



THE GOVERNMENT OF BULGARIA

**THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL
POLICY**

**THE DECADE
OF ROMA INCLUSION**

2005-2015

**BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY
JULY 2006 – JUNE 2007**

Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015

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.

Sofia, Bulgaria, February 2, 2005

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1. WHAT IS THE DECADE OF ROMA INCLUSION 2005-2015?

The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 is an unprecedented political commitment by governments in Central and Southeastern Europe to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Roma within a regional framework. The Decade is an international initiative that brings together governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as Romani civil society, to accelerate progress toward improving the welfare of Roma and to review such progress in a transparent and quantifiable way. The Decade focuses on the priority areas of education, employment, health, and housing, and commits governments to take into account the other core issues of poverty, discrimination, and gender mainstreaming.

The idea of the Decade emerged from "Roma in an Expanding Europe: Challenges for the Future," a high-level regional conference on Roma held in Budapest, Hungary, in 2003.

Prime Ministers of the participating governments Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia, signed the Declaration of the Decade of Roma Inclusion in Sofia, Bulgaria, on February 2, 2005. The Bulgarian prime minister appointed the Minister of disaster management policy as **National coordinator** of the Decade of Roma Inclusion.



All of these countries have significant Roma minorities, and the Roma minority has been rather disadvantaged, both economically and socially. Each country participating in the Decade has developed a national **Decade Action Plan** that specifies the goals and indicators in the priority areas.

Following the official launch of the Decade in Bulgaria in early February 2005, the National Decade Action Plan was approved by the Council of Ministers on April 14, 2005.

The founding international partner organizations of the Decade are 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 the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the European Roma Information Office, the European

Roma and Traveller Forum, the European Roma Rights Centre, and the Roma Education Fund.

During the 7th International Steering Committee, which was held on 18 of November 2005 in Bucharest, Romania were adopted **the Terms of Reference** for the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”.

2. BULGARIAN LEGISLATION MEASURES

The Bulgarian Government works actively toward solving the social, educational, health and cultural problems of people from the Roma community. The integration of Roma people is of exceptional importance for the prosperity of the whole society, for its social cohesion and security.

The basic strategic and political aim is to overcome the unequal treatment of the Roma people through their active involvement in the social and economic life. The efficient social and economic policy combined with the protection of their rights and the cultural aspects of their integration represent priorities in solving the Roma related problems.

A special attention is paid to the introduction of efficient mechanisms for involvement of Roma people in the elaboration of policies for social integration, enhancement of the capacity of Roma people and Roma NGOs for competent social inclusion, improving the capacity of administration to work in the Roma community and with Roma civil organizations. The aim is to provide Roma people and Roma NGOs with the appropriate skills in order to participate in the decision making at all levels.

During 2006 the administrative support and organisation of the Bulgarian participation in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015 was a real challenge for the Bulgarian government in the process of negotiating the accession of Bulgaria to the European Union. The Bulgarian Decade participation was closely related to the membership criteria. As a result of the positive efforts to reinforce this participation the decisive European Commission monitoring report of 26 September confirmed the progress in the sphere of Roma integration. This issue was taken out of “the red zone” and did not become an obstacle to the country’s membership in the European Union.

In relation to this the **Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Demographic policy and Equal Opportunities Directorate** initiated and enacted a series of secondary legislation measures concerning the participation of the Republic of Bulgaria in the international initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”.

With a Protocol decision № 21 of the Council of Ministers from 25 May 2006 the **Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy** was appointed as a **National Coordinator of the Decade**.

Decree №141 of the Council of Ministers was adopted on 12 June 2006, which accepts the **one-year Bulgarian Presidency** of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” for the period of 1 July 2006 – 30 June 2007, together with the procedures and rules of the Decade. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy was assigned with the implementation of the Decree.

With a Protocol decision № 43 of the Council of Ministers from 26 October 2006 there was appointed a new National Coordinator of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”, who is Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

The Council of Ministers with Decision № 738 from 30 October 2006 approved the **Decade Terms of Reference** and proposed to the Parliament to ratify them. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy drafted a bill for the ratification of the Decade procedures and laws.

