference***

Bucharest, 12-13 December 2005

....Mrs. Marta Schaafft, Consultant with the OSI, presented the study Mediating Roma Health-the programme and policy opportunities. In the introduction she affirmed that many countries are planning to introduce the Roma Health mediators within the National Plans of Action of the Decade. Within this context, OSI initiated a study which is meant to analyse this programme. Within this study were involved both health mediators and NGOs. The purpose of the study was that of identifying the potential and the limitations of the health mediators' programme. In her reviewing of the programme background, structure and efficiency, Mrs. Schaff underlined the way in which this programme is placed within the governmental strategies on the whole. The methodology used in the study elaboration consisted in: consulting materials form the specialised literature, interviews with the relevant actors, qualitative researches over the programmes in Romania, Bulgaria and Finland.

From the analysis of the programmes in these 3 countries occurred the fact that in Romania activate an important number of Roma health mediators as against the situation in Bulgaria and Finland.

The Roma health mediators can less efficiently tackle the following issues: discrimination, poverty rate (one cannot help the poor people which are not targeted by the government policies), the multi-marginalized groups policies and legislation in the health field, the lack of the political will and engagement both at the local and at the national level, the insufficient number of health mediators heaving a reduced number of resources at their disposal.

VI. The recommendations and the conclusions of the OSI Study

For those actors who implement the Roma Health mediators programmes

- to evaluate the on-going programmes;
- to provide training and support targeting the double-marginalized groups;
- to provide additional professional support to the Roma Health mediating programmes;
- to increase the number of the Roma mediators;
- to increase the medical personnel involvement;
- to enforce the programme supervision mechanism.

For those actors who elaborate the public policies at the national scale

- to include, in the National Actions Plans on Health, more measures which take into account the socials determinants that influence the Roma health condition

...

Within the workshops there were debated the problems the Roma woman is facing with. During the last decades substantial efforts have been made to improve the woman status in general, being important to notice that Roma women have a series of special problems: their vulnerability, the sexual abuses, the domestic violence – all these are and must be regarded as violations of human rights in general, the right to health must be considered together with its correlative – the right to freedom, despite the significant effort of the governments, very few Roma women have substantial rights.

The Roma women are facing discrimination in many forms: they are discriminated because they are women, because they are Roma, because they are very young or very old, because they are living in the rural areas, because they have special needs. Within this context one can perceive the

Roma woman health condition as across-cutting issue with other human rights. There is indeed a large spectrum of problems the Roma women are facing, the main discrimination source is a double one: the fact that they are women and they are Roma. The problems issuing from that are: they are discriminated regarding the access to the public health system, they are not treated well, and the ambulance-cars drivers refuse to go in the Roma arrears. The Roma women problems are not sufficiently present on the public institutions agenda. In the Decade context, it is recommended the multiplying of the institution-civil society type partnerships number - e .g. NAR-Roma civil-society.

It was enlighten the fact that a main issue which is stressed is the fact that the birth rate at Roma people is twice larger than the one of the rest of the population but is avoided to be mentioned the fact that the mortality rate is much higher than the one present in the case of the majority population. ...

Annex 5. Contact lists for the representatives of the Members States governmental bodies, International Partner organisations and Young Roma Leaders involved in the Decade of Roma Inclusion

Governments representatives

No. Crt	Name	Position	Institution	Country	Phone/Fax/ E-mail
1	Maya Cholakova	Director	Directorate on Ethnic and Demographic Issues	Bulgaria	m.cholakova@government.Mg
2	Milena Klajner	Head, Office for National Minorities NC	Government of Republic of Croatia	Croatia	milena.klajner@vlada.hr
3	Czeslaw Walek	Director, Office of the Council for Roma Community Affairs	Government of the Czech Republic	Czech Republic	walek@vlada.cz
4	Mabera Kamberi	Assistant Minister	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy	FYR of Macedonia	mabera_k@yahoo.com
5	László Teleki	State Secretary for Roma Affairs	Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities	Hungary	laszlo.teleki@meh.hu
6	Andor Urmos	Director of Roma Integration Department	Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities	Hungary	andor.urmos@meh.hu
7	Major Balázs	Financial Expert, Roma Integration Department	Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities	Hungary	major.Malazs@icsszem.hu
8	Anne-Maria Cukovic	Assistant, Roma National Strategy Secretariat	Ministry of Human and Minority Rights	Serbia and Montenegro	roma@humanrights.gov.yu
9	Sofia Daskalova	Coordinator for International cooperation	Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities	Slovak Republic	sofia.daskalova@vlada.gov.sk
10	Masárová Eva	Coordinator for Health field	Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Slovak Government for Roma Communities	Slovak Republic	eva.masarova@vlada.gov.sk

11	Mariea Ionescu	State Secretary	National Agency for Roma	Romania	Tel: +4 021 211 30 37 Fax: +4 021 211 51 94 maria.ionescu@gov.ro
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International organisations representatives

No. Crt	Name	Position	Institution
1	George Soros	Chairman	Open Society Institute
2	Calin Popescu-Tariceanu	Prime-Minister	Romanian Government
3	Shigeo Katsu	Vice President	World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Region
4	Renate Weber	Presidential Councillor	Romanian Presidency
5	Marko Bela	State Minister	Government of Romania
6	Anne de Ligne	Head of the Phare Section	European Commission Delegation
7	Soknan Han Jung	Resident Representative of PNUD, Romania	PNUD Regional Office
8	Christian Bodewig	Human Development Sector Unit	World Bank, Europe and Central Asia Region
9	Andre Wilkens	Director	OSI - Budapest
10	Gheorghe Raducanu	Board member	European Roma and Travellers Forum
11	Anthony Lockett	Acting Head of Unit DG European Social Affairs	European Commission
12	Annette Dixon	Director	World Bank's Europe and Central Asia Region
13	Eva Schwebel	Sector Manager, Projects Department	Council of Europe Development Bank

14	Costel Bercus	Chair of the Roma Education Fund Board	Roma Education Fund
15	Nicolae Gheorghe	OSCE/ODIHR councillor on Roma and Sinti	OSCE Roma and Sinti Contact Point for ODIHR
16	Erika Adamova	Expert, DGIII- Social Cohesion, Roma and Travelers Division	Council of Europe
17	Stephan Mueller	International Consultant for the Roma Decade	OSI
18	Valeriu Nicolae	Deputy Director	ERIO
20	Florin Moisa	President	Roma Center for the Roma Communities
21	Iulius Rostas	Program Manager	OSI - Budapest
22	Simona Lupu	Task Manager	European Commission Delegation
23	Isabela Mihalache	Program manager	OSI, Hungary
24	Andrei Ivanov	Policy Adviser, Department-Poverty reduction	UNDP Regional Support Center - Bratislava
25	Buzetky Tunde	Communications and operations analyst	World Bank's Slovakia country office
26	Richard Florescu	Programme Coordinator	World Bank's Romania country office
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