On 12 December 2006 the Parliament adopted the law and ratified the Decade Terms of Reference.

Following the recommendations of the European Commission in 2006 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy took further **steps to improve the efficiency of the implementation of the activities aiming integration and social inclusion of Roma population in the Bulgarian society**.

In accordance with the Plan of the Bulgarian government (Decision № 453 of 19 June 2006) to approve measures for the implementation of the main recommendations of the European Commission, pointed out in its Global Monitoring Report of 16 May 2006, and the Decade Terms of Reference, a **Council for Roma Integration in the Bulgarian Society was established** and a **campaign was launched to increase the level of awareness of Roma population** in the sphere of programmes for equal access to the labour market, social security, education, health care, reproductive health care, problems of responsible parenthood, etc.

The council’s task is to discuss and give opinions on the issues of Roma social inclusion and equality of the Roma population in the Bulgarian society. Chairman of the Council is the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Vice Chairman is a Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy and National

Coordinator of the Decade, and members of the Council are 24 representatives of different Roma non-governmental organisations in Bulgaria. In addition, with an ordinance of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy **was formed an Interdepartmental working group for the monitoring of the National Decade Action Plan by nominated representatives of all responsible institutions.** Monitoring meetings are held at the end of every month in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

2. THE BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY

Bulgaria is a President country of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, from 1 July 2006 till 30 June 2007. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy has the leading role during the Presidency and the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy coordinated the activities implementation in his role of National coordinator of the Decade.

The technical and organizational activity during the one-year Presidency was done by experts in the “Demographic policy and equal opportunities” Directorate in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

- **The VIIIth International Steering Committee Meeting;**

The National Agency for Roma, Romania organized the VIIIth International Steering Committee Meeting which was held on 12th of June 2006 at Sheraton Hotel in Brussels, Belgium. During this Meeting the Bulgarian National Coordinator reconfirmed Bulgarian commitment to take over the Presidency of the “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”

- **Taking over the Presidency of the initiative “Decade of Roma inclusion 2005-2015”;**



On 4 July 2006 there was the official ceremony of taking over the Bulgarian Presidency of the “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”.

The ceremony was organized by the Bulgarian Government and was held in Sofia at the National Palace of Culture.

The ceremony was officially opened by Mr. Georgi Parvanov - President of Bulgaria, Mr. Stanishev - Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Mrs. Emel Etem - Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Disaster Management Policy, Mrs. Emiliya Maslarova - Minister of Labour and Social Policy and Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy and National coordinator of the Decade of Roma Inclusion.

The Presidency of the Decade of Roma Inclusion was taking over from the Romanian Government. The Romanian delegation was composed of five persons, respectively the National Coordinator of the Decade and President of the National Agency for Roma - Ms. Mariea Ionescu, Mr. Marius Ion and Mr. Marian Babes - experts in the National Agency for Roma and Ms. Claudia Kovacs and Ms. Maria Ursu representatives of the Romanian Technical Secretariat of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”

- **IXth International Steering Committee Meeting;**



The IXth International Steering Committee (ISC) meeting was organized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Bulgaria in its capacity of a National Coordinating Body of the Decade of Roma Inclusion under the Bulgarian Presidency.

The ISC Meeting was held on 16-17 November 2006 in Sofia Princess Hotel, Bulgaria.

Nicolaus van der Pas, European Commission Director General of Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities, welcomed the new initiatives and reinforced the European Union’s commitment to Roma inclusion through Structural Funds and Social Funds, as well as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007. He also commented on the value of Roma-led monitoring work and emphasized that the Commission fully supports the Decade as a framework for policy making.

“Cooperation between Roma communities, NGOs, and national governments is essential to the success of the Decade,” stated Baki Hyuseinov, Bulgaria’s Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Policy, chairing the initiative “Decade of

Roma Inclusion 2005-2015“ and said that: *“In Bulgaria we have worked with many groups within society, including media and police, to focus greater attention on social inclusion issues.”*

The main decisions which were taken during the IXth International Steering Committee Meeting were the following:

➤ **Terms of Reference for work with the Trust Fund**

Concerning the **Terms of Reference** for work with the Decade Trust Fund was made a decision to form a Steering Body, which will act in coordination with the International Steering Committee. In the discussion during the ISC Meeting, the participants came to an agreement that this body will be from three persons: one from the country currently holding the Decade Presidency, one from the next country that will hold the Decade Presidency, and one from the World Bank. The selection of proposals for financing by the Decade Trust Fund will be done through an open competition; proposals can be made by the governments and by non-governmental organisations, too. The necessary documents for preparing of proposals were done duly by the World Bank in result of which were send and discussed proposals by some Decade member-countries. As a result of this was approved and realized the first project, financed by the Decade Trust Fund. In May 2007 Bulgaria organized international seminar “Exchange of Good practices in the sphere of employment”.

➤ **Establishing of a Permanent Decade Secretariat**

With a view to the better coordination and technical support of the Decade, during the IXth meeting of the International Steering Committee was made a decision for establishment on a Permanent Secretariat in Budapest with the financial support of the Open Society Institute. It will appoint two persons – one at a full-time and the other at a part-time position. There are opportunities for the placement of temporary consultants to the Secretariat, if necessary. The staff of the Secretariat will be selected through open competition. Job descriptions for the staff positions will be prepared. The opinions of the International Steering Committee will be taken into consideration during the selection process.

➤ **Monitoring of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”**

The new initiative of Roma organizations for monitoring of the implementation of the National Decade Action Plans, as well as a commitment to provide cross-country support using an international trust fund, were endorsed during the Meeting.

“DecadeWatch,” means to monitor the Decade countries’ execution of their National Decade Action Plans, is being prepared in the nine Decade countries by Roma researchers, supported by the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the World Bank.

The Decade of Roma Inclusion is the first international effort designed to improve the lives of Roma and include them in the societies in which they live. Now Roma are one of the largest, poorest, and fastest-growing minorities in Europe.

- **Seminars devoted to the social role of “Roma women”**



In January 2007 “Demographic policy and equal opportunities” Directorate in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy elaborated Plan for the activities in accordance with the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” on national and international level for 2007, concerted by the deputy minister of labour and Social Policy and National coordinator of the initiative and approved by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy.

In relation with the implementation of this plan in the period March-June 2007 were organized 2 seminars devoted to the social role of the Roma women.



The first seminar was organized on 20 March 2007 in the building of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. To participate in the seminar were invited more than 40 Roma women from whole West Bulgaria.

The second seminar was organized on 4 June 2007 in Kazanlak town. During the

seminar took part more than 120 Roma women.

The main topics, which were discussed during the seminars were: “Challenges in the implementation of the National employment action plan – 2007”, “Overcoming of the social inclusion through giving social services for children and families in risk”, “Equal Opportunities for All”, “The Roma family and the place of children in It”, “Preservation of the cultural identity of Roma society in Bulgaria” and “Kinds of discrimination and the Roma women”.

- **National workshop “Opportunities to candidate for European Structural Funds with a purpose to make a decision for Roma problems in the country”**



On **29 and 30 of March 2007** in the National Center for professional development (base of the Ministry of Labour and Social policy) was implemented a national workshop which main topic was: **“Opportunities to candidate for European Structural Funds with a purpose to make a decision for Roma problems in the country”**.

This workshop was a part of the Action Plan about the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” on national and international level for 2007, approved in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

The main topics, which were discussed during the first day of the seminar were: “Opportunities to apply for pre-accession EU Funds”, Operational Programme “Human resources development” and “Social Investment Fund – financing of infrastructural and qualification projects”.

During the second day of the seminar there was a Meeting of the Council for Roma Integration in the Bulgarian Society, to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

- **International workshop “Exchange of good practices in the sphere of Employment”;**



The international workshop ” Exchange of Good Practices in the Sphere of Employment” was organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy with the financial support of the Decade Trust Fund.

It was held in Sofia on 10-11 May 2007 in the presence of more than 60 experts, representatives of governmental and non-governmental organisations and researchers. A significant achievement was to attract as participants experts in the sphere of employment and Roma inclusion not only from country-members of the Decade, but also from Spain, the UK, and the Netherlands. Therefore the debate, comments and discussions concerning the Decade were set in a broader European context. The main issues of the seminar were: reviewing and pointing out the problems of the integration of the Roma population in the labour market, recommendations and future actions.

The general conclusion from the all presentations during the seminar was that the key problem areas in the sphere of Roma employment have been identified. Efforts are being made to improve the situation of the Roma population on the labour market by measures and programme to increase the motivation for seeking and finding job, vocational training, professional qualification, prevention of early drop-out pupils and improving the Roma public image.

Concerning the Roma integration to the labour market, some strategic approaches were mapped out. According to the World Bank presentation, the policy to make the population more active could be successful in reducing the expenditure on social assistance and the number of people depending on it, in promoting the seeking and finding of permanent occupation and on condition that those who need further qualification are supported. However, making the

population more active could not only reduce the expenditure on social assistance but also raise poverty when there is an underdeveloped sector demanding lower qualification (rural areas for example), when a large part of the population, entitled to social assistance, is socially excluded and when the institutional capacity for social work is low. The policy of making the Roma population active on the labour market could have a positive effect only after consideration of the complex specifics regarding the exclusion of the Roma community. It is the state's obligation to promote access to the labour market by means of a precisely addressed individual approach. The needs of the Roma community should as well be considered while reforming the employment services. A balance is needed between the policy to promote employment and the social security policy.

The Spanish non-governmental organisation „Foundation Secretariado Gitano” presented its programme called „Acceder”, which aims to promote the access of the Roma community to specialised vocational training and to ensure employment based on equality. This could be achieved by ensuring such training for a better access to the labour market, with the help of raising the level of information concerning discrimination practices towards Roma population and promoting a bigger number of actions dedicated to the Roma community. The objective situation of the Roma population on the labour market of Spain is characterised by a high level of temporary employment. It is focused on the need of long-term programmes for employment of the Roma and on the role of the EU Structural Funds. Through the “Acceder” programme the resources of the Structural Funds are being used for programmes targeting the Roma population. The undertaken actions are part of the specific activities regarding the Roma community in accordance with the established mainstreaming approach. The global economic and social development of the society is considered, and in the course of the actions specific target groups are differentiated, while the establishment of segregated services and actions is avoided. The achievements concern more than 31 000 beneficiaries, 23 000 signed employment contracts, an increase of the employment rate amidst the Roma population to over 70%, gender balance, active participation and a shift in the attitude of the Roma beneficiaries, as well as an improved access to specialised services for the Roma population, cooperation between administration and business, strong influence resulting from supplementary actions and data gathering during the analysis of the situation.

The joint project JOBS of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the UNDP in Bulgaria was also presented, which supports entrepreneurship and creation of jobs in regions with high unemployment rate. Experience was shared with the established and active network of 42 business centres and 10 business

incubators in the whole country, offering services to small and medium-sized businesses, unemployed and farmers.

Another interesting presentation was offered by SEGA Foundation and The Land - a Source of Income Foundation (Bulgaria) on the programme “The Land - a Source of Income”, which aims to assist landless Roma families to gain economic independence by buying land and working for sustainable agricultural production. During the 3-year starting phase of the programme it became clear that financial assistance or training alone is not sufficient for the Roma families to become good farmers. The conclusion is that there should be better access to information, training and consultations in addition to the financial assistance, and also the focus should be not only on the given individual but on the entire family.

Mr. Andor Urmos from Hungary presented his report on “The integration of the Roma population in the labour market as part of the national frame programmes financially supported by the European Social Fund of the European Union and the national budgets in the period 2007-2013” and focused on the specific training for Roma people, in accordance with the main occupation in the regions in question.

The seminar was attended by representatives of the employment services of Montenegro and Croatia, who shared their achievements in the actions aiming to Roma population and regarding the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015.

No less interesting were the presentations about the employment of the marginal groups, the programmes for employment and self-employment, as well as about the promotion and financial support for the Roma entrepreneurship.

Among the main conclusions of the seminar was the consideration of the important role of the modern understanding of the process of social protection and social inclusion, which has already been adopted at European level. Along with the established goals for sustainable economic growth, the updated Lisbon strategy puts an accent on social policy. It provides for significant financial resources to be invested in human capital through the European Social Fund.

• **Regional seminars to make popular the aims of the initiative and to explain the implementing policies in Bulgaria in this sphere;**

In relation with the implementation of the Plan of activities to the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” on international and national level “Demographic policy and equal opportunities” Directorate in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy realized series of seminars **“To make popular the**

aims of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” and to explain the implementing policies in Bulgaria in this sphere”.

For the period January-September 2007 are organized four seminars in different parts of the country – Bankja, Stara Zagora, Varshets and Shoumen.

During the seminars attended more than 400 representatives of different Roma non-governmental organizations, Roma experts in Municipality administrations, representatives of the civil society engaged and working for the equal integration of Roma in Bulgaria.

The main topics which were discussed during the seminars were: “Demographic problems of the population in Bulgaria”, also there were presented the results from two sociological surveys “Orientation of the Youngs for creation of family, childbirth and breeding of children” and “Roma for Roma”, there was done also a survey of the implementation of the National Decade Action Plan and also there were discussed the main priorities: education, healthcare, housing, employment, anti-discrimination and culture.

- **The Xth International Steering Committee Meeting;**

The Xth International Steering Committee (ISC) meeting was organized by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in cooperation with the Open Society Institute Office in Bulgaria and The World Bank. The ISC Meeting was held on 12-13 June 2007 in Sofia Princess Hotel, Bulgaria.

The meeting of the International Steering Committee was opened by Mr. Sergey Stanishev – Bulgarian Prime Minister, Ms. Emiliya Maslarova – Minister of Labour and Social Policy, Mr. Baki Hyuseinov – Deputy Minister and National coordinator of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”. Official guests during the Meeting were Mr. George Soros – President of “Open Society” Institute, Mr. Shigeo Katsu – Vice President of the World Bank and also Ms. Victoria Mohachi

In his welcoming speech during the Xth International Steering Committee Meeting of the Decade the Bulgarian Prime Minister stated that the Bulgarian membership in EC and the access to resources from the Operational Programmes propose new political, financial and managing instruments, which have be used for effective for the decision of some of the Roma problems.

The Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev reminded that namely in Sofia was the launch of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”, which is important sign for the commitment of our country with this cause. He estimates

the meeting as an opportunity to continue the discussion about the Roma integration and also as a place to exchange experience and good practices, because no one country can cope alone with the complete inclusion of Roma minority. The Prime Minister called for more altogether commitment of the European Union about the policy for Roma integration and bigger attention of the European institutions to this topic.

Other main governmental priority is in the future to be achieved better horizontal coordination of the institutions activities in accordance of their field, undertaken in relation with the Roma integration, said the Prime Minister.

He also marked that the implementation of broad expert and political discussion between institutions and NGO for elaboration of new Framework Programme regarding Roma for the period 2008-2015 is one of the main priorities for the forthcoming period. Interior Roma integration is part of the real Bulgarian integration in EU in all kind of aspects, said the Prime Minister. Its necessary to have political will and public agreement *“I rely on our partners, to make clear the character of the policy in Roma integration area and to achieve transparency in the consumption of resources, because It is not necessary to lead formal activities, which do not decide the problems in essence”*, said in conclusion the Prime Minister.

Mr. George Soros, President of “Open Society” Institute stated that he is exclusively glad from his participation in the ISC meeting and also by the progress, which is marked about the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” . He also appeal to full usage of the EU Funds and propose the creation of working group by representatives of all countries included in the Decade, which will have to define the purposes and the main indicators for developing of the initiative, as they have to be in consideration with the specifics of every one country.

Mr. Shigeo Katsu, Vice President of the World Bank greets in his welcoming speech Bulgaria for the significant progress and about the implementation during the last 12 months for the Roma integration. He joined himself to Mr. Sergey Stanishev and Mr. George Soros appeal for maximum using of resources by the eurofunds. *“On first place let’s always remind ourselves that when we speak about the Decade of Roma Inclusion, we are speaking about European question ans for social cohesion of Roma”*, he highlighted.

Ms. Emiliya Maslarova, Minister of Labour and Social Policy express aloud her satisfaction from the participation of so many people, which have given, give and will continue to give their own contribution for the Roma development. She higlighted, that in the frameworks of the European Year of Equal Opportunities

for All is necessary to succeed to break the social prejudices and stereotypes and to change the wished equality in the reality. Ms. Maslarova shared that the Bulgarian government during this one year is put on first plan “the employment” and highlighted that more than 83 thousands roma found their own realization on the labour market during the year. She also sent one challenge to Hungary, in its role of following President Country, to make a cult the Roma children, because if they feel that they are in equal position, that will give influence and about the whole Roma community as all.

She especially thanks to Mr. Soros and Mr. Katsu for their cares and contiguity about roma issues and finished with the phrase „*together we can more*”.

The main proposals for decisions during the Xth International Steering Committee Meeting were the following:

➤ The International Steering Committee to accept the report of the non-governmental organizations as important contribution in the process of monitoring of the results about the initiative „Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015”.

➤ To support the further participation of the Roma Civil Society in the monitoring of the implementation of the National Decade Action Plans in the different countries.

➤ To continue the work about the elaboration of clear indexes and quantity indicators to the different Decade priorities, as for this purpose to forming working forum with the participation of the National coordinators, national experts, UNDP, World Bank, Open Society Institute, representatives of the Roma non-governmental organizations.

➤ As a base for the working group about the elaboration of clear indexes and quantity indicators to the different Decade priorities will be the working group, formed in initiative of the UNDP, Bratislava.

➤ The first stage of the activities of this group is to prepare a overview of the existing approaches in the monitoring implementation and to propose variants, appropriate for monitoring of the separate National Plans – accordingly the specifics of the countries, the results of which to be reported on the next Meeting of the International Steering Committee.

➤ Bulgaria proposes to the Hungarian government to continue the efforts for enlargement of the Decade and to include other countries and to pay

attention of the inclusion of Ukraine which was one of the countries-observers during the Xth ISC Meeting.

4. GUIDELINES FOR THE FUTURE

The Bulgarian Presidency summarised the needed actions which should be focused on the following directions:

➤ The activities for improvement of the life quality in the Roma community to be connected with integrated approach, which cover all problem areas of Roma inclusion;

➤ Promote a vast range of programmes of active employment policy, increase the qualification level of the excluded from the labour market, establish close relations between the social security system and the labour market in order to assist and motivate the long-term unemployed to join the labour market; create a positive attitude to job-seeking and convince that employment brings satisfaction and leads people out of poverty and social exclusion;

➤ Overcome the shortcomings of education and bring it up to date in accordance with the labour market by adjusting the system of education to the needs of the labour market; promote the early access to integrated education for all; prevent the early drop-out pupils; pay special attention to children with specific educational needs;

➤ Undertaking of measures towards offering of high quality social service for Roma;

➤ One of the main priorities in the functioning of the initiative “Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015” is the exchange of knowledge in the implementation of the activities for the Roma inclusion. In relation with this is necessary to promote the initiative of the separate countries-members of the Decade to organize international forums.

➤ Overcoming of the formal approach in the taking of decision for the problems of Roma community through insurance of maximum broad area of expertise and analysis;

➤ Development of specific measures in the sphere of equality towards Roma children;